

Quality Review Report

2018-2019

P.S. 048 William G. Wilcox

K-8 31R048

**1050 Targee Street
Staten Island
NY 10304**

Principal: Allison Odonnell

**Dates of Review:
February 13, 2019 - February 14, 2019**

Lead Reviewer: Jennifer Eusanio

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. 048 William G. Wilcox 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 | 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 | Additional Finding | Proficient |
| 2.2 Align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessment and grading practices, and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels | Area of Focus | 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 | Well Developed |
| 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 |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|

Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high instructional and assessment expectations to the entire staff. School staff effectively communicates expectations and successfully partners with families on their children's progress toward being college and career ready.

Impact

Meaningful communication structures and training support a culture of mutual accountability for all staff members. Effective home-school connections support student progress toward meeting grade-level expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- A variety of structures are used to communicate school leaders' expectations on planning, instruction and assessment. As a primary reference tool, the staff handbook includes expectations for the use of learning continuums, also known as cross-grade rubrics, and the updated grading policy, which reflects a five-point mastery-based system. The *Principal's Message* is a weekly email that shares updates and reminders for staff for maintaining the instructional expectations. The messages include the instructional focus on using the Evidence, Analysis and Action (EAA) protocol during team meetings and its connection to small group instruction to improve student performance. They also include reminders for teachers of the five core practices for formative assessment, and highlight teachers who are using technology, including the online document-sharing programs, to share video tutorials with colleagues. A review of team agendas reflects the use of the EAA across teacher teams and development of plans for small group instruction. In addition, class visits reflected students working in small groups with each other or their teachers, demonstrating teachers' increased collective efforts to improve instruction across the school.
- School leaders use the observation process to hold teachers accountable for the instructional expectations. Additionally, through Evidence Walks, teachers provide support and hold each other accountable for moving the school's goals. During one walk, sixth-grade teachers visited the fifth-grade teachers and used the EAA protocol to reflect on their practices. Some of their own actionable next steps are to engage in inquiry-based math number talks and incorporate some of the viewed assessment and instructional practices, such as engaging in peer assessment and utilizing a variety of tools as resources for students. Similarly, during another cross-grade walk between third and fourth grade, teachers reflected on their use of the learning continuum and set goals with their students. A review of student work reflected students' developing goals in different subject areas.
- Parents shared that communication between the school and home regarding their children's progress has supported their abilities to progress academically. Communications include online grading programs and other tools to share daily individual and class updates. In addition, parent workshops, class visitation opportunities, and curriculum night are used to share the grade-level expectations as well as to provide updates on current units of study to develop more home-school connections. Several parents shared how these updates help them with their children's homework and all agreed that these opportunities have led to improved grades. Overall, school-parent partnerships are increasing students' abilities to strive toward meeting and exceeding grade-level standards.

Area of Focus

| | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Quality Indicator: | 2.2 Assessment | Rating: | Proficient |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------|

Findings

Teachers use and create rubrics, success criteria, and other curricula-aligned assessments. Teachers consistently use checks-for understanding and self-assessment practices as a means for determining student understanding of skills and concepts.

Impact

Although teachers use rubrics and success criteria, students do not currently take an active role in utilizing them consistently to determine their own understanding and take ownership of their own next steps. Actionable and meaningful feedback to all students is not fully present in a few classes.

Supporting Evidence

- Curricula-aligned rubrics are utilized across subject areas and grades. Students are exposed to rubrics and success criteria, a set of student-friendly learning targets, or intentions, which may be co-created with students, that are expected in work products. In a sixth-grade class, students worked in groups to develop a set of expository essay success criteria prior to beginning their writing. Several students shared that the purpose of the activity was to help them understand the grade-level expectations for developing this type of essay and to serve as a reflection and feedback tool for themselves or their peers. Some of the criteria students agreed upon were to include evidence that supported the sub-topics and provide an analysis for their readers. However, this level of ownership with success criteria as a self-reflection or assessment tool was not fully embedded. In a few classes, students were provided with the criteria but were either not using them or not consistently reminded by teachers to use them.
- Feedback provided to students by either their teachers or their peers was evident in student work folders and on bulletin boards. Additionally, goal setting in English Language Arts (ELA) and math was noted in several folders. Students agreed that their teachers regularly provide them with feedback; yet a review of the feedback, at times, reflected limited next steps. In one math rubric, the teacher feedback complimented the student on explaining their answer, yet read, "Next time, review your models", which did not specifically share clear next steps for improving the project. Similarly, in ELA, one piece of feedback shared a compliment without any next steps for the student to improve their grade. Therefore, in a few classes, teacher feedback does not currently reflect clear next steps for students to meet their goals or to improve their work products.
- Across classes, teachers regularly checked for understanding based on students' understanding of the task. In a first-grade math class, after observing students' errors in measuring different size fish, the teacher paused to demonstrate how students should properly use tiles for measuring by ensuring that they do not leave spaces between them when determining the length of each fish. After the demonstration, students revisited how they were measuring their current fish and corrected themselves. However, in few classes, although checks for understanding were present, adjustments were limited. In one class, students were measuring the temperature of water and although the teacher posed a question to check for understanding, there was a missed opportunity to adjust and allow for further explanations by students through their responses.

Additional Finding

| | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Quality Indicator: | 1.1 Curriculum | Rating: | Proficient |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------|

Findings

School staff ensures that the curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards and integrate instructional shifts, such as text-based answers and fluency. Curricula and academic tasks consistently emphasize rigor for student subgroups.

Impact

Planned tasks are rigorous across grades and subjects for a variety of learners. Purposeful decisions to include certain shifts in the curricula build coherence across grades and promote college and career readiness for all students.

Supporting Evidence

- A review of the ELA curricula reflects an integration across instructional shifts, including the text-based answers and writing from sources. A third-grade reading curriculum map includes the theme of understanding the main idea and text structures. Additionally, the foci of the learning goals are to choose two to three details from a text to support the overall main idea and explain how they are supported while using transitional words and phrases. Similarly, in sixth grade, a unit on analyzing society's influence on authors' style of writing includes content objectives to evaluate the effectiveness of the government using text evidence. In an eighth-grade unit on rhetorical devices and persuasion, objectives include arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence and to provide logical reasoning with credible sources. Overall, the ELA curricula reflect a grade-by-grade effort to integrate specific shifts.
- A review of math units across the school reflects an emphasis on fluency and problem solving. In a first-grade unit on addition, target standards and tasks focus on fluency using addition and subtraction within ten and solving problems with unknown change or with one unknown addend. In third-grade, a unit entails similar methods, such as number talks or games, yet focuses on solving multiplication and division problems that result in a remainder, and using the break-apart strategy. In a seventh-grade unit that focuses on the application and extension of previous addition and subtraction understandings from the lower grades, work with these same operations when learning about rationale numbers are listed. Problem solving approaches are integrated with the use of the **study, organize, line, verify and examine (SOLVE)** strategy and annotating word problems in math.
- Academic tasks across content areas are written to provide rigor for a diverse population of students. In an Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) math lesson plan, the task requires students to use equations for an unknown quantity and assess the reasonableness of their answers using estimation strategies while using the SOLVE strategy. Students are provided with choice in a project that requires critical thinking. One science investigation involves a baking project that requires students to work in groups to bake an item from a box, where they choose to change one of the ingredients from the directions provided. Students are required to determine whether changing that variable makes a difference in the texture, taste, and look of the final product, which requires students to draw conclusions as a result of the investigation. Overall, planned tasks emphasize rigorous habits across the school's curricula.

Additional Finding

| | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Quality Indicator: | 1.2 Pedagogy | Rating: | Proficient |
|---------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-------------------|

Findings

Teaching strategies consistently provide multiple entry points into curricula and allow for small group instructional opportunities to enhance work products and student discussions.

Impact

Across classrooms, all learners are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and student work products reflect higher-order thinking and high levels of student participation. However, strategic, high-quality supports and extensions leading to student ownership are not evident in a few classes.

Supporting Evidence

- In a fifth-grade math class, groups of students worked to resolve a real-world word problem as to where the subjects are having difficulty determining whether they have the correct amount of food when feeding their dog. The problem requires an understanding of fractions and measurement. The students worked in groups to develop a step-by-step guide with models for the subjects in the problem to help them use a measuring cup correctly and know exactly how much food would be needed for the dog. To solve the problem, some groups received fraction toolkits with labeled tools while others were prompted using skill-based tailored questions. In one group, no additional supports were needed since those students had already shown competence in this skill in prior tasks. Yet, in each group, students developed planning and reflection skills, used math vocabulary as part of their discourse, while prompted to challenge and debate each other's thinking, thus demonstrating high-order thinking and increased ownership of the task. However, this degree of thinking, through the strategic use of high-quality, data-based supports and extensions, work-product choices, real-world understanding of the problem, and student ownership, was not present in a few classes.
- Across the school, student-to-student discussion groups or partnerships were present in most classes. In a seventh-grade math class, students studied the differences between theoretical and experimental probability, and worked in groups to develop their rationales for why the probability was not a particular amount for a set of colors. In a sixth-grade class, student groups worked together to build consensus on the criteria for a co-created class checklist to use while producing an expository essay.
- In a fifth-grade social studies class, students worked in partnerships and groups to list landforms on a graphic organizer, state which geological process may have contributed to forming each landform, and draw conclusions on the seven natural wonders of the world. In a first-grade math class, students worked with tiles to measure a variety of fish and record their findings to determine whether the caught fish met the six-inch requirement of a keeper. Students worked in pairs to use tiles, where some determined that the measured fish were smaller or larger than the six inches and were to be thrown back into the sea. In a fifth-grade ELA class, students were provided with different graphic organizers to find the meaning of unfamiliar words and used different leveled texts based on a common theme. Some of the graphic organizers contained clues, while others did not, to support students while reading their texts. Overall, groups of students engage in challenging tasks and respond critically in discussions or in their work products.

Additional Finding

| | | | |
|---------------------------|--|----------------|-------------------|
| Quality Indicator: | 4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision | Rating: | Proficient |
|---------------------------|--|----------------|-------------------|

Findings

School leaders support the development of all teachers through frequent cycles of observation with effective feedback in the form of strengths and considerations for improvement, including next steps, using the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*.

Impact

Feedback articulates clear expectations for teacher practice, supports teacher development, and promotes professional growth and reflection.

Supporting Evidence

- Observations are cycled and conducted among three school leaders. The cabinet tracks observations to monitor the frequency per teacher and who conducted the observation. This information is reviewed by all school leaders to determine the focus of subsequent observations. Teachers agreed that the frequency of the feedback they have received through the observation process has provided them with opportunities to reflect on and demonstrate growth in their practice. In one observation report from the beginning of the year, a teacher was asked to consider her line of math questioning, which only prompted students to provide one-word answers, and did not lead to accountable talk. Recommendations included forming partnerships, where students could formulate their own questions about a data set. In the subsequent lesson, the teacher demonstrated increased growth in this area as students were engaged in partnerships and were provided with opportunities to form consensus on their choice of project and how to plan it.
- In one observation report, a teacher received feedback advising her to increase the level of rigor of the task while considering the varying needs of the students by removing scaffolds on character analysis for some students who were meeting or exceeding the learning objective. Additionally, it stated that other students would have benefited with more support versus the entire class engaging in the same level of support. In the next observation, the teacher was commended for using different approaches to address the needs of her learners, including station teaching and increasing the rigor of her questions using the State exam as a model and guide for formulating them. To continue the teacher's professional growth and reflection in these areas, the school leader provided an article on rigor with other ideas.
- Several observation reports reflected an emphasis to reinforce the school's instructional focus on supporting high-level discussions, small group instruction, and formative assessment approaches. In one report, as a next step, the teacher was asked to consider ways to increase student discussion by having them respond directly to one another and build upon each other's conversations. Additionally, the school leader asked the teacher to reflect on the types of questions asked and whether they were open enough to allow all students' voices to be heard and not mediated by the teacher. During the following observation, the school leaders noted that students used accountable talk strategies and debated their peer's responses in class based on a shared nonfiction topic, indicating teacher growth in this component. A review of teacher observation reports reflects similar patterns of teacher reflection and growth.

Additional Finding

| | | | |
|---------------------------|---|----------------|-------------------|
| Quality Indicator: | 4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development | Rating: | Proficient |
|---------------------------|---|----------------|-------------------|

Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based impact teams that consistently analyze assessment data and work of students on whom they are focused.

Impact

Teachers' participation on teams promotes the achievement of school goals, strengthens their instructional capacity, and improves teachers' practice and progress towards goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- Across the school, teacher teams are using the EAA and other protocols to review student work on formative tasks and determine next instructional steps. A review of agendas and notes reflects that during grade-level and departmental team meetings, teachers determine whether their students are meeting the school achievement goals in literacy and math and grade-level standards. One set of notes reflects that after two cycles on the same standards using read alouds to support retelling, second-grade teachers determined that in order to push their identified students toward meeting the standards, they needed to integrate work on central message, also including students already meeting the standard. Additionally, after the second cycle, teachers revised retelling lessons to increase the use of success criteria checklists by students for self-reflection and peer assessment. Reflecting on their team's practices and revisiting prior decisions are leading to an increase in teachers' instructional capacity.
- Similarly, a review of the first-grade team notes reflects how teachers reviewed their students' ELA data based on the reading foundation standard on recognizing and reading appropriate words, specifically 50 sight words. After using the EAA protocol, teachers decided to support those who were progressing and emerging toward the standards using peer tutors to review the words. A department team, consisting of ELA and social studies teachers, focused on the use of specific unit vocabulary to help students to develop a claim and counterclaim. After reflecting on their instruction and student work, the team decided that students who were progressing and emerging should be provided with sentence starters, more models, and increased use of the success criteria in class.
- Teacher teams meet twice a month as part of a cycle of inquiry to determine students' progress toward standards-based goals that are set for a specific cycle. During a team meeting, third-grade teachers reviewed their data from student work products and determined trends in students meeting or exceeding a specific math standard on solving problems involving four operations and identifying and explaining arithmetic patterns. Although several students were able to make progress from the first round, there were still a few students who needed additional support. Teachers reflected on their practices and decided that students who were performing below the standard should attempt these skills with word problems containing only one step, where the operation is identified. Students who were progressing towards the goal should use a numberless word problem to help them visualize and determine the proper operations to use. Overall, teachers are monitoring students' progress toward meeting goals.