Quality Review Report

2019-2020

P.S./I.S. 295
K-8 29Q295
222-14 Jamaica Avenue
Queens
NY 11428

Principal: Deon Lavigne-Jones

Dates of Review:
February 12, 2020 - February 13, 2020

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


School Quality Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></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>Additional Finding</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>Proficient</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>Proficient</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### 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>Area of Celebration</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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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</tbody>
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### 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>Proficient</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>Proficient</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>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Developing</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>Proficient</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>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Area of Celebration**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.4 Positive Learning Environment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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</table>

**Findings**

The school’s approach to culture-building, discipline, and social-emotional support is informed by a theory of action that focuses on a safe and welcoming school environment. Professional development (PD), family outreach, and student learning experiences and supports are strategically aligned to the building of an inclusive school community.

**Impact**

Students benefit from a safe environment that is inclusive, respectful, and meaningfully involves their voice through venues such as the student council. The school involves student voice in decision-making processes so that the result is their adoption of effective academic and personal behaviors.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The school’s approach to culture-building, discipline, and social-emotional support is centered on the idea that the school environment should be safe and welcoming to all. School leadership has established a student diversity club, which consists of middle school students facilitating monthly events that focus on themes on diversity and personal behaviors. For example, in February during Black History Month, the diversity club focused on the theme of citizenship by creating a bulletin board celebrating famous civil rights activists such as Claudette Colvin. In addition, school leadership and staff regularly conduct assemblies that highlight personal behaviors for a safe school environment. During an October assembly, the school’s elementary students received important information on how to navigate social bullying. Also, the safety team meets regularly to discuss and modify the school’s safety procedures such as eliminating the middle school students’ line-up procedure to accommodate crowd flows. During a meeting, students stated that they felt safe and welcome in the school. A review of suspension data shows low and decreasing disciplinary actions over a three-year period.

- School leadership and staff have built a culture in which student voice plays a meaningful role in improving the school, which is evident in the work of the student council. School leadership, teachers, and students collaboratively created by-laws that highlight the student council’s purpose, including facilitating student activities that positively impact the school community. For example, the student council facilitates a yearly carnival focused on student safety and promoting a drug-free school environment. In addition, the student council visits all lower-grade classrooms during Respect-for-All week to engage students in activities such as anti-bullying and no-name calling workshops that promote a positive school culture. During a meeting, students agreed their voice facilitates a positive culture and provided specific examples. One example was that students communicated to teachers the need to improve in checking their understanding of science topics, resulting in increased checks for understanding to during science lessons.

- School staff strategically use PD sessions, including for families, to build an inclusive school culture. For example, staff members received McKinney-Vento training on how to identify and support students who are homeless, including strategies on how best to communicate and support families that are homeless. In addition, the school’s paraprofessionals, who support students with disabilities in the classroom, receive monthly PD sessions on topics such as creating a behavior management plan and how to support autistic students. Also, the school psychologist conducted a workshop for fathers and male guardians on how they can best support the academic and social-emotional wellbeing of their children. In two separate meetings, both parents and teachers acknowledged that they are provided multiple PD opportunities that teach them how to best support students’ social-emotional growth, which help maintain a positive school culture.
Findings
School leaders’ support of teachers’ development with feedback and next steps is currently through frequent cycles of classroom observation. Feedback to teachers inconsistently captures strengths, challenges, and next steps and is not fully connected to the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Impact
Although school leadership conducts frequent cycles of classroom observations, the feedback offered to teachers is not consistently effective. Additionally, feedback included in observation reports is beginning to support teacher development but does not consistently offer actionable next steps that teachers can take in order to improve their instructional practices.

Supporting Evidence
- School leadership, consisting of the principal and one assistant principal, supports teacher development through the Advance observation process. The frequency of teacher observations is based on each teacher’s preference, which is established during the Initial Planning Conference (IPC). An observation schedule was created, which allowed each school leader to observe all teachers at least once during the school year. Aside from the Advance observation process, school leaders conduct informal walkthroughs and provide feedback verbally or on Post-Its. This process ensures that all teachers are observed frequently. However, in reviewing observation reports, feedback was infrequently provided. This resulted in the feedback being inconsistently effective in teacher development.

- In an observation report, feedback was provided to a teacher regarding a math lesson centered on adding single-digit numbers. The report cited low-inference evidence related to happenings observed during the lesson. The teacher was provided one next step for improvement, which related to the teacher using a system for student self-assessment with the intent of enhancing student understanding. The report suggested the teacher use an established check-for-understanding chart throughout her lessons. In another observation report, the school leader created an observation report regarding a lesson centered on the use of place value and patterns to find the product of a decimal. The report cited low-inference observations from the lesson, including lesson planning, student discussions, and teacher assessment of student learning. The observation report did not cite any feedback to improve the teacher’s practice. During a meeting, teachers noted that school leadership does provide verbal feedback for their improvement. However, they also noted that feedback is not typically written down. Thus, feedback to improve teacher practice was anecdotal and it could not be connected directly to the observation process.

- In an observation report, the teacher was provided a recitation of low-inference observations related to a lesson on determining the elements necessary for an accurate and cohesive extended response to a literacy question. Observations were noted such as how the teacher used questions to engage students, how students used self-assessment protocols, and the use of rubrics in the lesson. There was no feedback noted in the observation report. In another observation report regarding embedding difficult vocabulary into student work products. The teacher was given feedback on planning lessons that allow student input in designing tasks to promote authentic student discussion. A review of observation reports shows an emphasis on reciting low-inference observations for teachers to review. However, observation reports inconsistently provide feedback to teachers, thus limiting their ability to identify next steps for improvement.
### Additional Finding

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator: 1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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**Findings**

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to State standards. Curricula and academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills for all students.

**Impact**

School curricula build coherence and promote college and career readiness for all students. Curricula are accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to State standards.

**Supporting Evidence**

- School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to State standards by providing multiple opportunities for students to access rigorous activities and text. In one sixth-grade literacy lesson plan, students are expected to use the restate, answer, cite, cite, explain, and inference (RACCEI) Strategy to answer short-response questions. The plan’s activities are aligned to State standards related to writing informative and explanatory texts and drawing evidence from informational texts. The plan calls for students to analyze their peers’ responses using a three-point short-response rubric. The plan also includes resources to support student understanding such as graphic organizers. In an eighth-grade math lesson plan, students are expected to learn how to find the inverse of a linear function. The plan’s tasks are aligned with the State standards related to the creation of equations with two or more variables and solving for a simple function. The plan outlines an equation that will be modeled to students. It also outlines expectations for small group work and times when the teacher should check student understanding. A review of documents shows that the standards are aligned to curricular documents, allowing teachers to plan lessons that promote college and career readiness.

- In an eighth-grade science lesson plan, students are to demonstrate their knowledge of reproduction and fetal development by completing station tasks. The plan outlines key cross-curricular learning in the areas of science, engineering, math, and literacy. Student groups are to work in stations with areas of focus such as calculating human cell growth during the gestation period. Tasks are differentiated by using scaffolds such as graphic organizers and enrichment activities. In a fifth-grade math lesson plan, students are expected to learn how to multiply a fraction by a whole number using models to help with conceptual understanding. The plan outlines how the teacher is to model multiplying fractions by using visual aids. Student groups are formed based on language ability and previously-administered assessments. Certain groups are given instruction by the teacher or have access to online platforms tailored to their proficiency levels. A review of lesson plans across grades and content areas reveals an emphasis on providing students with rigorous tasks that address higher-order skills appropriate to students’ needs.

- In a fourth-grade math lesson plan, students are expected to learn how to find equivalent fractions by using division. The plan outlines the learning from previous lessons, which informs its rationale and framework. In addition, the plan outlines a series of questions to be asked of students to promote a deeper understanding of the material, including the question, “Could you divide the numerator and denominator of 18/24 by 4 to find the equivalent fraction? Why or why not?” Students are to work in homogenous groups determined by previously-administered assessments. Tasks are differentiated by using task cards aligned with each group’s proficiency level. During two meetings, both school leaders and teachers stated that they emphasize rigorous tasks that are accessible to all students when creating lesson plans.
**Findings**

Across classrooms, teaching strategies consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula. In addition, students are engaged in creating meaningful work products.

**Impact**

Instructional practices result in students demonstrating higher-order thinking in work products and in discussions, reflecting high levels of thinking and participation.

**Supporting Evidence**

- In a fourth-grade integrated co-teaching (ICT) social studies class, student groups were analyzing and interpreting primary and secondary sources related to the Boston Massacre. Both teachers were working with groups of students to provide extra support with one teacher focused primarily on argumentative writing. Each group was provided texts that were differentiated according to each group’s reading proficiency level. In addition, student groups were using visual supports to facilitate understanding of the content. In a first-grade math class, students were working on how to collect and represent data points. Students were working in groups, with the teacher and a paraprofessional each working with a group. Groups were created based on both math and language proficiency levels. Groups had access to scaffolds to facilitate learning, including visual and vocabulary supports for Multi-Lingual Learners (MLLs). A review of teaching practices shows that teachers provide multiple entry points into the curricula aligned with their content-specific proficiency levels.

- In a fifth-grade ICT math class, student groups were learning how to multiply a fraction with a whole number. Students were divided into low-, on-, and above-level proficiency groups. Both teachers were working with a group. Students in the low-proficiency groups worked directly with teachers while on- and above-level groups worked collaboratively on their math tasks. Groups were provided scaffolds such as math counters and visual supports to facilitate student learning. In a fourth- and fifth-grade special education literacy class, students were working in book clubs, learning how to make predictions on what a character might do, say, or feel. The class was divided into three instructional groups with two teachers and one paraprofessional providing support. Groups were provided scaffolds such as prediction sentence starters to facilitate student learning. Also, one group, which consisted of MLLs, was provided a graphic organizer to help identify the meaning of unknown words they found in their books. During a meeting, school leadership stated, and instructional practices show, that teachers consistently plan to provide students multiple entry points into the content, resulting in students using higher-order skills to create their work products.

- In an eighth-grade science class, students were collaboratively demonstrating their knowledge of reproduction and fetal development while working in stations. Students were divided into six working groups. Each station called for students to analyze a different portion of the reproductive process. For example, one station required that a student group create a timeline of fetal development by matching pictures and text in the proper sequence. All station activities required that students work collaboratively to complete the assigned task. The teacher supported the groups in their tasks and noted their progress. A review of instructional practices across classrooms shows an emphasis on student discussion and participation.
**Quality Indicator:** 2.2 Assessment  
**Rating:** Proficient

**Findings**

Across classrooms, teachers use or create assessments, rubrics, and grading policies that are aligned with the school’s curricula. Teachers’ assessment practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

**Impact**

Actionable feedback is provided to students and teachers regarding student achievement, using a glow and grow assessment model. Teachers make effective adjustments to meet all students’ learning needs.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teachers use a feedback model where student progress is indicated by citing one strength and one next step, based on student performance and work products. In a fourth-grade math task, a student was expected to find different ways music instruments can be arranged on a graph. The student was complimented for showing a good understanding of the task. As a next step, it was suggested that the student carefully review his answer since a key detail was missing from the final answer. In a first-grade math task, a student was tasked with determining and explaining if the given solution to a math word problem was correct or incorrect. The student was complimented for properly using equations and pictures to represent her analysis. As a next step, it was suggested that the student use the circle, underline, box, and evaluate (CUBE) strategy when working on math word problems. A review of student work products across grades and content areas reveals that the school’s feedback model is consistently used to provide actionable feedback.

- Content-based rubrics are used to provide students actionable feedback that allows them to know their next steps. In a third-grade writing assignment, a student was tasked with writing an informative essay on her experiences as a swimmer. The essay was assessed against a four-point rubric that evaluated areas such as introduction, organization of facts, and the use of words and phrases to connect ideas. The student was complimented for effectively using transition words. As a next step, it was suggested that the student avoid crossing out words in the final draft. In a fifth-grade social studies assignment, a student created a poster based on his research centered on the development of the kayak. The essay was assessed against a four-point rubric that evaluated areas such as catchy title, use of details, and persuasive writing skills. The student was complimented for creating a catchy title for his poster. As a next step, it was suggested that the student embed more information into the poster. A review of student work products shows that rubrics are used to provide actionable feedback so that next steps are understood.

- Across classrooms, checks for understanding and student self-assessments are conducted to monitor understanding and adjust lessons. In a first-grade math lesson, a teacher checked for student understanding concerning using data points as they worked in groups. At one point, the teacher stopped the lesson and asked students to indicate whether or not they understood their task by holding up a color-coded card. Reviewing students’ responses, the teacher pulled three students for guided small-group work. In addition, students engaged in self-assessment of their work. For example, in a fourth-grade literacy assignment, a student stated that he needed to embed the most important information into his writing. A review of classroom practices and student work reveals a consistent use of checks for understanding and student self-assessment across classrooms.
### Additional Finding

| Quality Indicator: | 4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development | Rating: Proficient |

#### Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations. In addition, distributed leadership structures are in place so that teacher voice is noted in key decisions.

#### Impact

Teacher teams promote the achievement of school goals and the implementation of State standards, strengthening the instructional capacity of teachers. Teachers have built leadership capacity so that they have a role in affecting student learning across the school.

#### Supporting Evidence

- The majority of teachers engage in professional collaborations that promote the adoption and implementation of best instructional practices schoolwide. In a kindergarten, first-, and second-grade vertical team meeting, the focus was to ascertain the efficacy of supports put in place to improve students’ persuasive writing pieces. The meeting began with members establishing meeting roles such as facilitator and timekeeper. Next, it was determined that the team would analyze three student work products from one class, with the teacher explaining how she used modeling and sentence starters to teach persuasive writing. Each work product represented a challenge, a target, and enrichment student work. Team members then reviewed and discussed selected writing pieces from the class. In reviewing the work, teachers noted the efficacy of graphic organizers and visual supports for multilingual learners (MLLs). Next, team members discussed the implication of the review on their teaching practices, including the continued use of visual supports and the implementation of the opinion, reason, examples, and opinion (OREO) writing strategy. During a meeting, all teachers agreed that their inquiry work results in improved teacher capacity across the school.

- In a third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade vertical team meeting, teachers were analyzing how various scaffolds such as a problem-solving template affected student performance in multiplying multi-digit problems. During the discussion, team members determined that the math four-square graphic organizer provided students the needed support to successfully solve multiplication problems. The team also noted that teacher support during small-group work was important in facilitating students’ understanding of multiplication concepts. For next steps, the team agreed that further work was needed in norming the math performance rubric and the need to use alternative strategies to the currently-used circle, underline, box, evaluate, and solve (CUBES) strategy. In a science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) inquiry team meeting, team members were analyzing student work related to lab reports. It was noted that the student that self-reflection protocol, and student self-analysis using a rubric were effective. It was also noted that further work was needed related to partnerships in peer editing. Teacher also established next steps, including developing protocols so students can show their math calculations. A review of teacher team notes show that team efforts result in promoting the State standards and improve teacher capacity.

- Each year, school leaderships create a professional development plan based on teacher surveys. In addition, inquiry team roles are rotated so that all team members have the opportunity to take on a leadership role. Also, teachers are given the opportunity to supervise school programs. For example, one teacher, who holds the appropriate school administration licenses, supervises academic programs held on Saturday. Overall, teachers’ voice is valued, and they have input into key decisions that affect the school community.