Quality Review Report

2019-2020

P.S. 056 Norwood Heights
Elementary 10X056
341 East 207 Street
Bronx
NY 10467

Principal: Maureen O'Neill

Dates of Review:
November 7, 2019 - November 8, 2019

Lead Reviewer: Elsa Kortright-Torres
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. 056 Norwood Heights serves students in grade K 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

### Instructional Core

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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>Well Developed</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>Area of Focus</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>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### School Culture

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<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>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

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

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

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

Findings
Structures are in place so that each student feels safe, nurtured, and cared for. Professional learning (PL), family outreach, and learning experiences are strategically aligned through events and workshops.

Impact
Personalized interventions, routines, celebrations and supports help students learn positive behaviors and result in the adoption of effective academic and personal behaviors. Incidents of student behavior not aligned to school beliefs have decreased dramatically.

Supporting Evidence

- The school’s approach to social-emotional learning is based on addressing the basic needs of the students and adults so that they feel safe, valued, and appreciated. Every student wears identification to ensure that anyone in contact with them knows their name. In the morning and at dismissal there are several rituals. For example, the students are greeted each morning by the school leaders, teachers, and staff. One morning observed, students wore red, white, and blue to celebrate Veteran’s Day. Students formed two lines facing each other and raised the United States flag while the rest of the students entering the building saluted the flag and walked through the lines. The national anthem and other songs were played. School leaders smiled and greeted students with enthusiasm and nurture. The school leaders have communicated with the staff that working at the school should be seen as calling, not a duty. School leaders call parents to share good news anytime that a student has done well or deserves to be recognized. Throughout the school, adults were accompanying students and attending to their personal needs.

- There are structures in place such as the positive behavior intervention and supports (PBIS) and the recognizing, understanding, labeling, expressing, and regulating emotion (RULER) research-based programs to support the social-emotional learning of students. Students have internalized the RULER as evident in many conversations observed in classrooms, in meetings, and in the hallways. Students shared that they have used the strategies of the RULER program such as having a meta-moment at home to identify their emotions and self-regulate. Tier-one social-emotional learning is embedded in the curricula and addressed daily in lessons, while students needing tier-two interventions participate in small group lunches, pull-out programs, and consultation with mental health personnel. Interventions for tier-three students are coordinated based on the specific needs of students by having more prescriptive action plans executed by crisis intervention specialists, the guidance counselor, and the school mental health consultant to name a few. As a result of these support programs, the attendance percentage for the previous school year is above 90 percent and serious incidents reported in the Online Occurrence Reporting Systems have decreased.

- There are various opportunities throughout the year to engage teachers and parents alike in PL regarding social-emotional topics. For example, for parents there is a comprehensive parent handbook where the school values, expectations, policies and regulations are explained. Throughout the year there are events such as Hearts and Flowers Week, Red Ribbon Week, Open House, and Cultural Night to name a few. Teachers have conducted book studies of The Discipline Fix by Pollastri and Ablon as well as Hammond’s Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain to apply their learning to the RULER program and embed culturally responsive practices. All students asked reported that they feel safe. Some added that the mood meter helps them recognize when they are nervous or anxious, resulting in meta-moments which help them calm down and concentrate on their work. Teachers feel that the school is supportive, and that the RULER program has helped students acquire new vocabulary to better express their feelings.
### Findings

Across classrooms, pedagogical practices are aligned to the school’s core belief that what you pay attention to grows and students are actively involved in their learning. In most classrooms, teaching strategies, such as using complex texts for reading and multiple entry points, are consistently used.

### Impact

While teachers provide meaningful learning opportunities with scaffolds and supports, engagement of all students was not consistently evident. Work products demonstrate rigor and higher-order thinking, yet student-led discussions using academic vocabulary was not evident in the vast majority of classrooms.

### Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use interactive boards and questioning in small and whole-class groups to engage students. In English Language Arts (ELA), teachers create groups so that students talk about what they learn using academic vocabulary. In a grade-five classroom, students were reading a complex text and used interpretive questions and group discussion to find out the meaning of the story. Students discussed human rights and how the book relates to being honest, the theme of the story. This was done by students creating their own questions and taking turns answering them. One student explained that they had to find evidence in the text to support their answer. Students also rated the quality of their questions using a rubric. The teacher provided dice, graphic organizers, and ideas on how to engage in discussions such as using the choose it, chart it and chat it (3C’s) protocol. Evidence that teachers hold to the school’s philosophy around growth through relevant PL, was evident in a grade-three math classroom. The teacher formed a group of students that needed re-teaching as they began their multiplication unit. A short mini-lesson led to students then joining the rest of the class using counters other manipulatives.

- Students have opportunities to demonstrate their thinking by using the Advance Literacies (ALS) hallmarks, such as discussion and academic vocabulary. In a grade-two classroom, students worked in pairs to find evidence and answer questions about a text. Students explained their thinking while highlighting different parts of the story to answer tiered questions. One student reflected on why the main character’s actions were described as ignorant by the father. She showed her partner where she found the evidence. In a grade-five classroom, students solved decimal problems. The teacher asked questions such as “How would you explain to someone what this decimal represents?” Students used math sentence starters and academic vocabulary such as decimal, rounding, thousandths. However, in teacher-led lessons such as a kindergarten math lesson and an ELA first-grade lesson, there were missed opportunities for students to engage in discussions. Though practices across the school evidence common planning and the school’s core beliefs about how students learn best, opportunities for students to engage in discussions and use academic vocabulary were not yet evident in the vast majority of classrooms.

- Across classrooms, teaching strategies included the use of multiple entry points, specifically in ELA classrooms. All students had opportunities to engage in learning such as in a social studies grade-three class where students conducted a mystery Skype, which required students to ask questions to guess the location of the Skype class. In an English as a New Language (ENL) class, there were native-language scaffolds, laptops, and older students to help students. While teachers used different modalities of teaching such as the use of resources, technology, and complex texts in the vast majority of classrooms, there was a lack of scaffolds in place so that all learners, including Multi-Lingual Learners (MLLs) and students with disabilities, were equally engaged in challenging tasks. In some cases, while there were resources within the classroom, such as dictionaries, students were not observed using these resources to engage in learning.
### Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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**Findings**

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to the Standards and strategically integrate the ALS hallmarks. Interdisciplinary units and lesson plans are rigorous, and curricula strategically emphasize higher-order skills.

**Impact**

Curricula alignment to the Standards and ALS hallmarks results in coherence across grades and subject areas promoting college and career readiness for all learners. Students have developed rigorous habits such as making their thinking visible.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Curricular documents show evidence of the integration of two ALS Hallmarks, discussing to build both conversational and academic language and knowledge, and studying a small set of high-quality vocabulary words and academic language structures to build breadth and depth of knowledge. For instance, in a non-fiction fifth-grade unit, students are tasked with learning about human rights through engaging in a group discussion and using markers and chart paper to write down things that connect to human rights, such as specific types, people who have stood up for human rights, and any events in history that connect to human rights. Students are tasked to make their thinking visible by using the See, Think, Wonder protocol. Listed on the plan is academic vocabulary that students will be learning and essential questions to answer. In a grade-three math lesson plan, students are tasked with making their thinking visible by representing equal groups by using manipulatives, drawing, and writing a multiplication equation. Students will later reflect by answering the essential question in their math journals using academic vocabulary such as equal groups.

- In a grade-two ELA lesson plan, after modeling from the teacher how to find evidence in a text, students are tasked with collaborating in groups or partnerships and use evidence from a text to answer comprehension questions using small post-it notes. Students are encouraged to discuss the question and the evidence they find in the text. In a grade-one interdisciplinary unit, students learn about families then and now by making text to text and text to self-connections. Students will be exploring how families grow and change over time. In a science unit plan for grades three, four, and five in a self-contained setting, students learn about the water cycle. Students make their thinking visible by using text evidence to complete a water cycle illustration. Academic vocabulary is introduced using a video of the water cycle, kinesthetic actions, and discussion. These examples demonstrate the alignment to the Standards and hallmarks of the ALS, thus, promoting college and career readiness for all students.

- In an MLL grade-three literacy, social studies, and technology unit lesson plan, students are tasked with comparing and contrasting two countries researched by their classmates while they present using PowerPoint. The students use technology to research the country of their choice and learn about the similarities and differences of cultures from around the world. In a grade-three lesson plan, students use Skype to communicate with a class in an unknown location. The students are tasked with finding out what country they are from by asking them different questions related to their geography. Students are also tasked with using academic vocabulary related to geography. As a culminating activity, students reflect on the cultural exchange, their experience using Skype to communicate, and what they learned from their new friends from a different country. Across classes, all students make their thinking visible through discussions and reflections.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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Findings

Across classrooms, teachers and students use rubrics that are aligned with the school’s curricula. Across classrooms, teachers’ assessment practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding.

Impact

Teachers’ use of assessments and rubrics provide actionable feedback to students. Additionally, teachers guide students toward self-assessment and continually check for understanding during lessons and make adjustments in order to ensure all students’ needs are being met.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms on bulletin boards and in portfolios, teachers provide feedback to students using post-it notes, rubrics, and student work. For example, on a kindergarten hallway bulletin board, the teacher posted student work consisting of students writing each letter of their name inside a box. The teacher used post-it notes to write actionable feedback in the form of a glow and a grow, such as that the student did a nice job writing the letters but needs to use lower case letters appropriately. Similarly, on a fifth-grade bulletin board students’ work about creating and writing their own goals, students used a four-point rubric aligned to the ELA curriculum. The teacher circled the criteria accomplished followed with a grow and a glow. The teacher modified the rubric by rewriting the criteria in student-friendly language. In a third-grade classroom bulletin board, students received actionable feedback on a multiplication exit slip. During a student meeting, students shared that their teachers provide verbal feedback when they confer with them and that they use rubrics to know what they need to accomplish to earn mastery level.

- Actionable feedback is generally seen in published work on bulletin boards and student work products in portfolios for ELA and math. According to the students, teachers provide feedback after a baseline writing task such as glows and grows. During conferences with students, teachers make recommendations for the students such as using transition words. On another piece of student work, the teacher wrote that next time, the student needs to write in complete and clear sentences. Students also receive feedback from their peers. Evidence of this practice was seen in notebooks and student work products presented. Students shared that they frequently share each other’s work and provide each other feedback based on rubrics, checklists, and other tools.

- Across classrooms, teachers ask questions, circulate, and confer with students to check for understanding. In a third-grade classroom, students were tasked with making equal groups using counters and then writing the multiplication fact. The teacher pulled several students to clarify because they did not understand what was meant by equal groups and the difference to arrays. She used a mini-whiteboard to explain and then students joined the rest of the class. In a grade-three classroom, students were tasked with analyzing their progress on a reading digital adaptive program. Students received their latest data by Lexile levels. The teacher paused the class when students had a hard time finding their beginning score versus their latest score and explained where to find it and the importance of comparing the two numbers. In a social studies grade-three class while the teacher-facilitated a digital conference with a class in a different country, the teacher asked students to think about the questions they were asking the students on the other side to figure out what country they are from. Thereafter, students asked questions using academic vocabulary such as western or eastern hemisphere, above the equator, north, and south, to come up with the correct country. Frequent checks for understanding such as these were observed across classrooms, resulting in clarification of students’ misconceptions and targeted reteaching.
Findings

School leaders provide staff with embedded professional development and consistently communicate high expectations including those connected to college and career. Partnership with families provides ongoing feedback to help students become college and career ready.

Impact

Through PL and workshops for parents, there is a culture of mutual accountability among members of the school community. Partnerships with families support progress towards goals and expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the staff about schoolwide instructional practices, social-emotional learning, and the Danielson Framework for Teaching. In addition, inherent in the school are core values that reflect high expectations toward achieving college and career readiness. Teachers consistently reinforce some of the core values such as service, achievement, responsibility, and love of learning in their curricula, their behavior, and their relationships with students. Each of the school values is taught, modeled, and reinforced. For example, students shared that they participate in class by having different roles to conduct reciprocal teaching such as being in charge of summarizing and clarifying to help each other comprehend text. There are clear expectations about the use of complex text in all classrooms with all students. Teachers are also expected to conduct regular check-ins with students to check for understanding, get in touch with parents, and share information via the school’s own website. Teachers agreed with a teacher that shared that they are all role models, they value being respectful with each other, and hold each other accountable for the work in their teams.

- In the school PL plan aligned with the school goals, teachers are provided with training aligned to different components of the Danielson Framework for Teaching focused on assessments, preparation, and planning. For instance, teachers shared that they learn from and have applied strategies shared at PL sessions dedicated to using digital assessments and planning lessons that incorporate ALS. There is also frequent communication with the staff about student performance data after administering digital assessments and beginning of the year data from the New York State Assessments. Teachers shared that they plan their units collaboratively and use the data frequently to form flexible groups. Therefore, teachers have mutual accountability as they rely on each other to collaborate on creating units of study that are necessary to achieve better results for students, are engaging, and promote college and career readiness.

- Parents shared that the school helps them understand learning expectations, high stake assessments, and requirements for achieving proficiency and moving to the next grade level through the school’s website, telephone calls, parent workshops, weekly parent engagement open houses. Parents have access to their children’s grades online through a web-based program and are provided with periodic progress reports and phone calls when there is something positive to share or something of concern about student progress. There is continuous communication through an online program that updates parents about grades, missed homework, and tips from teachers on how to help their children, such as using post-it’s when they read to improve reading comprehension. Parent workshops have been instrumental in helping parents understand subject areas, content, and skills. One successful workshop was a math workshop in which parents were provided with supplies and were explicitly taught how to help their children with homework. All parents interviewed feel confident that their children are being challenged and provided with opportunities via assignments that prepare them for life and events such as attending college trips to prepare students for college and career.
Additional Finding

Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations that promote the achievement of school goals and implementation of the State standards and ALS. Distributed leadership structures are in place.

Impact

Teachers’ collaborations strengthen their instructional capacity. Additionally, teacher voice is included in unit design, curricular resources selection, and PL facilitation.

Supporting Evidence

- The vast majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry-based professional collaborations focused on improving school goals and the instructional capacity of teachers. A grade-five teacher team was focused on analyzing data from the latest literary work based on Number the Stars by Lowry. Teachers shared that they have revised their unit plans to incorporate the ALS such as academic vocabulary, opportunities for student discussions, and reciprocal teaching. Classroom visits illustrated evidence of the use of reciprocal teaching strategies and all classrooms have word walls with academic vocabulary. Throughout classrooms, students used academic vocabulary in their discussions. During the teacher team meeting, an integrated co-teaching (ICT) teacher shared a graphic organizer with her colleagues for the lowest-performing students in the class. Teachers also identified that students struggled with identifying supporting details and using textual evidence. The notes from the observed teacher team meeting reflect action planning for individuals and groups of students depending on their needs. The teachers plan on meeting next time to discuss math data from the problem of the day, quick checks, and exit slips.

- A review of notes from other teacher team meetings for math and ELA show that teachers meet to discuss weekly plans, unit plans, unit reflections and planning for different groups of students. These notes also reflect the time spent on planning based on curricular pacing guides and using supplemental programs. Teachers also discuss data from schoolwide assessments and next steps such as adding peer conferencing and multiple entry points to their lessons. During a grade-five inquiry meeting that focused on math, teachers analyzed baseline student work and identified strengths and gaps. Together with the math coach, teachers decided to implement daily word problems requiring students to explain their thinking orally and in writing. They also identified students in need of remediation and additional support. For example, to increase multiplication fact fluency, teachers plan on using the math curriculum resources and strategies as well as the circle the numbers, underline the question, box the keywords, eliminate unnecessary information, solve and show your work (CUBES) strategy. Evidence of the use of this strategy was shown in posters in grade-five classrooms and in student work. Teachers shared that working with other teachers and having common planning time has helped them build coherence of teaching the Standards and strengthened their capacity as teachers, especially in teaching phonics and ALS.

- Teachers shared that there are many ways to have a voice in decision making in the school. Mostly, they feel that through having autonomy to adjust units and lesson plans during planning time, they have impacted key decisions that have been made in the school. For example, teachers identified that there was a need for a specialized phonics program to help struggling students in the lower grades. As a result, teachers were sent to training and have implemented the program in the school with fidelity. Teachers track the progress of students using the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) in the lower grades. Teachers stated that they feel empowered to voice any needs and that these needs are met expeditiously.