

Quality Review Report

2018-2019

P.S. 160 Walter Francis Bishop

Elementary 28Q160

**109-59 Inwood Street
Queens
NY 11435**

Principal: Tiffany Hicks

**Dates of Review:
November 29, 2018 - November 30, 2018**

Lead Reviewer: Evelyn Terrell

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. 160 Walter Francis Bishop 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	Proficient
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	Proficient

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	Area of Celebration	Well Developed
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	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:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to all staff via specific handbooks, newsletters, and grade conferences, as well as professional training through Teachers College and administrative workshops aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Newsletters, class DoJo, workshops, and mid-year student progress reports provide effective communications to families.

Impact

Administrative walkthroughs and ongoing training result in teachers and school leadership holding themselves mutually accountable for schoolwide expectations. Families successfully partner with the school so they are able to effectively support their children on a path to college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- At the beginning of the school year, the principal conducts a workshop outlining expectations for the coming year. This year, an expectation is that all teachers record a specific learning objective to support students in understanding the skills taught in each lesson so that they better understand the what, why, and how of their learning. Each staff member receives a handbook written to highlight the specific expectations for which each is responsible. For example, an Assistant Principal Handbook provides a template aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, used to gather evidence and provide feedback to teachers. In addition, the administration provides handbooks for the secretaries, paraprofessionals, school aides, and classroom teachers. Teachers receive in-class modeling of reading and writing strategies on designated days from Teachers College staff developers. The administration conducts walkthroughs to hold teachers accountable and provide support.
- A review of a weekly staff newsletter highlighted instructional expectations observed by the administration during walkthroughs, such as checks for understanding during lessons, lesson objectives aligned to the schoolwide protocol, and the display of *Thinking Maps*, another schoolwide initiative to support students in making their thinking visible. The “Grade Leaders Corner” in the newsletter provides information which leaders are responsible for discussing with their grade peers, such as uploading unit plans and data onto the Google Drive. Teachers invested in helping each other engage in intervisitations to observe the implementation of effective instructional practices. In addition, all teachers conducted an instructional focus scavenger hunt to ensure that all classrooms had enough books in their leveled libraries, encompassing a variety of genres, and that student work on bulletin boards reflected all content areas. These activities support the high expectations set by the school and staff.
- The school partners with families to ensure that parents and guardians understand what students should know in preparation for the next grade. Grade specific newsletters are available on the school website and backpacked home with information about curriculum units. Parents sign up for Class DoJo, an app with information about homework, class projects, and trips where teachers also invite parents to volunteer in classrooms and complete surveys. The school hosts family workshops where parents and their children use math skills to build gingerbread houses. Moreover, teachers conduct workshops on curriculum and strategies used in the classroom. A progress report, provided in January in addition to regular report cards, allows parents to know their children’s strengths and challenges. Families have access to videos from Teachers College to view information about the school’s literacy program. The principal meets with parents monthly for *Coffee and Conversation*. Parents shared that they look forward to this and stated, “The communication at the school is awesome!”

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Across some classrooms, teachers inconsistently provide tasks to engage all students in multiple entry points aligned to their instructional levels. While classrooms have accountable talk signs posted, most students do not consistently use the protocols to participate in high level discussions.

Impact

Student work products, including those of English Language Learners (ELLs), students with disabilities, and accelerated students, do not consistently demonstrate high levels of student thinking and participation across classrooms.

Supporting Evidence

- In one classroom visited, after completing a mini-lesson on solving a math word problem, the teacher asked students to report to their groups. In one group, the students were using manipulatives to figure out how many more to add on to solve the problems. In a higher group, the teacher instructed students to collaborate on writing their own word problem. However, in another classroom where students were working on building math fluency, all the students worked on the same problems, and the information the teacher provided for adding on “one” to doubles did not accurately explain the procedure provided in the math program. In “doubles plus one,” students need to comprehend that because $3+3=6$ and 4 is one more than 3, therefore $3+4=7$, which increases their fluency in addition. Some students were not adding correctly. In another class, neither texts nor tasks were differentiated, with all the students used the same text to determine if a conversation was great. Thus, tasks provided did not consistently support all students at their instructional levels.
- During a literacy lesson, the teacher instructed the students to “think about when you had a really good talk with someone” and then asked them to turn and talk to their partners about what made the conversation so great. Following the partnership talk, the teacher asked the students, “What made the conversation great?” The students did not respond. As the lesson continued, the teacher posted a text on an Elmo board. She instructed the students to read it to themselves as she read it aloud. Prior to reading the posted text, students were given no specific questions to guide their thinking about elements of great conversations to support their participation in a high-level discussion about the displayed text. While there were charts posted on the board in the front of the classroom about great conversations, the teacher did not ask the students to look for those elements as evidence to support their thinking while reading and listening to the text in preparation for discussions. While the students engaged in the turn and talk activity, they did not participate in high quality discussions in which they used text-based evidence to support their answers.
- In an upper grade math class, the teacher conducted a discussion on different ways to use the commutative property to solve a math word problem. The teacher asked students to look for trends and state the reason why they selected a particular strategy. For example, one student who was adding the five decimals in the problem saw that when he lined them up, he could add more quickly by looking for combinations of ten. Students shared with the class why that strategy was or was not a good one. The students participated freely in the discussion. On the other hand, in a self-contained class, the teacher talked about adding details to support the main idea for a persuasive essay about making the lunchroom better. However, the students did not participate in discussions with reasons to support their opinions about making the cafeteria better. Consequently, student discussions reflected uneven levels of thinking and participation.

Additional Finding

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders and staff ensure that the curricula is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (Common Core) and integrate the instructional shifts through the use of a Department of Education (DOE) approved math program and units of study from *Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP)* across content areas. The school uses student work and data to plan and revise the curricula.

Impact

The alignment of the curricula builds coherence across all grades and promotes college and career readiness skills. More time and use of manipulatives allow students to have access to curricula that provide cognitive engagement.

Supporting Evidence

- A review of curriculum maps across content areas reveals alignment of units of study to the Common Core and integration of the instructional shifts. The school uses the *GO Math! Program* to build math skills across grades. This DOE approved program reflects alignment to the State standards and instructional shifts. Units of study include math academic language such as *multiply, factors, product, and distributive property*. Multi-step word problems support students in preparing for college and career readiness skills in math. The school uses *Amplify* for its science curriculum, in which students work on project-based learning tasks. In a grade four unit on energy conservation, students learn reasons why an electrical system fails. The art curriculum pushes students to add details in pictures as well as academic language, such as *landscape, background, and foreground*.
- This year the school has embarked on a schoolwide implementation of TCRWP for its literacy curriculum. A review of unit plans reflects the use of informational texts in non-fiction book clubs across grades within leveled libraries. All students engage in the writing process, where they write, edit, and publish their compositions, supporting opinions with text-based evidence. A pacing chart covers all concepts and topics for each grade to ensure coverage by the end of the school year, thus building and preparing all students for colleges and careers.
- An analysis of English Language Arts (ELA) State data revealed that many students were struggling with adding details to their writing and summarizing their ideas in a conclusion. As a result, the school added a daily 30-minute Academic Interventions Services (AIS) period across all grades. Teachers use this time to reteach writing and reading skills for targeted students. Unit plans have areas colored-coded to show what students have done well and areas that need additional support. In a grade five math unit plan, pre-test data indicated that 75 percent of students were successful at completing measurement problems, finding factors for whole numbers within 100, and completing addition and subtraction of fractions referring to the same whole. However, 20 percent of students struggled with expressing fractions with denominators of 10 as equivalent fractions with denominators of 100. Teachers planned to adjust the curriculum by reteaching activities through Mathletics, a software program to support math skills, and greater use of manipulatives for targeted students during the AIS period. The principal shared that after a review of grades four and five State math data, she dissolved the departmentalized math block because there were too many level one and two students for one teacher to support. A review of State grade five math data reflecting "Numbers and Operations in Base 10" shows a 14 percent decrease in levels one and two from October 2018 to November 2018, the timeframe in which students have been back in their homerooms for the math block which provides more time for homeroom teachers to provide cognitive engagement.

Additional Finding

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use a schoolwide grading policy, teacher-created rubrics, and running records aligned to the school's curricula. Assessment practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for student understanding, and students use *glows* and *grows* to conduct peer and self-assessments of their work.

Impact

Students receive actionable feedback to help them understand their next steps, and teachers adjust lessons based on ongoing checks for understanding.

Supporting Evidence

- A schoolwide grading policy assesses students on classwork (20 percent), exams (45), projects (10), quizzes (15), and participation (10). In addition, teachers use a variety of rubrics aligned to the curricula to assess student understanding. For example, the visual arts teacher has designed a "Visual Landscape Rubric" to assess students' work. The rubric has four domains capturing students' evidence of foreground, middle ground, and background in projects, progressing to assess an understanding of overlapping objects and elaborate details in the final landscape. Students observed using this rubric were able to explain their next steps. A review of student work provides evidence of writing rubrics to assess the use of transition words, endings, organization, and elaboration. A math exemplar rubric assessed students' use of problem-solving strategies and appropriate mathematical representations (such as a tally, diagram, or chart) as well as their ability to communicate with mathematical language and make mathematical connections (like verifying a strategy and reasoning by solving the problem more than one way). Teachers also use running records to assess students' reading comprehension, leading to the assignment of appropriate leveled books. These tools allow students and teachers to assess levels of understanding and target next steps for students' growth.
- Feedback is provided to students in the form of *glows*--areas that show students' understanding of a skill or task--and *grows*--areas that demonstrate a challenge to the student and become next steps for academic growth. An example of a glow and grow was noted on an upper-grade writing piece, in which the teacher stated, "Excellent job on organization and craft (author's tone). You continued to hook your reader. One area you can grow in is transitional phrases. It's a great way to connect your opinion and reason." The student's self-reflection indicated that the next step was to work on transitional phrases. In a lower grade, the teacher's feedback in response to how a character changes in a story was, "You included 3 examples of text evidence that supports how the main character changed from the beginning to the end." A next step was to work on spelling and writing mistakes. Thus, actionable feedback is guiding students to improve their work.
- Across classroom visited, most teachers were consistently checking for students' understanding during the lesson. In an upper-grade math class, the teacher stopped to ask students to explain to their partners what property they used to solve a problem. The teacher circulated among the students, listening to their conversations. In another class, the teacher took notes on a checklist while conferencing with a small group that had difficulty during the mini-lesson on character traits. Evidence of student self- assessment and peer assessment, noted on writing samples, shows that students understand how to reflect on what they do well and what they need to work on.

Additional Finding

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

Observation feedback aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* accurately captures strengths, challenges, and next steps via the use of a common feedback template with a date to follow-up on the teacher's development. School leaders have effectively implemented a system in which they use *Advance* data to plan professional development and succession plans for targeted teachers.

Impact

Feedback provides teachers with clear expectations for instructional practices. Data gathering informs decision-making to support professional growth and reflection.

Supporting Evidence

- A review of feedback from classroom observations reflects an alignment to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Administrators use a template they designed to ensure that their feedback reflects the schoolwide instructional goals and provides evidence of both strengths and practices that need further support. One observation report included the following: "A strength in your practice is found in 2d: Managing Student Behavior. In this lesson it was evident that students were aware of the routines that you had established in the science lab, as they were able to enter the room, walk to their assigned spots and turn and talk with their partners." Noted in the observation was the following question for a next step: "How are you accounting for think time and for generating a discussion with the ENL students in this class?" The feedback provided examples of sample sentences the teacher could use to facilitate discussion. Moreover, the teacher was asked to include accountable-talk protocols using **scribble-** present your ideas, **connect-** make connections, **add-** include additional information, **modify-** make modifications to ideas heard, **pick** an alternate word or image, **extend** your thinking, **revise/reverse** your thinking (SCAMPER). During a follow-up visit made three weeks after the observation, the teacher received this feedback: "Although students used SCAMPER, it seemed more of a Q&A session in which they answered your questions, instead of building upon the ideas of each other." A next step subsequent to this visit stated, "Questions should be framed in a way that allows students to cite evidence, draw conclusions, or make an inference." Thus, school leaders are promoting teacher development with clear expectations supported with examples of best practices as noted in this as well as other observation reports.
- The principal analyzes data from the *Advance* rating system to inform decisions for professional development. This year the focus is on 1e: Designing coherent instruction, 3b: Using questioning and discussion techniques, and 3c: Using assessment in instruction. These three rated the lowest on the *Advance* system of eight components. Consequently, teachers have been receiving training from Teachers College on the TCRWP. In addition, the administration provides professional development around elements of an effective lesson, training on using math centers to engage students in tiered, rich math tasks, student-to- student discussions, and the development of math vocabulary.
- The principal has selected teachers to be content area leads for intervisitation in each content area. A "Delegation Grid" reflects targeted teachers and administrators selected for specific responsibilities, such as *Thinking Maps* trainer, Attendance Coordinator, and English as a New Language (ENL) Vertical Team Lead. The grade leader for each grade is part of the instructional cabinet, which meets monthly. This, in conjunction with ongoing training, promotes professional growth and reflection around best practices.

Additional Finding

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

The majority of teachers are members of inquiry-based professional collaborations via horizontal grade and vertical cross-grade teams, supporting the implementation of the Common Core and instructional shifts aligned to school goals. Teachers from each grade are part of the Instructional Cabinet and have a voice in key decisions such as best practices for implementing multi-step math problem-solving strategies, professional development, and the daily Academic Intervention period.

Impact

Inquiry Teams strengthen the instructional capacity of teachers. Shared leadership supports student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers on each grade comprise a horizontal collaborative team and meet once a month to engage in inquiry to determine best practices aligned to the school's goals. The grade four team met to discuss strategies which will support students in solving multi-step math problems. Teachers discussed using the **circle, underline, box, explain (CUBE)** strategy to push students to identify operations within a multi-step word problem. Another strategy used is a "flow map" to lay out the sequences needed to solve the problem. Students with disabilities retell math problems to help with their comprehension of what the problem is asking them to do. A strategy to support ELLs is to focus on key math vocabulary (such as *estimate*) to ensure that they understand the meaning of these terms. One teacher shared that rounding numbers was a problem for some students. Consequently, students practice rounding as a do now at the beginning of the math block and explain how they got their answers.
- One teacher from each grade is part of the Vertical Team that looks at best practices uploaded onto Google Drive and discusses how they are working for students at different grade levels. For example, students on each grade are using the **CUBE** math strategy and the **restate, answer, cite evidence, explain (RACE)** strategy to support writing constructed responses. A review of student math work shows that students are citing evidence in multi-step math word problems and are circling words and phrases such as *in all* as they solve math tasks.
- Once a month the Instructional Cabinet, consisting of teachers and the administration, meet to discuss instructional strategies, professional development for teachers, and social and emotional needs for students. In alignment with the school's goal to support students in understanding what they need to know, all learning objectives are recorded in the following format: "Today we will... So that we can... You know that you've got it when you can..." The shared rationale was to provide a format in which students are able to identify the what, why, and how of their learning. A collaborative decision of this team was the inclusion of a daily 30 minute AIS period, which teachers use to reteach skills for struggling students. Teachers are working out the implementation of PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention System) so that students have more opportunities to receive rewards for appropriate behaviors. They lead professional development around norming expectations aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. The Vertical Team recommended the CUBESSS strategy. The additional two S's require students to choose a **strategy** to solve a math problem and answer the question with a **solution** statement using math vocabulary. The instructional Cabinet also made a decision to use exemplars during the math block on Fridays for solving word problems. These collaborative decisions promote shared leadership with a focus on improving student learning.