

Quality Review Report

2016-2017

P.S. 110 Florence Nightingale

Elementary 01M110

**285 Delancy St.
Manhattan
NY 10002**

Principal: Karen Feuer

**Dates of Review:
October 24, 2016 - October 25, 2016**

Lead Reviewer: AJ Hepworth

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. 110 Florence Nightingale 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		
<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	Area of Focus	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	Additional Finding	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	Developing

Area of Celebration

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

Structures are in place for all teachers to have leadership opportunities, including leading professional development sessions, and to be engaged in inquiry-based collaborations during common planning time.

Impact

Teacher instructional capacity and student achievement are strengthened through the promotion of school goals and the instructional priorities. Additionally, decisions that affect student learning across the school include teacher voice through their built in leadership capacities.

Supporting Evidence

- A review of various grade instructional team minutes makes evident all teachers are involved in structures that follow protocols with adopted norms intended to support improved pedagogy. Protocols include assigning job specific roles to participants and recording notes leading to defined next steps. An instructional discussion based on assessments used to measure students' knowledge of English Language Arts (ELA) and math Common Core Learning Standards included gap analysis, thus identifying specific learning needs of targeted groups of students. Teachers shared that their involvement on instructional inquiry teams is useful to assist specific students. Teachers also noted their involvement has resulted in the consistent application of school goals related to Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). For example, teachers implement recommendations for staff to use similar language and a consistent message with students throughout their classes.
- Teachers indicated the recently adopted meeting protocols offer increased structures to get "more done without getting sidetracked," as compared with prior years' instructional teams. Other teachers agreed and shared the norms "keep us on track." Overall most teachers agreed instructional teams are useful and their participation has been helpful and "the impact is more telling whether the child has a consistent struggle with something...or [if] it is a reflection of a single assessment." Teachers also noted there is much more to still improve in the quality of student work, but their inquiry based collaborations are a good "starting point and we are meeting goals."
- Two teachers previously rated as highly effective according to their Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) serve in the capacity as Peer Collaborative Teachers (PCTs) and work collaboratively with teachers to better serve the school community. Teachers communicated they felt working collaboratively with the PCTs has been helpful in providing professional development focused on the use of running records, effective instruction using rubrics, incorporating more approaches to delve into high-level tiered questioning, and rigorous instruction. A recent teacher-led professional development intended to increase program coherence was reported by many teachers to be beneficial because the additional supports communicated made teachers feel more "accountable to each other," and helped them understand students' needs better, particularly those in their own class.
- A grade four meeting agenda addressing a pre-and post-assessment gap analysis report focused on the team using information to norm their understanding and knowledge of informational expository essays. Next steps suggested that teachers focus on using text evidence, developing reasons, and evidence. Additional next steps included teachers using shared reading time to discuss how authors use reasons and evidence to support opinions thus improving their instructional capacity and understanding of instructional priorities.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Across classrooms, pedagogy and curricula are becoming aligned with the core beliefs about how students learn best, which is informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, and is reflected in the P.S. 110's mission statement. Teaching strategies across most classrooms currently inconsistently provide scaffolds and levels of questioning.

Impact

The lack of consistent scaffolds and high level questioning leads to uneven engagement in appropriately challenging tasks and in demonstration of higher order thinking skills in student work products especially for students with disabilities.

Supporting Evidence

- Across many classes, students were placed in small groups intended to promote higher-order thinking, collaboration, and conferring on tasks. Although some portions of the content required students to work skillfully, few students were observed appropriately delving into the task as indicated in the learning objective. For example, during an ELA lesson, students were instructed to match two words written independently on index cards with a partner and then create a sentence using that combined word (ex. "sun" and "flower"); however, after student pairs matched up, students were not heard developing sentences, thus limiting higher-order thinking. In another ELA class, students were tasked with identifying the characters from one page of a picture book. Students in groups created silly and irrelevant names, such as "Luli" and "Car Man," with no consideration for making connections to the content imagery. Teachers failed to model the intended instructional goal, and students were unable to generate work that demonstrated higher order thinking.
- Students in gifted and talented classes were often provided opportunities to be more cognitively engaged in challenging tasks, although with uneven results. For example, in a science lesson, students were tasked with observing living and nonliving things and checking off characteristics that they felt supported their understanding and traits of the object. Students had choice in what characteristics they identified for each observed item, yet many students selected characteristics based on their prior knowledge such as naming the object as a piece of Lego or acorn, and not based on observable traits. In the majority of other classes, students were not given instructional materials and resources suitable to support the instructional goals. Several students writing an essay on human rights were provided a sentence starter, although when asked, did not know how to use it to begin writing their essays. Other students in the same class circled words they did not know in a given reading, but they were not provided additional resources or direction to support their understanding of those words or to know what to do to meet the learning objective.
- Building leadership and most teachers communicated that their instructional priorities are focused on engaging students in learning, providing student choice, guiding instruction through an inquiry lens, and identifying clear explicit learning targets. Students in a gifted and talented math class were exposed to an alternative approach to solving an equation. All students appeared clearly able to explain their interpretation of a new use for applying a tape diagram to their equation through an inquiry lens. Additionally, students were also able to clearly articulate their reading goals in that class when prompted and how to show evidence of improvements towards their learning objective. However, in the vast majority of general education and Integrated Co-Teacher (ICT) classes, those stated priorities were not evident among students in either their conversations or work products.

Additional Finding

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Curricula and academic tasks reflect planning, although they inconsistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order thinking skills across grades and subjects.

Impact

A variety of learners, especially students with disabilities, have limited opportunities to meet Common Core Learning Standards and to develop rigorous habits of mind.

Supporting Evidence

- Lesson planning documents in science, ELA, and math reflect planning with the Common Core Learning Standards in mind and identify learning targets in terms of what students will be able to do as a result of the lesson. Other planned documents, however, merely primarily state the narrative teachers will use to engage their students during instruction, such as, “Each time you draw something, cross it out from the problem so you know what you’ve taken care of,” and “I keep saying the animal. I bet the animal has a name.” Often these planning documents do not provide identifiable learning targets, recognizable structure, pacing, and/or material supports for cognitive engagement. A reading lesson plan for grade four students, for example, further limits the implementation of coherent instruction by including only one anticipated student answer with no anticipation of alternative answers or discussions.
- Learning targets across most classes do not emphasize rigorous habits, thus offering limited structures for higher-order thinking in spite of school documents that state a belief that “academic rigor is foundational in every classroom.” Connections between rigorous academic tasks and the instructional shifts are beginning to develop through meetings during Instructional Lead Team (ILT) time and common planning time. Samples of student work and data are reviewed for cognitive engagement and alignment with expectations for grades with a focus on literacy and independent reading. Curriculum unit plans in kindergarten and grade five show some revisions based on teachers’ noticing where students needed to have prior knowledge, although this practice was not noticed across all grades and content areas.
- Lesson pacing, questioning techniques, and unit planning for several math units focused on aligning similar expectations for both gifted and talented classes and ICT classes. Some teachers use a checklist to unpack units of instruction and to identify gaps in reports that measure comprehension. However, similar planning and refinement of curricula across content areas does not use similar structures. As a result, not all teachers have the opportunity to adjust curricula to provide access to, and to cognitively engage, the majority of their students.
- Many tools to support instruction are developed or in the process of being developed by teachers individually, including rubrics, checklists, and student evaluation forms; however, a shared understanding and coherence in and across grades does not exist with the use of these tools so there are missed opportunities for meeting the needs of various student sub-groups.

Additional Finding

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

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

Impact

Feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement is limited and teachers inconsistently make effective adjustments to meet students' learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Common assessments in math and ELA are administered to students before, during, and after units. Several math conferring notes and exit ticket tracking forms from modules highlight students grouped according to the results of the benchmark assessments as either a level one, two, or three; corresponding to, "in need of support," "getting there," or "making sense." Additionally, next steps are listed for some students; however, the feedback is generalized and does not provide actionable strategies and supports for the majority of students. Teachers also provided general statements regarding how they confer with their students to make goals and hold them accountable for them. Some of the teachers further stated that they felt it was challenging to provide opportunities for students to speak to their goals, and acknowledged the need for students to do so to define and meet their individual learning needs.
- Few samples of student's feedback with clearly stated next steps were seen around the classroom, in student work samples, or posted around the building on bulletin boards, thus limiting students' understanding of how their work aligned with the instructional goal of the assignment.
- Opportunities for students to self-assess exist within some classes, according to a few lesson planning documents and examples provided by building leadership, although it was not observed in use in any classes nor communicated by the majority of students. When asked, one grade two student did state he has used checklists and self-assessment forms, although not in his current class to date. Additionally, students in a group meeting stated they sometimes use rubrics, although most students in the primary grades could not articulate what a rubric is, or when shown one, they could not recall using one. However, one grade four student did share he uses them with his writing tasks to make sure he completed all the required procedural steps.
- Ongoing checks for understanding were observed throughout most classes, although the information collected often was not in alignment with the instructional goals and/or did not support opportunities for the teacher to use that information to make effective instructional adjustments. Many teachers asked their students throughout instruction to show thumbs up, side-ways, or down to assess their current understanding; however, when asked, many students did not participate in sharing their understanding by modeling with their thumb, or when all students did show, the teacher moved on in the lesson despite many students showing they did not have an understanding. For example, in a first grade class only half the students raised their thumb, so the teacher called on a boy to clarify the expectation. The student restated the expectation inaudibly, and others still did not demonstrate understanding, which was confirmed when the students moved on to complete the task and stated in groups they did not know what to do. In a grade three class, the teacher walked around to check for levels of understanding and told two students who appeared unable to answer the question to do a close reading and then pointed to the text and said "just write that down."

Additional Finding

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff. School leaders and staff also consistently communicate expectations that are connected to college and career readiness and offer ongoing feedback to families.

Impact

Communication of expectations of teachers and students informs instruction and helps families understand student progress.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal creates weekly bulletins which highlight expectations and happenings that are shared with staff and frequently references them during structured meetings, including post observation conferences, professional development sessions, and faculty meetings. A focus of the communicated expectations is the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Teachers noted they attend professional development sessions and are expected to apply their learning and delve into the presented practices in their instruction. Some teachers referred to recently communicated expectations regarding collecting running records to move instruction and to develop more effective questions.
- A belief that social emotional learning directly correlates with academic growth is recognized by the majority of teachers and building leadership. As such, the creation of an environment with various structures and supports in place to develop a students' social-emotional literacy is considered a high priority and an expectation across all content areas and grades during instruction and in implementation of procedures throughout the building. All classes, stairwells, and hallways contain posted expectations related to respect, responsibility, safety, and scholarship.
- Professional development for all probationary and veteran teachers includes an emphasis on structures designed to improve the instructional core. The review of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* rubric and student work samples is a major component of professional development sessions. Teachers discuss the application of rubrics and expectations in their teaching with colleagues and mentors. One of the school wide goals is to increase the percentage of effective and highly effective teachers because, "it is the single most important factor in increasing student achievement."
- Families shared they felt the school was doing a good job in communicating their children's progress towards meeting standards and the level of rigor expected in their work. Families also shared their children have folders they bring home and that families receive monthly newsletters, emails, and/or texts. Many parents stated they are required to sign assessments and are aware of their children's reading Lexiles. A concern expressed by several parents, however, was the level of transparency with administrative structures and with the selection of students placed in the gifted and talented program. They were concerned that the high expectations offered to students in that program are placing some of their children not in the program at a disadvantage considering they feel that all their "kids are amazing and...could thrive in [those] classes."

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 and next steps from cycles of observation and student work analysis. School leaders have an effective system to use observation data to design and facilitate professional development and to make informed decisions connected to all staff members.

Impact

The cycles of observation and feedback encourage improved instructional practice.

Supporting Evidence

- Building leadership regularly visits classrooms both through formal and informal observations as a part of the cycle of observations. Written evaluation forms are provided to teachers in accordance with contractual obligations, and additional evaluator notes that are based on evidence collected and that reference the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* are often provided. Specific references to instructional priorities from professional development sessions are referenced during and after observations and are included in the teacher provided evaluation form. Examples include comments that teacher's appropriately use assessment in instruction strategies and engage students in instruction such as, aligning the instructional tasks with the instructional outcome with narrative texts, and making efforts at checks for understanding with strategies like thumbs-up and thumbs-down. Recommendations and next steps written on APPR evaluator forms often include supportive evidence collected for each component and provide a rationale for scores.
- Ten minute pop-ins are conducted throughout the year which include verbal feedback in the form of guidance focused around school goals and the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. School leaders stated they structured the pop-in feedback to reflect discussions based on teachers self-evaluations rather than just suggesting practices. One teacher who commented on not having previously understood why her evaluation was not rated as highly effective, was able to pinpoint areas of strength and need based on the written feedback tied to the evaluative rubric and instructional goals. Collaborations between PCTs and teachers with self-evaluation to guide and plan for professional development workshops and differentiated goal setting has reinforced teacher's commitment to their professional growth according to many teachers. A science teacher and guidance counselor noted they have been encouraged and supported with their content specific professional development opportunities.
- The development and strengthening of teacher teams is supported by data analysis of teacher input based on reflection and teacher survey results. Purposeful questions asked include: "Has using protocols to look at student work been successful in your grade team and why? How could the process be improved? Based on the data, what are the next instructional steps?"