

Quality Review Report

2017-2018

P.S. 112 Bronxwood

Elementary 11X112

**1925 Schieffelin Avenue
Bronx
NY 10466**

Principal: Andrea Tucci

**Dates of Review:
May 15, 2018 - May 16, 2018**

Lead Reviewer: Rosemary Stuart

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. 112 Bronxwood serves students in grade PK 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	Area of Celebration	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	Additional Finding	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:	1.3 Leveraging Resources	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The school leaders leverage resources to address school goals, such as creating an attractive and inviting environment in which to provide a student-centered learning community. Hiring and programming practices focus on providing additional support to struggling students.

Impact

Students have resources to produce meaningful student work and have access to learning opportunities to help them prepare for college and career.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal identified resources to paint the halls, provide brighter lighting, and furnish classrooms with new desks and bookshelves and stated that the emphasis on the physical plant was a way of providing “an inviting, comfortable environment for learning to convey the message that learning is expected.” Stair risers throughout the building display multiplication and division fact families. Other resources were used to provide curricular resources, such as the Fountas and Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention program to identify students who are reading below grade level. A survey of teachers revealed that 99 percent of teachers agree that the school environment is improving this year.
- The technology capacity of the school was upgraded to include expanded internet bandwidth and laptop carts for all classes in grades three to five. Teachers in the upper grades use the laptops to conduct the *iReady* assessments with fidelity. Students in a lower-grade class were observed taking pictures of plants using tablet computers and discussing how they will be able to compare the growth of the plants from week to week using the resulting photographs. In another class, the teacher displayed the text for a guided reading lesson on an interactive white board with some of the words covered so that students could predict the words.
- School leaders and teachers identified students in need of intervention, including students with disabilities and English Language Learners, from each class to meet school goals and benchmarks for proficiency. The school leader identified funding to hire an additional guidance counselor and to provide an intervention teacher to focus on struggling students. In addition, students were identified to attend Saturday programs focusing on math problem-solving and on topics emphasizing the major math content standards in each grade. After-school programs focus on college readiness literacy skills such as helping students distinguish between important information and distractors in texts, and to use the strategy of restating and answering the question with at least two details (RADD).

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Teaching strategies, such as small group instruction and read alouds, do not consistently provide multiple entry points for students to produce work aligned to the curricula.

Impact

There are uneven levels of engagement in challenging tasks across grades and content areas. There are uneven levels of student participation in high-level discussions.

Supporting Evidence

- In a second-grade science class, the teacher organized an experiment in which a control plant will be provided with air, water, sunlight, and soil and an experimental plant will be deprived of one of these growth factors. The students, organized into small groups, were observed using rulers, magnifying glasses, and digital cameras on tablet computers to obtain baseline measurements of the height and health of the flowering plants. The students explained the procedures they were following and made predictions about what they think will happen to their plants. This level of student engagement and self-direction was not consistent across all classrooms.
- In a math lesson, three students were seated at desks with no interaction with the teacher or the rest of the students who were seated on the rug engaged in a phonics lesson. This lack of engagement resulted in one student using an incorrect digraph to spell a word with no opportunity for correction or redirection from the teacher.
- Students in a social studies lesson listened to the teacher read a text about the government in the Dominican Republic. Although students had notebooks open, they were passively listening to the teacher read, thus missing the opportunity for higher-level engagement. After the read aloud, the students did engage in a turn and talk about symbolism on a public monument. Students noticed that the colors of the clothing on the images in the monument were the same as the colors of the flag. In a fourth-grade math class, students discussed the properties of acute and obtuse angles. One group of students determined that a right angle must be exactly 90 degrees. However, students in other classes were not engaged in the same level of conversation and discussion. In one class, the teacher started to create a graphic organizer to capture the suggestions the students were making about the game of soccer. Several of the students' suggestions were missed as the teacher asked questions and then immediately provided the answer, thus limiting the opportunity for rich levels of discussion for the students.

Additional Finding

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

School leaders and teachers produced unit plans that align with curricula in English Language Arts (ELA) and math and are in the process of developing such plans in social studies and science. Tasks in some lessons are planned to meet the varied learning needs of students.

Impact

Tasks are not consistently accessible to all learners and planning for cognitive engagement is uneven across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders review lesson plans as part of the teacher evaluation process. They provide feedback to the teachers on how well plans align to the curricula, such as the Teachers College (TC) Reading and Writing Project. In addition, they observe if the teacher is adhering to the pacing calendar and the recommended time blocks in ELA and math. Teachers and school leaders are in the process of developing these recommended time blocks, along with critical thinking paths, as part of unit plans for other content areas, specifically social studies and science.
- Feedback in one observation report noted that the teacher “led the students in a lesson using the TC opinion piece checklist.” Another report indicated that the teacher had paced the mini-lesson in alignment with the schoolwide time blocks and planned time for students to practice a new skill. Not all observation reports provided feedback on designing coherent instruction.
- Some lesson plans indicate strategies for students of differing learning abilities. For example, one lesson plan outlined activities for beginning, intermediate, and advanced students. According to this plan, beginning students would describe pictures of the four things plants need to survive, intermediate students would say a complete sentence about the pictures, and advanced students would create illustrations about the four growth factors and write sentences about them. This plan did not explain how students would be identified for each activity. Another lesson plan included the names of students who were tiered for small group instruction or conferencing according to the level of understanding the student displayed. A lesson plan for students with disabilities did not identify strategies to support the different learning needs of each student.

Additional Finding

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Teachers use rubrics in some content areas that align with the curricula, notably the TC writing units of study. Teachers in some classes use checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact

Not all feedback to students is actionable and not all teachers make effective adjustments to meet the assessed needs of all students.

Supporting Evidence

- Some teachers use rubrics to assess student progress and communicate to them about their performance, although not all of the rubrics explain the relationship between the performance levels and the numerical grade of the schoolwide grading policy. One student explained that a grade of 75 means, “I need to work harder.” One rubric for a first-grade assignment was customized for the task of identifying people who work in schools, courthouses, churches, and gas stations. Most pieces of extended writing were accompanied by rubrics that outlined the characteristics of multiple grade levels and included grows and glows from the teachers. A science lab report from a second-grade student was assessed using a rubric for information writing. Some math work was assessed using a problem-solving rubric, but not all pieces of student work were assessed using rubrics or included explanations for how the student could improve performance. A few students stated that often the rubrics are not included with the assignment and are only used to assess the completed tasks.
- Feedback to one student indicated that he had done a good job working in his group to discuss important people and places in a community. As a next step, the teacher suggested that she would work with him to “brainstorm more people and places that we may need in a community.” On the same assignment, the teacher asked another student to extend her thinking to include the people who work in a pet store. Not all pieces of student work, such as in writing notebooks or math tasks, had actionable feedback from the teacher.
- Some teachers track performance on clipboards during lessons. For example, one teacher noted that a student, reading on level G, was tapping out unknown words and using a decoding strategy. Several students in that class were identified as needing help with fluency. Although teachers were observed monitoring student performance in some, but not all, classes, this level of tracking was seen in two classes. Students in a kindergarten class used a checklist to assess their own performance. The checklist reminded students to use transition words such as *because* and to include details in pictures or words.
- In a few classes, teachers regrouped students following a check for understanding. For example, one teacher asked students to indicate with thumbs up or down if they wanted additional help with understanding how to use an analog clock to tell time to the half hour. She remained on the rug with a few students to review telling time with them.

Additional Finding

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The principal regularly communicates expectations for teacher performance through the staff handbook, the monthly newsletter, Bronxwood News, and the observation cycle. Communications to parents provide timely information about student performance and high expectations regarding preparation for next-level readiness.

Impact

School leaders provide training and hold teachers accountable for meeting expectations and parents are aware of the progress their children are making.

Supporting Evidence

- The staff handbook outlines the expectations that all teachers will prepare coherent lessons with structured routines, monitor student learning, provide feedback to students, and self-assess on the components of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. It goes on to enumerate the goals established in the Renewal School Comprehensive Education Plan. The monthly faculty newsletter reminds staff about the schoolwide instructional focus, the equity and excellence goals, and the vision of the school as a learning community that provides scholars with a well-rounded educational experience. These expectations are reinforced through the cycle of observation and evaluation. One observation noted that a teacher had used positive reinforcement to encourage students as they focused on their work. Another teacher was praised for providing consistent routines for students to monitor their small group work. A school leader noted that feedback to students had not addressed next steps in learning.
- Professional development is provided throughout the year. For example, a series of sessions was started in November to address the need for improved performance on the State math exams. Topics included improving student engagement and developing a unified understanding of best practices. One teacher stated, and others agreed, that communication about expectations for teacher performance was “spot on” and that school leaders ensure all are informed of supports available to them as they are on the frontline with students. Another teacher added that there are frequent discussions with school leaders to brainstorm solutions to issues around student performance. One teacher shared, “No one acts like they have all the answers, we are all in this together.”
- Parents utilize online programs, such as PupilPath and Class Dojo, to stay informed about the progress their children are making. They indicated that they are welcomed into classrooms to observe the curricula and to help with instruction. In one class, a parent volunteer was observed helping students during an early grade literacy lesson. The school holds workshops to help parents understand the curricula, such as math family game day and a poetry meeting, and to help parents learn to help their children with homework. Parents of fifth-grade students sign a contract that affirms they know, and will support, the expectations for their children.
- At parent association and School Leadership Team meetings, the principal gives an update on the progress students are making toward their performance goals and outlines the supports available to students and their families. For example, the agenda for one parent meeting includes a discussion of the programs put in place to meet the social-emotional needs of the students, as well as the implementation of new programs for math problem-solving and phonics in the early grades.

Additional Finding

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

The majority of teachers analyze student performance data during inquiry-based grade-level and vertical team meetings. Teachers develop leadership skills through intervisitations and regular collaborations.

Impact

Teachers are improving their practice and groups of students are making progress toward performance goals. Teachers have a voice in decisions that affect student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers on collaborative teams use the Data Wise protocols, with support from a coach, as they analyze student work and data to determine the actions they will take to address the needs of their students. One team identified a learner-centered problem and an associated problem of practice that led them to implement think alouds, modeling, and explicit demonstrations of how to analyze questions in their lessons. The principal noted that analysis of student performance has shifted over this year from conducting item analyses of test results at the beginning of the year, to looking at what students and teachers were actually doing. This work evolved into teachers conducting intervisitations to learn best practices from colleagues.
- Grade-level teams track student performance on curricula-aligned and periodic *iReady* assessments. They note the progress groups of students are making from the beginning of the year baseline to end-of-year assessments. They analyze the results of these assessments to determine progress for groups of students, such as those performing above, approaching, or below grade level at the beginning of the year. One class noted that the percentage of students performing at or above grade level improved from 26 percent to 41 percent from September to February and those performing below grade level fell from 59 percent to 37 percent.
- The instructional leadership team, which includes teachers and administrators, adopted a schoolwide philosophy of curricula and instruction represented by instructional planning, multiple entry points, progress monitoring, rigorous tasks, explicit instruction, scaffolds, and small group instruction (IMPRESS). In the process of exploring the instructional ramifications, teachers realized that they did not have a normed understanding of rigorous tasks. As a result, teachers stated that they are working in their teams to deepen their common, schoolwide understanding of what constitutes academic rigor. They meet in vertical teams to ensure cross-grade implementation of rigorous tasks throughout the components of their lessons.
- Teachers are empowered to attend professional learning opportunities outside of the school building and they are then asked to train the rest of the staff on strategies that they have learned. Teachers feel that they have a voice in decisions that improve student outcomes. For example, they implemented a program that partnered younger students with fifth-grade students for peer mentoring and tutoring. They also started a program to provide strong role models for male students. After visiting another school, the fourth-grade teachers are now planning to departmentalize next year.