

# Quality Review Report

## 2017-2018

**P.S. 127 Aerospace Science Magnet School**

**K-8 30Q127**

**98-01 25 Avenue  
Queens  
NY 11369**

**Principal: Evita Sanabria**

**Dates of Review:  
November 1, 2017 - November 2, 2017**

**Lead Reviewer: Lenneen Gibson**

# 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. 127 Aerospace Science Magnet School serves students in grade PK through grade 8. 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	<b>Additional Finding</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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	<b>Additional Finding</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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	<b>Additional Finding</b>	<b>Proficient</b>

## School Quality Ratings continued

<b>School Culture</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Rating</b>
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults	<b>Additional Finding</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations	<b>Area of Celebration</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
<b>Systems for Improvement</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Rating</b>
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	<b>Additional Finding</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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	<b>Additional Finding</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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	<b>Additional Finding</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning	<b>Area of Focus</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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	<b>Additional Finding</b>	<b>Proficient</b>

## Area of Celebration

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>3.4 High Expectations</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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### Findings

School leaders convey high expectations for instruction to staff through professional development workshops and through written communication, such as the “Instructional Essentials,” that reflects the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. School leaders communicate high expectations to families that are connected to college and career readiness.

### Impact

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the school community, providing training and a system of accountability to ensure those expectations are met. School leaders and staff offer ongoing feedback to help families understand student progress toward those expectations

### Supporting Evidence

- School leaders create clear expectations regarding instruction, which are evidenced through written structures such as the “Instructional Essentials” portion of the staff handbook, and provide professional development for all staff in meeting these expectations. Expectations for the classroom environment, such as libraries, assessment portfolios, strategy charts, bulletin boards, flow of the day, and word walls, are delineated in the handbook. Likewise, professional development workshops match expectations for instruction, focusing on topics such as “Using Baseline Assessments to Adjust Instructional Practices and Strategically Form Groups,” “Teaching Advanced Literacy Skills,” “Differentiated Instruction,” and “Identifying High Leverage Standards on Item Skills Analysis.” Teachers are held accountable for these expectations through the observation process, as the feedback to teachers directly aligns to the supports provided through professional development offerings.
- Staff members provide written communication to families through the parent handbook that articulates expectations for safety, attendance, classroom visits, and parent engagement activities. The school also has a Facebook page that is constantly updated. In addition, parents have access to a parent calendar that denotes school events such as a middle school open house, workshops like “Helping your ELL Child Learn English” and “How to Help your Child get into a Quality High School,” and parent-teacher conferences. The school orchestrates grade specific events such as a “Family Literacy Night” that center on a theme from the literacy curriculum. A series of mathematic workshops are provided to expose parents to games and activities related to number sense. Parents attested to the workshop offerings and also mentioned weekly workshops on topics such as nutrition, how to save money for college, and unpacking the State math exams.
- Parents are made aware of their children’s academic achievement through progress reports, report cards, student-led conferences, portals such as ClassDojo, weekly parent engagement meetings, phone calls from teachers, and one-on-one meetings with teachers. The principal meets with parents monthly by hosting “Breakfast with the Principal.” This meeting keeps parents apprised of additional programs to help students, such as supporting student learning at home and providing social-emotional learning. Through these modes of communication, the school helps families understand student progress toward these expectations. As a result of these practices, there has been a decrease in the number of students attending summer school in grades three through five and in grade seven.

## Area of Focus

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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### Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in vertical or grade band professional collaborations and consistently analyze assessment data and student work. However, the data were not always systematically analyzed through the use of a protocol to unpack student data.

### Impact

Teacher teams are engaging in inquiry-based work that promotes the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards. However, this work does not result in shared improvement in teacher practice, schoolwide instruction, and the mastery of goals for groups of students.

### Supporting Evidence

- A math vertical team was observed engaging in inquiry work. The teacher looked at the State mathematics item skills analysis data and noted trends and patterns across grades three through eight. Integral skills at each grade level were identified from kindergarten to grade eight. For example, when students graduate from kindergarten, they will know counting to ten and identifying zero to ten. Students who graduate from grade three will be able to add and subtract with regrouping up to three digits. Teachers discussed instructional strategies to implement and assess these skills in class, such as mental math Fridays, quickie math, and creating an assessment protocol at every grade level, using common planning time to devise the protocol. Although the team reviewed the item skills analysis data and identified the skills of importance to be reinforced at each grade level, the impact of these practices on improving teacher practice and student achievement was not yet evident, as this was a new initiative. Moreover, the use of a protocol by the observed team to unpack the assessment data was not evident.
- A review of teacher team meeting notes revealed a kindergarten through grade two instructional team that looked at samples of student writing. The minutes indicated that this teacher team used a prescribed protocol to examine the student work and determine what trends and patterns were observed in the student work. Teachers then devised next steps, such as adjusting the lesson to add sequence words, using sentence starters and/or pictures, and modeling expectations for students. Similarly, the same team looked at Fountas and Pinnell data for their classes and used this data to form their guided reading groups and to explicitly teach specific sight words. As a result of these practices, the students advanced one reading level. Teachers stated that because of teacher team work, teachers have been able to share best practices. In addition, they noted that the data that is being reviewed shows that the issues that students are having are not isolated but can be seen across grades. Although teachers are consistently analyzing student work and data, this has yet to lead to shared improvements in teacher practice and mastery of student goals for groups of students.
- A kindergarten through second grade instructional team worked collaboratively on the school's Comprehensive Education Plan goal that supports teachers customizing curriculum during common planning. Through a series of meetings, teachers analyzed lesson plans and modified lessons to include strategies for lesson customization, such as modeling, including exemplars, and using mentor texts. As a result of this teacher team work, a lesson customization guide was created. Though many teachers are engaged in these practices, they have yet to result in schoolwide instructional coherence and increased student achievement for all learners in the vast majority of the teacher professional collaborations.

## Additional Finding

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>1.1 Curriculum</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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### Findings

Curricula and academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits for diverse learners. During teacher team meetings, curricula and academic tasks are refined and modified utilizing student work.

### Impact

Curricula and academic tasks incorporate higher-order thinking skills and are modified with leveled texts, scaffolds, and differentiation strategies so that all students are cognitively engaged.

### Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use student work and data to plan and refine academic tasks to ensure that students are cognitively engaged. A sample English Language Arts (ELA) task required students to write an opinion piece supporting their points of view with reasons based on the viewing of the video “Taking a Knee.” Modifications to the task included leveled texts (articles) based on students’ Lexile levels, graphic organizers, and a student-modified two-point State short response rubric. Teachers in team meetings adjusted lesson plans based on the pre-assessment writing samples of students with disabilities. These lesson adjustments included the restate, answer, cite, explain and sum it up (RACES) strategy, a scaffolded, text-dependent questioning model that uses color-coding to demonstrate the different elements of the strategy.
- Curricula and academic tasks are accessible for a variety of learners and challenge students to think critically. A tiered ELA, Modern Language Association (MLA)-cited task required students to produce a research project on brain disorders. Student choice was embedded in the project, for student were able to choose how they wanted to present their project (essay, video, PowerPoint). This project was modified after teachers in teams analyzed student work. Guided, text-dependent questions about brain disorders were embedded in the task, and text-based evidence sentence starters and a transition word scaffold were also offered. A math task infused real world applicability that required students to evaluate expressions with grouping symbols to determine the cost of a family’s cell phone plan. A social studies task required students to write their interpretations of the line in the national anthem that stated, “land of the free and the home of the brave.”
- Lesson plans included scaffolds and differentiated strategies. In an ELA lesson plan, student groups were differentiated based on the supports provided and the task. One group of students received a graphic organizer and a list of vocabulary words and had to use two quotes in their responses, whereas another group was tasked with writing a paragraph by answering a specific prompt, did not have any scaffolds, and had to include three quotes. A mathematics lesson plan included vocabulary word cards for students with disabilities and for English Language Learners (ELLs), with an emphasis placed on specific academic vocabulary words. Groups were also differentiated through the process, such as providing a reteach to students in need and offering on-grade tasks and enrichment activities, as needed.

## Additional Finding

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>1.2 Pedagogy</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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### Findings

Teaching practices reflect the school's mantra that students learn best through differentiated lessons and the use of supports. Multiple entry points into lessons are demonstrated through instruction, tasks, and resources in the students' native languages.

### Impact

Teaching practices that reflect the school's belief consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula so that all learners are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school's instructional focus about how students learn best is articulated through lessons that are differentiated and provide students with high quality supports. In an English as New Language (ENL) class, the learning target for the lesson was, "I can explain how Percy is following *The Hero's Journey* by aligning evidence from *The Lightning Thief* and *The Hero's Journey*." The lesson was differentiated for student groups through the teacher's questioning. Examples of questions posed to the different student groups were, "What can you infer about Percy Jackson?" and "What is an example of a mentor?" Students who struggled with the vocabulary had supports such as envelopes with vocabulary words to assist them when selecting evidence from the text. In a mathematics class with diverse learners, the essential question for the lesson was, "How can you read and interpret (information) in a bar graph?" Students were tasked with sorting their M&Ms on their scaffolds while using guided questions to support the sorting. Students used another scaffold to create their bar graphs. The lesson also demonstrated differentiation by being conducted in the students' native language when needed, through scaffolds from the teacher to remind some students via post-it notes about how to generate a tally, and through one-to-one support from teachers such as re-teaching and the modeling the process under the document camera. Multiple entry points into the curriculum were evidenced through the use of scaffolds for support and differentiating questions, so that all learners were engaged in appropriately challenging tasks.
- In a mathematics class with diverse learners, instruction was fully immersed in Spanish. The objective of the lesson required students to interpret the remainder using four methods. In this station activity, students were tasked with choosing and writing about one of the four strategies used in interpreting the remainder. Student groups were differentiated by their prior knowledge of division by two digits. Additional differentiation of the lesson was evidenced by the focus for specific groups, such as one on vocabulary and another on enrichment. Students at each station had a scaffold of a model division problem that indicated key vocabulary words as well as the process for completing long division. However, in a social studies class with diverse learners, students learned about Native Americans through studying artifacts. Students conducted a gallery walk and examined Native American artifacts to determine the identity of each artifact based on the description they were provided. While students did take a virtual gallery walk through the Metropolitan Museum of Art, there was no differentiation of instruction to meet the needs of all learners in the class. Consequently, the practice of strategically providing multiple entry points has yet to be observed across the vast majority of classrooms.
- In an English Language Arts (ELA) class with diverse learners, students were practicing writing a narrative using temporal words to signal event order. Student groups were working on differentiated tasks at their tables. One group of students worked on using transition words while drafting their sequence of events. Another group used a graphic organizer that supported them in sequencing what happens first, next, and last in their narrative. Yet another group drafted their narrative through sketching.



## Additional Finding

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>2.2 Assessment</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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### Findings

Teachers use and modify State rubrics and use baseline and mid-year assessments to determine student progress.

### Impact

Teachers provide actionable feedback to students regarding their performance. Results of common assessments are used to adjust instruction and curricula.

### Supporting Evidence

- Teachers in teams analyze the results of common assessments such as beginning, middle, and end of the year and State assessments as well as Fountas and Pinnell (F&P) data to make adjustments to curricula and instruction. A review of documentation revealed teachers' analysis of kindergarten F&P assessment data indicated that the students were reading below their grade level. The teachers noted trends and patterns and decided to work on supporting students with skills such as interpreting details in pictures, talking about the ideas in texts, and using visual information such as the first letter of a word to read known and new words. As result of these instructional adjustments, all students were reading at the appropriate reading level of AA. Similarly, second grade teachers analyzed students' F&P results and noted trends such as students not using the following skills: picture details to figure out an unknown word, inferencing, identifying high frequency words, and determining the importance of information in the text. Next steps denoted for teachers included having students make connections of text to text, text to self, and text to world, utilizing interactive word walls, and teaching word families. As a result of these practices, most of the second-grade classes showed a reduction of students reading below their F&P grade levels, with some students reading above grade level.
- Second grade teachers analyzed baseline and mid-year mathematics assessment data and incorporated strategies such as using counters in instruction, having students act out a process, using Unix cubes, and having students draw models to represent their thinking. Mid-year results showed a reduction in students scoring below their grade level. Similarly, kindergarten teachers noted students were struggling with the standards that addressed operations and algebraic thinking and numbers and operations in base ten. Teachers adjusted instruction by targeting specific skills associated with each standard. Mid-year assessment data revealed a reduction in the number of students scoring below grade level and some students also performed above grade level. As a result of these practices, teachers have discerned the skills sets needed to use assessment results to adjust curricula and instruction to meet student needs, and students are steadily performing at grade level and beyond.
- Teachers modify rubrics, such as the third and fifth grade informative and explanatory writing rubrics, to include child-friendly language. Similarly, a two point short response rubric was modified with student annotations to include deconstructed language. During the student meeting, all students attested that the feedback they receive tells them what they need to do on future assignments. Feedback is in the form of glows and grows or written on a post-it note. An ELA writing sample commended (glow) a student for providing strong evidence related to her claim. The recommendation (grow) cited that the student needed to include a clear thesis statement. A sample of a student's math work commended the student for revising her work and recommended that she annotate the math problem to support her in answering the problem.



## Additional Finding

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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### Findings

Feedback to teachers accurately captures commendations and next steps using the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. School leaders analyze *Advance* observation data to design professional development.

### Impact

Feedback to teachers articulates clear expectations to elevate schoolwide instructional practices and support teacher development.

### Supporting Evidence

- Teachers receive feedback from school leaders and a consultant in order to promote professional growth and reflection. Sample observation reports reviewed captured teachers' strengths, challenges, and next steps. An observation report cited that the teacher needed to incorporate checks for understanding strategies, such as including a white-board in the lesson for students to draw or write words that begin with the letter "c." Links to professional reading on the fundamentals of formative assessment were included to give the teacher additional support. Another observation report provided the teacher with clear next steps for strategies to support English Language Learners (ELLs). In this case, the observer cited using an anticipation guide that promoted collaborative strategies such as students working together to solve a problem or respond to questions about an assigned reading. During the teacher meeting, the teachers attested that the feedback they received from observations provided them with next steps to get better and that they feel supported in their observations.
- An additional review of observation reports commended a teacher for conducting small group instruction. However, the lesson was not structured as a true guided reading lesson but rather as a strategy lesson. The report explained how to execute a guided reading lesson and provided the teacher with a professional reading source entitled, "Guided Reading vs. Strategy Lessons." Another report lauded a teacher for procedures in place in the classroom allowing students to demonstrate work at the interactive white board. The feedback to the teacher recommended the use of differentiated tasks for grouping of students based on their levels of understanding.
- School leaders analyzed *Advance* observation data for trends and patterns, determining that there needed to be more focus on the areas of questioning and discussion, engagement, and assessment. The data was used to inform the professional development offerings. Professional development workshops were conducted on analyzing data to inform instruction and differentiated instruction. In addition, many teachers are dual-certified with English as a New Language certification, which assists school leaders in making informed decisions connected to staff.