Quality Review Report

2019-2020

P.S. 130
Elementary 25Q130
200-01 42 Avenue
Queens
NY 11361

Principal: Michelle Contratti

Dates of Review:
October 23, 2019 - October 24, 2019

Lead Reviewer: Jerry Brito
The Quality Review Report

The Quality Review is a two-day school visit by an experienced educator. During the review, the reviewer visits classrooms, talks with parents, students, teachers, and school leaders and uses a rubric to evaluate how well the school is organized to support student achievement.

The Quality Review Report provides a rating for all ten indicators of the Quality Review Rubric in three categories: Instructional Core, School Culture, and Systems for Improvement. One indicator is identified as the Area of Celebration to highlight an area in which the school does well to support student learning and achievement. One indicator is identified as the Area of Focus to highlight an area the school should work on to support student learning and achievement. The remaining indicators are identified as Additional Finding. This report presents written findings, impact, and site-specific supporting evidence for six indicators.

Information about the School

P.S. 130 serves students in grade PK through grade 5. You will find information about this school, including enrollment, attendance, student demographics, and data regarding academic performance, at http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/report/default.htm.

School Quality Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To what extent does the school...</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to State standards and/or content standards</td>
<td>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by State standards and the Danielson Framework for Teaching, aligned to the curricula, engaging, and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessment and grading practices, and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## School Quality Ratings continued

### School Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations</td>
<td>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school’s instructional goals and meet student learning needs, as evidenced by meaningful student work products</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Establish a coherent vision of school improvement that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are tracked for progress and are understood and supported by the entire school community</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Observe teachers using the Danielson Framework for Teaching along with the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate schoolwide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Evaluate the quality of school-level decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school, with particular attention to State standards</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations and provide training to the entire staff through venues such as the staff handbook. School leaders and staff effectively communicate expectations connected to a path to college and career readiness.

Impact

The school culture results in mutual accountability for high expectations. School leaders and staff successfully partner with families to support their children’s progress toward high expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- The staff handbook outlines the academic, operational, and social-emotional framework used to inform the school’s operations. For example, the handbook provides an explanation of the school’s instructional focus, which is to deepen understanding and improve the practice centered on math instruction. The handbook also provides a road map on how teachers are expected to conduct professional learning cycles, expectations regarding the observation process, and the school’s plan to develop teacher leadership. In addition, school leadership focuses on training teachers to develop a shared understanding of rigorous instruction. In one document, the school leadership worked collaboratively with the staff to develop a common understanding on collegial inquiry, productive struggle, and rigorous instruction. In teacher meetings, it was clear that school leadership communicates high expectations, and mutual accountability is a norm. One teacher stated that teachers’ roles are clear and all teachers hold each other and school leadership accountable.

- School leaders and staff partner with families to effectively communicate expectations to prepare their children for college and career. Staff routinely provide workshops to families to support their children for rigorous academic instruction. For example, kindergarten through second-grade students’ parents were invited to a workshop focused on retelling of stories and strategies that they can use to support their children in developing this skill. Parents provided feedback to staff, which will be used to inform future workshops. In addition, school leadership provides families with a parent handbook, which provides the school’s vision statement, grading policy and homework policy. Additionally, the guidance counselor and parent coordinator invite parents to a workshop focused on what parents of fifth-grade students need to know about the middle school articulation process. A review of documents show that school leaders and staff communicate high expectations and provide the supports needed to achieve it.

- In a letter to parents of first-grade students, a new work study program was announced. The letter described the type of work that their children will bring home and the activities they can engage in to support them. In another letter, parents were given tips on how to read with their child at home. Strategies such as a book walk in which parents review vocabulary prior to reading were suggested as support. In addition, the school is using the Remind Me text messaging system to communicate academic happenings in the classrooms, including sending pictures of student work products to parents. In a parent meeting, it was expressed that the school communicates and provides them supports so that they can help their children.
Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect an articulated belief that students learn best when engaging in authentic learning tasks. Students participate in discussions that involve high-level thinking.

Impact

Students’ cooperative work and high levels of thinking and participation are evident across classrooms. However, there was little evidence of student ownership in their work.

Supporting Evidence

- In a fourth-grade integrated co-teaching (ICT) reading class, students were expected to engage in a debate centered on the book *The Tiger Rising*. The debate positions were whether or not a character is a caring father. A portion of text was read to the class three times with the goals of students choosing a debate position, collecting evidence to support their position, and deciding how they would persuade others of their position. Prior to the debate, students engaged in partner talk to finalize their positions. Next, students were sorted into two groups based on their position. In a fifth-grade social studies ICT class, student groups worked collaboratively to create an infograph to depict information on the history of the ice age. Student groups focused on particular areas of research such as the study of fossils and the effect of global warming during the ice age. Student groups were jotting down notes from their research on a note-catcher document. Group members chose roles such as facilitator to engage in their project. In reviewing classroom practices, the articulated belief in engaging in authentic learning was evident across many classrooms. However, this was not evident in a vast majority of classrooms.

- In a fifth-grade math class, students were working on fluently multiplying multi-digit whole numbers by using a standard algorithm and explaining the procedure used. Students were presented a math word problem centered on the costs of a school trip. Multiplication of multi-digit numbers was applied in order to answer the questions posed in the problem. At one point, the teacher asked students to engage in partner talk to discuss how they would begin to solve the math problem. Next, various students shared out the methods discussed during the partner talk. Based on these discussions, students then engaged in a group discussion analyzing the efficacy of different methods to solve the problem. In a second-grade ICT reading class, groups of students were learning to use multiple strategies to find the meaning of difficult words. The class was separated into two groups. Each group was taught by a teacher focused on the learning goal using different methods and texts dependent on students’ proficiency levels. In one group, students referenced a strategy chart as they engaged in partner talk to determine the meaning of words in the book *Fire Flies*.

- In a third-grade ICT math class, students were expected to use array models to determine product and sum. During whole group instruction, teachers read the math problem concerning deli sandwiches to the students. They asked students to think about the problem and what it was asking that they measure. Next, students engaged in partner talk to discuss their thoughts and also the types of follow-up questions they could ask to potentially further contextualize the problem. A review of instructional practices across classrooms showed evidence of students engaging peers in discussions, primarily in partner talk. However, the discussions did not result in student ownership across a vast majority of classrooms.
## Additional Finding

### Findings

School leaders and teacher teams ensure that curricula are aligned to state standards by creating school-specific unit plans and lesson plans. Rigorous habits and higher-order skills are emphasized in curricular and academic tasks.

### Impact

Alignment to state standards has resulted in coherence of and promotion of college and career readiness for all students. Emphasis on rigorous habits and higher-order skills require that all students demonstrate their thinking.

### Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and teacher teams have created unit plans that ensure alignment to state standards. In a kindergarten reading unit plan, students are expected to learn how they can read and retell familiar storybooks by looking at pictures and figuring out words. The unit plan is disaggregated into teaching points aligned with reading standards related to identifying key details in a text and understanding the difference between literary and informational texts. The plan also outlines required resources and differentiation activities such as using an alphabet chart. In a physical education (PE) September unit plan, students are introduced to PE class and the mechanics of American football. The unit plan is designed to address both the New York State PE standards and national PE standards. Activities to address the standards are delineated according to different domains such as psychomotor and cognitive. Pertinent vocabulary and assessment protocols are also present in the document. In reviewing teacher team notes and modifications to curricula, it is evident that teachers make strategic changes to unit plans and lesson plans to ensure alignment to state standards coherence across grades.

- Unit plans are designed with an emphasis on rigorous habits and higher-order skill that allow students to demonstrate their thinking. In a third-grade social studies unit plan, students are expected to understand the importance of geography. The unit plan outlines student activities such as creating relief maps and studying national resources by continents. Activities are designed for homogeneous student groups with a focus on partner and group discussions. In a third-grade math unit plan, students are expected to learn the standard procedures for estimating and finding products of multi-digit numbers. The unit plan details activities such as vocabulary study and intervention activities with a focus on small student group discussions. Multi-Lingual Learners (MLLS) are provided strategies such as visual supports and graphic organizers in order to facilitate understanding.

- Lesson plans are created in alignment with unit plans and specify the implementation of rigorous habits and higher-order skills. In a fifth-grade social studies lesson plan, student groups were working collaboratively on an infographic project centered on the early societies of the Western Hemisphere during the Ice Age. The two-day lesson outlines student activities such as group research of newspapers and pertinent texts, development of their understanding of an infographic, and group choice and development of how they will present their findings. The activities are dependent on student participation. A review of unit plans and lesson plans across grades and content areas demonstrates a focus on developing rigorous habits in student activities that allow students to show their thinking.
Findings

Rubrics are aligned with the school’s curricula and offer a clear portrait of student mastery. In addition, teachers’ practices consistently reflect the varied use of ongoing checks for understanding across the vast majority of classrooms.

Impact

Actionable and meaningful feedback in a compliment and recommendation format provides students and teachers with valuable information regarding student achievement. Teachers’ assessment practices result in effective adjustments during classroom instruction and modifications to meet all students’ needs.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and staff use content and task-aligned rubrics to provide students with clear, meaningful feedback for improvement. In one third-grade math assignment, students were tasked with solving a math word problem centered on determining the number of possible ways to arrange candies in a rectangular box. Using a four-point math-problem-solving rubric, student performance was assessed under various categories such as use of math strategies, accuracy, and efficiency in solving the problem, and how well students explained the strategies they used. Direct feedback on students’ strengths and areas of need was also provided. In one example, the teacher complimented a student for using tape diagrams as a model to check her work. As a next step, the teacher recommended that she explain all the strategies used to work out the problem, including arrays and repeated addition. The feedback provided aligned specifically to focus areas within the rubric, thus providing the student a clear portrait of performance and next steps.

- Feedback from both teachers and their peers includes one compliment and one next step aligned with a content- or task-specific rubric. In one third-grade special education classroom, a student was tasked with writing about his experience attending the U.S. Open. As a compliment, the teacher cited how well the student did in adding comparisons to his story. As a next step, the teacher recommended that the student further describe his thinking in parts of the narrative so that the reader would have a clearer understanding of his feelings. In a fifth-grade social studies assignment, students were tasked with responding to an article titled *I Live in a Refugee Camp*. Feedback was provided by students’ peers. In one example of peer feedback, a student was complimented on how she used details from the article and restated the question. As a next step, the student’s peer recommended that she use phrases such as “That shows” and “This detail” to make clear the connection between the evidence cited and the points she is making. During a meeting, all students confirmed that they receive detailed and meaningful feedback from both teachers and peers.

- Across most classrooms, there was evidence that teachers are assessing students’ learning and making adjustments to instruction as needed. In one third-grade special education lesson, students were tasked with analyzing texts to determine the needed components of good writing and to connect that with their own writing drafts. Based on previous assessments, the teacher used one student’s writing draft to model how to use key words to show a character’s actions. A review of classroom practices shows that teachers use checks for understanding in order to adjust instruction so that misconceptions and student needs are addressed.
Findings
School leaders and teacher peers strategically use effective feedback and next steps from classroom observations to support teacher development aligned with the schoolwide goal of using high-leverage supports to address teachers’ instructional goals. Clear expectations and feedback to teachers about their practice are provided using the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Impact
School leaders and teacher peers elevate schoolwide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection. Feedback articulates clear expectations for teacher practice, supports teacher development, and aligns with professional goals for teachers.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders use the Advance observation process in order to evaluate teacher performance, determine areas of strength and need, and plan follow-ups. The frequency of teacher observations is based on teacher preference determined during the Initial Planning Conference (IPC). School leadership, which consists of one principal and one assistant principal, has developed an observation schedule in which both administrators have the opportunity to observe each teacher in the school. In collaboration with school leaders, teachers develop professional goals aligned with the Danielson Framework for Teaching during the IPC. School leadership also conducts walkthroughs to monitor instructional trends and patterns outside of the Advance observation process with a focus on developing productive struggle among students. Information gathered during observations and instructional walkthroughs informs teachers’ next steps, contributing to their professional development and elevating their instructional practice.

- Advance is used by school leaders to focus on the schoolwide goal of using high-leverage supports to address teachers’ instructional goals. In one observation report, a third-grade special education teacher was given detailed feedback on questioning and discussion strategies, which was her instructional goal for the school year. Specifically, the school leader supported the teacher’s development by suggesting that she explore strategies for engaging students in mathematical content through rich discussion. It was suggested that the teacher use Number Talks as a way to engage students in short, structured discussions about math with their peers. In a subsequent observation report, the school leader further developed the teacher’s questioning and discussion techniques by suggesting ways to prepare students for discussions such as providing them questions to help facilitate discussions. The school leader also suggested that the teacher visit a colleague who is well-versed in discussion protocols as a resource. The report also stated that the school leader will follow up with the teacher within two weeks to monitor her progress. A review of observation reports demonstrates detailed feedback aligned with teachers’ professional goals.

- School leadership conducts walkthroughs to monitor teachers’ instructional practices as it relates to the schoolwide goal of developing productive struggle. School leadership has developed a productive struggle success criteria checklist in which they monitor teachers’ practices to ensure alignment with schoolwide expectations. For one second-grade teacher, school leaders noted that students are given adequate time for productive struggle. An area in need of development was using discussions to address misconceptions. The use of walkthroughs provides teachers feedback and allows for the school to develop a common understanding centered on instructional practices.
Findings

All teachers are engaged in inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations called collegial inquiry that promote the school's focus on providing rigorous work assignments accessible to all students. Distributed leadership structures are embedded within the school community.

Impact

Collaborations within professional teams have strengthened teacher instructional capacity schoolwide while data reveals increases in student achievement. Teachers build leadership capacity and have a voice in key decisions.

Supporting Evidence

- All teachers are engaged in collegial inquiry that promotes the adoption and implementation of best instructional practices schoolwide. In a fifth-grade teacher team meeting, the focus was a review of recently collected math unit data related to adding and subtracting decimals to the hundredths. Analysis of this data will determine the focus for the upcoming inquiry cycle. After reviewing team norms and roles, the teachers analyzed student data and determined that the main focus for their inquiry work is emphasizing student development of viable argument to justify answers to math problems related to addition and subtraction. Next, teachers discussed their action plan, which included developing a toolkit where student exemplars, mentor texts, and revised student-created rubrics. The teachers also discussed next steps to be addressed for the upcoming team meeting. The meeting ended with teachers reflecting on the work conducted.

- Teacher teams engage in cycles of learning informed by formative student performance data. In a third-grade English Language Arts (ELA) inquiry team meeting, teachers met to analyze pre-assessment data related to the book *Abby Takes Her Shot*. It was noted that students had difficulty distinguishing between character traits and feelings. Team members came to consensus on the need to use strategies such as Total Physical Response (TPR) and vocabulary building to address this discrepancy. In a subsequent meeting, teachers reviewed reading comprehension data, which led to the need to also incorporate comprehension strategies during read-alouds along with vocabulary and TPR work. In a second-grade math inquiry team meeting, teachers were analyzing end-of-unit assessment data for a recently completed unit. Teachers noted patterns and trends in the data, including a lack of multiple strategies to solve multi-step problems and lack of use of precise mathematical vocabulary in students' written explanations. Based on their analysis, team members developed next steps to adjust future units, including adding questions that allow students to construct viable arguments. A review of teacher team agendas and notes indicate that the collegial inquiry process is a vehicle to adjust curricular documents.

- All teacher teams are led by teacher leads who facilitate all team activities. Each team member is prescribed a clearly defined role, which helps facilitate team activities using established team protocols. Teacher leads meet regularly with school leadership to discuss the inquiry teams’ progress and suggest changes to curricula based on team findings. During a meeting, teachers all agreed that teachers lead inquiry work and are key in making adjustments to curricula. One teacher stated that the principal does not micromanage and encourages the sharing of teams' action plans to build coherence schoolwide.