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>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>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>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### School Culture

**To what extent does the school...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<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>
</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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

**To what extent does the school...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<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>
</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>
</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>
</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>
</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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

| Quality Indicator: | 1.4 Positive Learning Environment | Rating: | Well Developed |

Findings

The school community strategically aligns professional development (PD), family outreach, student experiences, and structures that support social-emotional learning, with a focus on knowing all students well.

Impact

Schoolwide training and structures ensure that all students are known well and are positively impacting their academic and personal behaviors across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- Strategic PD is thoughtfully planned around social-emotional learning and getting to know students academically, personally, and culturally. This year, the school leaders and staff have engaged in PD on Culturally Relevant Conversations to better understand their beliefs and perspectives, as well as those of others in their school community, and to celebrate diversity. This work led to the creation of a writing unit of study entitled I AM, where students write poems that reflect their personal, social, and cultural backgrounds, which are shared throughout the school community through inter-class gallery walks. During a team meeting, teachers used information from these poems, current social-emotional intervention plans, and other data to share strategies that promote students’ self-regulation and communication skills. Both parents and students agreed that the writing experiences and gallery walks enable students to understand their peers socially. Students also agreed that the gallery walks help to build their confidence with talking to others in their class.

- Other PD is provided to teachers to support social-emotional learning and to build support toward increasing positive academic and personal behaviors. This year, the Autistic Specific Disorder (ASD) team engaged in PD on mindfulness techniques, based on prior research in neuroscience. Sensory spaces have been implemented as a strategy in classrooms and in the cafeteria to support students. Additionally, trainings on social explorations and stories support students’ abilities to develop social skills in groups and to build their communication skills. Parents have received similar training on building social-emotional skills at home to support their children. Taken together, purposeful supportive training for community members fosters the positive academic and personal habits of students.

- Multiple structures are in place to support students' personal, academic, and social-emotional behaviors and to ensure that they are known well by staff. A Sanford Harmony program is in place in classrooms, which reinforces positive behaviors through lessons on responsibility, empathy, and acceptance of others, and students are celebrated through assemblies. The Dolphin Pride and Dolphin Players programs offer all students electives, with a focus on philanthropy. Some electives include filmmaking, gardening, newspaper writing, dance, and the theater arts. Students reported that these electives have helped them to express themselves and communicate more effectively and confidently with others. One student stated, "I'm usually shy when I speak, but drama allows me to communicate more and raise my voice". Other structures, including the schoolwide efforts to increase student attendance, are an ongoing focus. The attendance team is consistently communicating with families, monitoring progress in student attendance rates, and promoting good attendance through schoolwide incentives. As a result, the percentage of chronic absenteeism has decreased from 25 percent in September 2019 to 10.4 percent in December 2019.
Findings
Teachers use rubrics, success criteria, assessments, and schoolwide grading policies that are aligned to the curricula. Across classrooms, teachers’ assessment practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and self-assessment practices.

Impact
Although ongoing assessment practices are used to gauge students’ understanding of concepts, meaningful feedback and effective adjustments, where students are clearly aware of their next learning steps, are not always present.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use a schoolwide four-level rubric, aligned to the school’s curricula, to gauge their students’ understanding based on their performance on assessments or tasks. The rubric consists of the following levels: Rising, being the highest level, Anchored, meeting grade-level expectations, Sailing, approaching the expectations, and Navigating, below expectations. Students were able to articulate the meaning of these levels and shared that Rising meant a student was working above their grade level. A review of several bulletin boards and student work folders reflected teacher feedback aligned to this rubric. However, some teacher feedback during classroom lessons and in student folders reflected limited next steps, which primarily complimented students without next steps or provided next steps that were not meaningful or concrete to serve as examples for students.

- Students shared feedback provided by their peers and their teachers. Additionally, students set goals for themselves in reading, writing and math, and on Fridays, they review those goals with their teachers to determine their next steps. Only a few students were able to share how they were able to use their feedback and those strategies on other tasks to achieve success. One student shared how he challenged himself to solve multi-step word problems in addition and subtraction. After his first attempt, his teacher’s feedback and tools prompted him to provide an explanation to the problem in order to move from an Anchored to a Rising level. After using the teacher’s feedback and revising his work, the student’s level increased. However, when asked about feedback and next steps based on a reading goal, another student could not recall the strategy provided and did not use their teacher’s feedback.

- Checks for understanding, success criteria, and a list of expectations to be included in a task were observed across the vast majority of classes. However, student awareness of their next steps was not always clearly delineated as a result of teachers’ adjustments. At times, there were missed opportunities for students to self-assess using success criteria or tracking progress toward their goals. In a grade-three Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) reading class, both teachers provided clear adjustments and next steps while students created posters to explain to others how to find text features in a book. Students were clearly able to articulate how to meet their learning goals as a result of those adjustments. However, in two math classes, teacher questioning and prompting was generalized and did not specifically point to areas that would address students’ learning needs. Additionally, in one class, although students were aware of how to use the success criteria, the expectations did not match the task and could not lead students toward the appropriate next steps. In another class, students did not understand certain words in their success criteria, could not explain what they meant, and were unable to use them as a self-assessment tool.
Additional Finding

Quality Indicator: 1.1 Curriculum
Rating: Well Developed

Findings
School leaders and staff ensure that the curricula are strategically aligned to the State standards. Rigorous habits and higher-order thinking are emphasized in the curricula and student-choice tasks are embedded in a coherent way across grades and subject areas.

Impact
The curricula promote the demonstration of thinking and coherence for all learners, in support of their college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- The strategic integration of multiple skills is embedded into the Frameworks for Learning, the name of the school’s curricula, to build understanding of the standards across grades and subjects. A focus on character analysis, main idea, and the use of text evidence are integrated across reading, writing, and social studies. In a grade-one reading framework, essential questions focus on students using important details to retell information from nonfiction texts. In a grade-three integrated reading and social studies framework, a reading response task requires students to respond to a question on how people adapt to their environment and focus on standards that require students to use appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to report on the topic and respond to the question. In a grade-four reading and social studies lesson plan, the task prompts students to choose a character to analyze and use text evidence to support their explanations, providing a rationale that connects their character to a particular personality trait.

- Rigorous tasks are planned and embedded across subject areas and grades to support students’ learning styles. A review of Frameworks for Learning for each unit reflects student-choice activities, which align to a continuum of Webb’s Depth of Knowledge levels through a range of activities that adhere to students’ learning modalities to promote the demonstration of critical thinking. In Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) Frameworks for Learning, tasks emphasize research-based, engineering activities where students are provided with choices of projects based on their learning styles. In a fifth-grade framework, students engage in small group research projects on a phenomenon and engineer a solution to a worldwide water issue that occurs in the future. Choices include building a water collection system, creating a water filter, or engineering a wind-powered water pump that will require each student group to engage in multiple research steps. Similarly, in grade two, students will engage in a design and engineering project to understand and resolve the phenomenon of the vanishing rainforests.

- In a grade-one reading framework, student-choice projects and planned tasks integrate the arts and embed higher-order thinking. Options include critiquing the artwork of Henry Rousseau or Jim Dine. Another activity focuses on identifying the differences between a photograph and an illustration, paying attention to lines and shapes in pictures, and what makes artwork look realistic. In a kindergarten math Framework for Learning on building number sense and fluency, students can record themselves explaining about numbers or acting them out, and use tools to demonstrate their understanding of adding numbers between zero and five. Similar activities are reflected throughout the framework, including applying these concepts when solving word problems. In a grade-five Framework for Learning, learning objectives include multiplying multi-digit whole numbers, fluently using standard algorithms, and tasks focused on perseverance in problem solving.
**Additional Finding**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Findings**

Teaching strategies and student-choice projects consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula, as reflected in student discussions and work products.

**Impact**

In a few classes, teacher strategies do not fully enable all students to demonstrate critical thinking and ownership in their discussions and work products.

**Supporting Evidence**

- In a third-grade ICT math class, groups of students worked as a team to develop a budget plan for a party for which they were provided with a list of items with prices, a set amount of money, and the number of people attending. In one group, students stated that they had to first come to consensus about the items they wanted to purchase. They then stated that they had to develop a plan and determine whether they had enough money, if they went over their budget, or if they had money left over that could be used to purchase more items. Students then had to determine, depending on their situation, how to either spend the left-over money or revise their plan if they went over their budget, having to again come to consensus about their decisions. Students engaged in the use of multiple content and collaboration skills in their discussions and resulting plans. In a social studies/English Language Arts class, students were provided with three project choices, based on their learning styles, to analyze characters. Several students chose to create wanted posters and had discussions where they came to consensus about their character's traits and used text evidence to support their answers, which required higher-order thinking. Similarly, in a third-grade ICT class, students were provided with a choice of either demonstrating their understanding of main idea and key details, or to identify key text features and how to use them to find information in a text. Work products reflected students’ abilities to internalize reading concepts and engage in ownership of their own learning tasks.

- In a first-grade ICT reading class, teacher questioning in reading groups enabled students to demonstrate understanding of the main idea and supporting details in a text. In another reading class, a group of students worked with their teacher to describe and understand characters in their books through their traits, actions, and words. Other students read independently or worked in pairs in word-work centers. Although the provided tools enabled the students to gain access into their tasks based on their ability levels, some students were not as engaged or were unclear of their roles, which was a missed opportunity for higher-order thinking.

- In a third-grade ICT math class, both teachers worked with small groups of students on interpreting data in bar graphs in order to solve word problems. In both groups, the strategic use of teacher questioning, mini-charts, and other tools enabled students to solve one- and two-step word problems, where students demonstrated a sense of efficacy in their process, as demonstrated by their answers. In an ICT math class, teachers worked with small groups on multiplying decimals. Although teacher modeling, questioning, and discussion were used in one group, and additional manipulatives in another group to support students’ understanding of the concept, the lessons were teacher-led and the implemented strategies did not enable the students to work independently to meet their objective. In another ICT math class, students chose math projects based on their learning style to solve fractions, yet some work products did not reflect the learning objective.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations in support of their multiple instructional goals to the entire staff. School staff effectively communicates expectations and successfully partners with families on the school’s expectations.

Impact

Training and ongoing feedback promote a culture of mutual accountability for all staff members to achieve the school’s expectations. Effective staff communication with families supports student progress toward meeting those expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders communicate the instructional expectations related to student engagement, high-quality assessment practices and feedback, student choice, and differentiation of tasks. This is accomplished through PD, feedback during Impact or school-level meetings, emails, and memoranda. A review of morning announcement emails reflects communications that remind staff to reflect on their work environment to ensure subject-based learning centers are based on goals and teacher feedback is targeted and actionable for students to accomplish. PD is provided to support staff in meeting these expectations. The PD plan reflects sessions on reviewing the reading workshop model, to collaborate on planning for the skills block and independent reading across grades, and to promote student engagement based on their goals. Other PD focuses on conversations about student performance data, where teachers review their students’ performance profiles and use the data to determine and learn about the students who comprise their class in order to inform their planning and instruction to increase student engagement.

- Teachers shared ways in which they hold themselves and each other mutually accountable for the instructional and social-emotional expectations of the school community. One teacher shared that after an observation of a math lesson, a school leader provided her with feedback to include more real-world word problems to further engage students. This feedback led to revision of her math lesson planning, which was observed during a subsequent class visit. Another teacher shared how feedback from her school leaders encouraged her to implement learning centers or stations in her classroom to enable English Language Learners (ELLs) to read books at different reading levels and across themes. One teacher shared how team meeting feedback has led to creating a positive reward system and use of an If/Then chart in her classroom, which has been helping her students with disabilities maintain focus and build confidence in class. Across the school, staff members are collectively committed to achieving and maintaining high expectations.

- Parents shared that the school leaders and staff communicate their expectations through a variety of structures, including the school website, parent-teacher engagement meetings, newsletters, and curriculum conferences. Progress reports are sent home to parents five times a year and a separate STEAM progress report is also sent in support of that program. Teachers and students hold workshops for parents on multiple topics, including next grade level preparation, math workshops to support parents with understanding the new State standards, and Nest-based, specialized programs that serve students with autism, which include workshops where parents can collaborate and learn from each other. Parents were able to share their children’s learning styles, strengths, and goals based on student-led conferences. The ongoing home-school connection promotes student progress within the school community.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings

The majority of teachers engage in structured vertical and Impact inquiry-based teams. Impact and vertical teams consistently analyze assessment data and student work for groups of case study students on whom they are focused.

Impact

Impact and vertical teams promote the achievement of school goals, State standards, and strengthen instructional capacity. The work of teams improves teacher practice and promotes the progress of groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- Grade-level teachers collaborate on Impact teams in inquiry-based conversations based on the progress of their student focus groups. Each team uses a Case Conference Protocol to discuss their students’ strengths and needs, strategies implemented, their successes and challenges, and next steps. This year, as part of the school’s community’s goals and instructional focus, the Impact teams conduct research on culturally relevant, sustaining educational practices that specifically target their case study students to determine a focus for their group. Some of the strategies implemented this year include peer tutoring, the use of sentence frames, hands-on learning, and the use of prediction. Teachers reported that these strategies and the use of I AM stories have aided them in creating tasks that promote the engagement of students, thus increasing the instructional capacity within the school.

- During a vertical Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) team meeting, teachers reviewed the progress of their case study students using the Case Conferencing Protocol, and discussed their goals and learning styles. Based on their progress, the team provided each presenting teacher with strategies to support their next steps in order to help the case study students meet their goals. After reviewing an I AM story of a student and noticing that her strengths showed she is artistic and visual, yet needed support with revision, the team recommended the use of role play to model and build her confidence in this skill. For another student who demonstrated difficulty with focusing in class, teachers recommended several strategies, including timed tasks and the use of a timer to encourage the student to complete their task. Overall, the sharing of strategies supports the improvement of teacher practice.

- A review of teacher case-conference monitoring sheets reflects students making progress toward target goals and some students meeting their goals. Additionally, teachers reported that the chosen grade-level focus is supporting students in meeting their goals. One teacher reported that the use of peer-tutoring and student-created anchor charts are aiding the case study student in her class in applying reading and math strategies in their work. Another teacher reported that her case study student’s goal is inferring. Through the use of graphic organizers with thought bubbles for prediction and guiding questions to build prior knowledge of content, the student’s reading is showing growth based on their reading data. Therefore, teacher teams’ consistent review of student work through the case conference analysis is improving the progress of groups of students across the school.