

Quality Review Report

2016-2017

Juan Morel Campos Secondary School

Secondary School 14K071

**215 Heyward St.
Brooklyn
NY 11206**

Principal: Esther Shali Ogli

**Dates of Review:
May 16, 2017 - May 17, 2017**

Lead Reviewer: Heidi Pierovich

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

Juan Morel Campos Secondary School serves students in grade 6 through grade 12. 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		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	Area	Rating
1.1 Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards	Additional Finding	Developing
1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the instructional shifts and Danielson Framework for Teaching, aligned to the curricula, engaging, and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products	Additional Finding	Developing
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	Area of Focus	Developing

School Quality Ratings continued

School Culture		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	Area	Rating
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults	Additional Finding	Proficient
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations	Additional Finding	Proficient
Systems for Improvement		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	Area	Rating
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	Additional Finding	Proficient
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	Additional Finding	Proficient
4.1 Observe teachers using the Danielson Framework for Teaching along with the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection	Additional Finding	Proficient
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning	Area of Celebration	Proficient
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 the CCLS	Additional Finding	Proficient

Area of Celebration

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

The majority of teachers are engaged in organized inquiry-based professional collaborations using either the Atlas protocol or Writing Is Thinking through Strategic Inquiry (WITsi). Distributed leadership structures are in place.

Impact

Professional collaborations promote the achievement of school goals, the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards, and strengthen the instructional capacity of the teachers, who have a voice in key decisions such as professional learning that affects student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers are engaged in grade and subject teams that meet weekly. Teachers have adopted new protocols for looking at student work. Staff uses two agreed-upon protocols, Atlas protocol, and Writing Is Thinking through Strategic Inquiry (WITsi). Regardless of protocol implemented, staff maintains a rolling agenda and minutes, which shows the arc of the work. Although, the high school level teams adopted WITsi last year, the middle school teams began in stages this year. Implementation of Writing Is Thinking (WIT) instructional strategies began in January 2017 and then staff added Strategic Inquiry to complete the protocol cycle of WITsi in March 2017, having adopted the protocols to implement them consistently. A staff member stated that during inquiry, grade-team meetings, “We concentrate on writing across content areas using WIT strategies, to see how well students use those strategies.”
- Staff meets in grade teams to follow the continuous inquiry process using WITsi to target writing skills. The department teams concentrate upon the implementation of current and newly adopted curricula, to meet the expectations of using “teaching practices that meet the needs of all students.” Teachers use a WITsi protocol of looking at student work, gathering data, and noting it on a particular chart, called a tennis chart, on chart paper so all can see the results as they are tallied. The results led teachers to determine next steps to “focus on parallel revision and combining, revisit expanding sentences, and English Language Arts and all others too, will work on conjunctions.” Teachers agree, “The quality of writing [has improved] and [students] couldn’t even expand at the beginning. Now they are expanding the kernel into the paragraph and more are able to write essays.” Staff agrees that their collegiality has helped them grow in their pedagogy. A first-year teacher determined a misperception about scaffolding. “Now I know what scaffolding looks like and I am putting the scaffold in my lessons, when at first I ‘dumbed it down’ which is wrong....” New teachers are not the only ones who have acknowledged growth in their teaching skills. A fourth-year teacher stated she used a method to help her students understand how to solve quadratics that she learned from a colleague and added, “I learn a lot from her and it helps me with my teaching.” Also, several staff members have recently won awards, noting their growth of pedagogy.
- Teachers are empowered to make decisions through distributed leadership positions in several ways. Within meetings, team members hold roles, such as note taker, timekeeper, and facilitator/teacher leader, on teams such as the Academic Policy Team. Grade and department team leaders meet with administration to discuss progress and determine next steps. The Instructional Cabinet is composed of grade and department teacher leaders and administration who create and deliver professional development (PD). Teacher leaders receive coaching in WITsi and turnkey to their teams. One teacher leader stated, “We are the liaisons who are the bridge to connect the teachers and administration.” The communication between teachers, teacher leaders, and administration flows in both directions. The Instructional Cabinet members also work as mentors and coaches with teachers on improvement plans and new teachers. There is a sense of trust and collegiality, where “We are willing to say I’m struggling and accept help. We are not isolated; we are a collaborative unit.”

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

The use of common assessments, rubrics, and a revised schoolwide grading policy to measure student progress toward instructional and individual goals, is not yet consistent through the school. Across classrooms, teachers' assessment practices do not evenly reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact

Teachers do not consistently use results to adjust curricula and instruction, provide actionable feedback about student achievement, or make effective in-the-moment adjustments to meet students' learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Administration expects teachers to “give students actionable, timely, feedback with specific next steps.” To this end, the Academic Policy Team has revised a specific schoolwide grading policy stating that “meaningful feedback must be provided to the student.” Staff and administration agree that using WITsi has been helpful with giving students specific feedback. Yet, feedback on student work products varies from no grade, a check mark, percentage, letter, or rubric grade, and often a congratulatory statement such as “Good work!” In students' folders, there was little to no evidence of actionable feedback, only a grade or check mark. Some student work had rubric-based feedback, with a glow and next steps, “Good job at going beyond suggestions given to improve your essay. Your effort was noticed! Next time make sure that you are explaining your pieces of text evidence clearly.” However, other work included a score and only a glow, while others had glow and reminders for next steps, “More TE [text evidence] and analysis.” When asked, the student was not able to explain how or where to add analysis or text evidence.
- Students explained that they use rubrics when giving feedback to peers. One student explained, “We read the essay or PowerPoint and use the rubric to check the work. If something is missing or there are mistakes, tell them next time to fix or what they did well.” In an art class, students provided peers with feedback and next steps; yet, students agreed that they use rubrics to help them to achieve a higher grade, but that they do not peer edit often. In addition, checking for understanding is unevenly implemented. In one class, checking for understanding mirrored administration's expectations. Co-teachers moved from group to group, listening, posing probing questions, and adjusting instruction by providing scaffolds to support student learning while gathering data for re-teaching. Yet, in some classes, checking for understanding during the lesson was uneven and often had no impact on students' understanding, focusing only on directions. Some teachers check with students and note data. One teacher grouped students to clarify, yet, the teacher repeated previous directions without re-teaching it differently, providing scaffolds, or assessing to know that students understood. As a result, several students did not solve problems, saying they did not know how.
- Although the staff has several data tools to use including *iReady*, WITsi appears to be the one that is most used to address student progress and to determine next steps in lessons. However, it is not evident that staff, individually or in teams, uses these other tools to track student progress toward goals or use it to determine next steps in lessons. Several science and English Language Arts (ELA) item analyses show that teachers breakdown the data from baseline, midterm, and cumulative exam to determine the number correct for different unit topics; however, no evidence was provided to demonstrate how this was used to inform instruction and curricula. Staff has *iReady* for ELA and math with data comparing September through December to January through February by grade and class. Some evidence shows that students improved, plateaued, or decreased, but this is not analyzed by demographics to show data for English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities or how this data was used to inform instruction and curricula or to track student growth toward goals.

Additional Finding

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Across grades and subjects, curricula and academic tasks inconsistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills or reflect planning to provide access for all students.

Impact

The curricula and academic tasks across classrooms are in the beginning stages of being planned, so that they incorporate access for all students, including the school's large population of English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities.

Supporting Evidence

- The school's population has 25 percent ELLs, with 33 percent who also have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), and 34 percent of students are students with disabilities. With this in mind, administration and staff determined a need for "multiple entry points to access and navigate content, differentiated scaffolds to engage in meaningful tasks, differentiated products to demonstrate critical thinking and learning, and small heterogeneous groups to empower student voice." Additionally staff is focused upon engaging students in learning, using assessment in instruction, and designing coherent instruction. Unit plans demonstrate an outline containing components such as the essential and supporting questions, Common Core Learning Standards, skills, enduring understandings, texts, and formative assessments. Staff adopted new curricula this year, with the belief that they need to adapt the curricula to meet the needs of their students, "If we scaffold rigorous curriculum then all students will be able to succeed." Some lessons contain multiple scaffolds or opportunities for students to engage in rigorous habits and higher-order thinking skills. Some lessons include translated handouts. Yet, in many lessons, there are no plans for students who need more support or for those who are ready for more rigorous challenges.
- Administration stated, "If teachers are not using adopted curricula, they can use outside materials, but must demonstrate it is aligned to standards and level of rigor required by standards." Although many are using the new curricula programs, there is an uneven implementation of rigorous and higher-order thinking skills. One lesson included material that was not from the adopted programs and did not meet the rigor of the standard. Some lessons are specifically planned for differentiation of content, process, and product, while some are planned for differentiation with a list of generic possible methods. In some lessons, tasks include supporting questions that spiral upwards so that answers require higher-order thinking skills as measured by Webb's *Depth of Knowledge* (DOK). These social studies questions spiral upwards from level one to four. Level one is, "What are the Nation of Islam's specific criticisms of Christianity?" The level four questions ask, "What elements of their beliefs do you agree with? Can you connect any of their beliefs to other real-world situations?" Conversely, a math lesson has questions that remain at DOK levels one and two. "What is meant by surface area?" and "How can we measure the surface of a three-dimensional figure?" Yet, other lessons do not include questions or provide access via differentiation to cognitively engaging tasks.
- Although several teachers provided samples, including some reflecting the WITsi strategies, of using student work and data to inform instruction and curricula, there was an inconsistency among the samples provided. Planning and refinement to provide access for all students falls across a continuum, whereby some use data and student work to inform re-teaching and can demonstrate that all students, including ELLs and students with disabilities, have access to the task and are cognitively engaged. Yet, this level of data analysis used to inform curricula was not evidenced across grades and subjects. Other samples of curricular revisions have two versions of student work and no lesson plans showing how this student work informed re-teaching. Some do not show that any re-teaching has been planned. Thus, schoolwide, there was uneven evidence demonstrating the use of data to inform planning and refinement of tasks to provide access for all.

Additional Finding

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are becoming aligned to the curricula and beginning to reflect a set of beliefs that students learn best when provided with opportunities to engage with rigorous, cognitively challenging content and with aligned, differentiated tasks and products. Teaching strategies inconsistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula, student work products, and discussion.

Impact

As defined by the instructional shifts and the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, all students including ELLs and students with disabilities, are not yet sufficiently engaged in high levels of student thinking and participation, and therefore, not all students produce meaningful work products.

Supporting Evidence

- Staff believes that students learn best when they are provided with opportunities to engage with rigorous, cognitively challenging content, and with aligned, differentiated tasks and products. To support this, common practices are expected such as, “multiple entry points to access and navigate content, differentiated scaffolds to engage in meaningful tasks, differentiated products to demonstrate critical thinking and learning, and small heterogeneously groups to empower student voice.” However, these practices are just beginning to be implemented across classrooms.
- In some classes, the level of rigor of questions and tasks were evident and provided students with differentiated materials for multiple entry points, while in others it was uneven. In an Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) middle school social studies class, students worked on activities from whole groups to data-determined groups with differentiated graphic organizers, targeted-frontloaded vocabulary, and tiered readings that provided all students with level-appropriate work that engaged students in reading about the Mexican-American War. Similarly, in a living environment Teacher Assistant Scholars (TAS) class, students who are trained to facilitate groups of peers, lead their groups, and provide multiple scaffolds such as tiered worksheets, digital tablets for frontloading vocabulary, white-board slates to quickly draw key points, and switching between English and Spanish as needed. Yet, this level of differentiation was inconsistently implemented across classes and subjects. In a global history class, although students were provided handouts in Spanish or English, there were no scaffolds provided to support students in completing the work, and there was a variety of completion from one-sentence answers to paragraphs. In a math class, students were provided a three-dimensional paper cube to use in solving the surface area of a rectangle. There were no supports in Spanish or English, which resulted in many students unable to engage in the work.
- To empower student voice, many classes had students sitting in groups using sentence stems for student discussions. However, there were very few opportunities for student-to-student discussions. In an algebra ICT class, students were provided math-talk stems, and a few groups of students used those stems for their discussion. One student asked his peer, “Why do you think it will pass the vertical line test?” The other student explained his reasoning. Yet this level of discussion was not consistent across grades and subjects. In an algebra class, students worked in groups, but solved problems individually. Additionally, although they had math talk sentence stems, there was little to no student-to-student discussion since they worked alone. Although sitting in groups in a science class, students were not discussing the task of peer evaluation and most students were off task and idle.

Additional Finding

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

High expectations are consistently communicated to staff via the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, through training and ongoing communiqués. The school establishes a culture for learning, communicates expectations to students and families, and keeps them abreast of student progress toward college and career readiness, through venues such as student-led conferences and Teacher Assistant Scholars (TAS).

Impact

School leaders maintain a system of accountability toward expectations amongst staff and helps families understand student progress toward college and career readiness. Staff offers ongoing and detailed feedback, and guidance supports that prepare students for the next level.

Supporting Evidence

- A majority of students agreed that the school helps prepare them for life after graduation, for college and career through many opportunities, such as internships, College Now, and Advanced Placement (AP) classes. One opportunity is the Peer Enabled Restructure Classroom (PERC) program in which students called Teaching Assistant Scholars (TAS) are trained to collaborate with teachers to plan and implement lessons. The teacher opens the lesson and circulates, facilitating the implementation of the TAS in each group. TAS students explain, "It is a better way of making sure students are learning and it really helps. And lots of students learn from other students [with less] pressure to learn." During the school year, TAS also attend an intensive college readiness program, which includes research, reflection, and goal setting.
- The parents stated they receive report cards and progress reports, but the method that has the most impact on knowing how well their child is doing academically is through student-led conferences. In its second year, student-led conferences require students to reflect on their work. Teachers facilitate students as they present their work to their parents and what they have learned or still need to improve. One parent stated, "It is good for the kids too, because they have a voice to explain to the parents what they do and feel that the teacher is not saying anything." One goal of student-led conferences is to promote college-readiness skills. Beyond the weekly parent engagement contact via phone, email, or in-person meetings, staff also communicates with the home through an online grade book with parent and student portals. A parent stated, and others agreed, that her daughter checks the online program for assignments. Parents agreed that the school communicates consistently, for both positive and negative feedback. Additionally, parents agreed that they are aware of school happenings via the newsletter and calendar that provides them with information about dates and events, in English and Spanish. Students and parents agreed the college counselor and other support staff organize college trips, provide support for selecting and applying to colleges, and help completing financial aid applications. Additionally, there are also workshops and support for the high school application process with high school fairs and trips. Parent agreed that the counselors, social workers, parent coordinator, and other support staff, "are a tremendous help!"
- Administration provides staff with consistent messages regarding high expectations via weekly meetings, non-negotiables, staff handbook, and observational feedback. Administration emphasizes the instructional focus and Danielson *Framework for Teaching* feedback to staff around areas communicated, and provides PD for student-centered instruction, providing feedback and scaffolds, learning objectives, and rigorous tasks. During weekly staff meetings, administration shares the trends and patterns of these expectations observed during classroom visits, and focus areas. To meet expectations, administration uses classroom observations as a system of accountability by providing verbal feedback to support teachers in their implementation of new curricula and strategies, such as WITsi. The Instructional Cabinet determines areas requiring support through PD to support achievement of schoolwide expectations.

Additional Finding

Quality Indicator:	4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders support the development of teachers with effective feedback that captures strengths, challenges, and next steps from frequent cycles of classroom observation and analysis of student work and data, using the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*.

Impact

Professional learning and observation cycles articulate clear expectations for teachers and support the elevation of schoolwide instructional practices and strategies that promote professional growth and reflection.

Supporting Evidence

- Administration supports the development of teachers as aligned to their needs and the school-level goals. There are multiple cycles of observations in two forms, coaching and formal feedback. After the observation, teachers bring student work and data, representing high, medium, and low performance, from the observed class visit, and discuss the quality, quantity, and alignment to the intended outcome. Administration refers to student work and data in both verbal and written feedback to the teacher. Together, staff and administration reflect and discuss the student work and data, as well as the next steps. The principal stated, “When teachers try something new I would not include the feedback in *Advance* unless it was positive,” and added, “Then I send an email of positive trends and refer to someone who does it well.” This method promotes experimenting with new strategies and curricula.
- The instructional focus is that when students think about their writing, they write better and use WIT and restate and answer text evidence explanation (RATE) strategies. Additionally, administration and staff focus upon three areas of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, designing coherent instruction, engaging students in learning, and using assessment in instruction. Feedback to teachers is actionable and aligned to the instructional and Danielson focus, and accurately captures strengths and challenges. For example, in one observation next steps included, “Work with [teacher leader] to develop lesson plans that have adequate time allowances for activities and contain both rigorous learning tasks and differentiation for native speakers and students with disabilities.” Similarly, another observation had next steps about “making the writing process plainly visible...and explicit through a process checklist.” Through observations, staff receives actionable feedback with clear expectations that are followed with more informal visits by mentors and supervisors. In this way, the administration helps coach teachers towards their individual goals.
- In addition to a focus on WITsi and other instructional strategies supported during PD meetings, the other main topic is the use of intervisitations as the vehicle to support teacher growth in pedagogy. The intervisitations are done using a lesson study approach. Staff agreed that they provide opportunities for the exchange of ideas, low-inference observations, and development of effective lesson plans. For example, a math teacher explained that the math department adopted EngageNY this year and during a PD workshop in March, they created a daylong lesson review protocol. After planning a lesson, they implemented it in second period. Teachers from the math department observed and debriefed providing warm and cool feedback. Then the team adapted the lesson modifying for students’ needs and re-taught it in period five. Teachers stated that this process was helpful and one teacher stated, “I’m looking forward to doing it again.” Additionally, teachers stated that the protocol includes immediate next steps to implement in the teacher’s classroom. Teachers also attend learning walks, which teacher leaders and administration devise. The teacher leaders discussed how to implement the next round of learning walks, the focus, the types of questions, and groups to attend.