



**Department of
Education**
Chancellor Richard A. Carranza

Office of School Quality

Quality Review Report

2019-2020

P.S. 006 Lillie D. Blake

Elementary 02M006

**45 East 81 Street
Manhattan
NY 10028**

Principal: Lauren Fontana

**Dates of Review:
October 17, 2019 - October 18, 2019**

Lead Reviewer: Phyllis Siwiec

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. 006 Lillie D. Blake 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 State 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 State standards and the 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	Area of Celebration	Well Developed
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 schools 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 schoolwide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection	Additional Finding	Well Developed
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	Well Developed
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 State standards	Additional Finding	Proficient

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	1.4 Positive Learning Environment	Rating:	Well Developed
---------------------------	--	----------------	-----------------------

Findings

The school community's approach to culture-building, discipline, and social-emotional support is informed by a theory of action. Additionally, structures that support students are in place.

Impact

Student voice meaningfully contributes to decision-making that has an impact on schoolwide improvements. The adoption of a specific student program focused on social and emotional growth and personalized guidance services support the personal and academic growth of all students and adults.

Supporting Evidence

- The theory of action for improving school culture shared by the school leaders and staff states that if staff and students worked on using shared language throughout the school regarding respect and inclusion with regular classroom meetings, then students will become better able to self-regulate behaviors, collaborate more successfully, and be more productive. Through the use of daily community circles and morning meetings, students openly discuss concerns or issues that arise throughout the day. Since the focus on developing more student-centered social and emotional learning experiences began, the school has reported a reduction by half in disruptive and distracting behaviors. Students, parents, and staff shared that they feel safe in the school and surrounding school community. School leaders also believe that in order to have a successful school culture, student input was needed. One adopted approach is their student-centered social and emotional support program. This approach has many goals, one being that every child feels a part of his or her classroom and school community each day. Using a common language along with clear expectations creates a culture where students own their behaviors and work together to achieve goals. Students made videos about behavioral expectations that were shared across the school.
- School diversity is celebrated through events and curricular decisions that support a more inclusive culture. World's Fair Night annually celebrates families from cultures across the globe who share their food, arts, and dance. Students note the grade-two year-long study of New York City that culminates with a three-dimensional creation of a model city, *The Panorama*, to which every second grader contributes a city block. All second graders collaborate to create this imaginary, yet realistic city. Students stated that the project emphasizes City diversity and how that is reflected in their school. Creating diverse classroom libraries by including books that reflect characters from a wider range of backgrounds, ethnicities, and cultures is a focus. Students shared that reading historical books about people and events have helped them learn about those who are culturally different from themselves.
- Structures in place create a school culture that fosters social-emotional and academic inclusion. Teachers read literature out loud to their students to encourage conversations on various social-emotional issues and instill compassion and respect for oneself and others. Students are known well by at least one adult by methods including a wellness committee of various staff to address the whole child by discussing issues and concerns for specific students. Whole-school assemblies support the work around the school motto, "Be Safe, Be Kind and Be Responsible." The Pupil Personal Team and Special Education Implementation Team meet weekly to develop plans for students who need additional interventions or formalized support; each child discussed has an appointed case manager. An attendance team closely monitors students who have patterns of lateness or absences and develop action plans to assist families in improving their children's attendance. Student support groups include a small group affected by divorce and empowerment groups for boys and for girls.

Area of Focus

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

Findings

Teachers use common assessments to determine student progress toward goals across grades and subject areas. Across classrooms, teachers' assessment practices reflect checking for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact

While teachers use data to adjust instruction within departments and for individual classes, this practice does not currently lead to increased mastery for students with disabilities and Multilingual Learners (MLLs). Classroom check-for-understanding practices do not always result in instructional adjustments.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and staff believe that it is important to reflect on both formative and summative assessments in order to monitor student understandings, growth, and to provide data-driven instruction. In English Language Arts (ELA), upon entering kindergarten, each student is assessed with a one-on-one literacy profile for beginning literacy knowledge and to determine when students meet benchmarks in literacy development. This assessment profile is given to future grade-level teachers and used as needed in these grades if the student has not yet mastered benchmarks. Teachers administer running records across grades up until students reach reading-level K. When students are assessed at level K and above, whole-book assessments are administered. Pre-unit reading performance assessments are administered in grades three to five, assessing student comprehension of the main skills each unit addresses in fiction and informational reading. Teachers meet on grade levels to look at student work in response to these skills. State standards-aligned narrative and informational progressions in writing are used to measure students' performance levels, as well as to create small groups to move students to the next level. Post-unit assessments are administered to determine the effectiveness of instruction and to make plans for future units. In writing, students write an on-demand piece that teachers grade using a writing rubric.
- In math, teachers have students take pre- and post-assessments that are aligned to State standards. Students in kindergarten through grade two start the year with a pre-assessment in September on material that will be covered through January. In January, students are then provided the post-assessment to monitor student progress. This model of assessment is followed for February and June. In addition, teachers assess students weekly on number facts to help reinforce mastery or progress toward it. Teachers in grades three through five administer quizzes throughout each unit, a summative assessment at the end of each unit, and look at State test data. Across all subject areas, teachers use the data to create small groups and reflect on students who reach grade level and above, those at grade level, and those who have not yet reached grade level. However, the data produced does not include all subgroups within the student body. Therefore, progress and increased mastery for all student subgroups in grades kindergarten through five are not available.
- Across classrooms, teachers' primary method for checking for understanding is checking-in with table groups or student partnerships in order to monitor student progress. Student self-assessment is in the form of self-reflections. For example, in math, students rate their success level and give teachers feedback. Although teachers predominately use a check-in process across classrooms, no adjustments as a result of the check-in were observed.

Additional Finding

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

Findings

Units of study and lesson plans are aligned to State standards. Curricular and academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and data including the redesign of the math program.

Impact

Curricula promote coherence of academic skills that lead to college and career readiness for all students. A diversity of learners including MLLs and students with disabilities have access to the curricula and tasks while being cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and teachers meet in vertical teams to align the curricula to State standards across all grades. During team meetings and end-of-year planning, teachers assess the adjustments and modifications made by revisiting student work, looking at data from a variety of sources from State tests and looking at assessments that are administered in classrooms. Grade-level teams meet weekly with an additional meeting once every month with the literacy coach to monitor adjustments and results. The culminating work to build coherence is accomplished every June with a whole-staff meeting to review all adjustments along with plans for the following year. Reorganization of units, refined alignment, and clarified expectations are shared with a final version of the aligned curricula made for the following school year.
- School leaders and staff have chosen programs that use curricular materials that are aligned to the State standards in ELA, science, and social studies. In math, five years ago, grade-five teachers felt that the math program was not sufficiently challenging after analyzing State assessment data. They had four math sections that were heterogeneously grouped and one accelerated class. After consulting with teachers and parents, the decision was made for this year to create heterogeneously mixed sections with all groups using the Algebra for All focus and adapting State standard-aligned math materials. Grade-five students stated that the redesign of the math class into smaller groups with one teacher per small group helps to prepare them for middle school by having one teacher per subject.
- In order to offer a more comprehensive reading and writing program for students, school leaders and teachers began to use a specific reading and writing program over five years ago. Since then, after reviewing student progress through data and student work products, additional programs have been incorporated in order to develop curricula with tasks to address areas that needed additional support so that the diversity of learners in the school are cognitively engaged. Support for those students who needed more included intervention programs to include one-on-one reading support and small-group intervention groups with additional phonics work. This has led to a grade-one initiative implemented this year that blends phonics work with additional reading programs. In addition, spelling is whole-class and multisensory. In order to encourage a higher level of cognitive engagement, ELA is integrated into social studies or science topics. Science is embedded in the Eco-Center environmental education site instructional plans and is located on the roof of the school in an indoor/outdoor classroom.

Additional Finding

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

Findings

An articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best is demonstrated in teaching practices across classrooms through strategies such as the workshop model, small-group instruction, and station learning that are informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Across most classrooms, student engage in thoughtful work and discussions.

Impact

Most students produce meaningful work products while class work and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use varied structures and models to apply their belief that students learn best when they are engaged and understand the purpose for what they are doing along with exhibiting perseverance through challenges. In a grade-four math lesson, the teacher used a workshop model that started with the modeling of the strategy the class would be practicing in order to multiply a two-digit number by another two-digit number. The open array, or box method, is a horizontal graphic organizer that separates each two-digit number in the multiplication process and helps to visually represent each ones- and tens-place number while maintaining their connectedness. These models provide opportunities for visual representation while building coherence in math concepts. Students had opportunities to work on white boards to try out a few examples before moving to small groups to work collaboratively.
- Station teaching was demonstrated in several classes. In one grade-two class, each station had an adult-facilitator. One station was focused on math, another on independent reading, and a third on guided writing. In a grade-one science class, stations were used to explore live examples of small animals and plants situated on separate tables that the students explored with magnifying glasses. They studied hermit crabs, fish, snails, worms, a large cactus, and turtles and recorded their observations with pictures, labeling, and sentences. As a result, students were engaged, asked questions, and sought evidence to discuss what helps the classroom pets and plants survive if threatened by a predator. Comments and drawings noted the shell and darkish color of the turtle meant that a bird flying overhead would not see the turtle because it would blend into mud.
- Most students participated in lessons by creating work products or discussing content with partners, in small groups, and in whole-class exchanges that demonstrated high levels of student thinking and engagement. Through a website in a grade-five social studies class, each student created individual products of an infographic to present the effects of the most recent ice age on the Western Hemisphere. Chatting with elbow partners, students discussed where they are in the creation process and their next steps. They also shared what new things were learned in day two of the introduction to this unit. Students discussed the effect of the actual capturing of water in ice that covered most of North America and its effect on the shoreline.

Additional Finding

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
---------------------------	------------------------------	----------------	-------------------

Findings

School leaders consistently convey high expectations to the entire staff through the staff handbook, feedback from walkthroughs, and professional learning (PL) aligned to Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. School leaders and staff communicate expectations and provide ongoing feedback to families.

Impact

School leaders provide training and facilitate a system of accountability for expectations. Families understand student progress towards meeting standards.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders share high expectations with staff including behavioral and academic elements through their staff handbook, which is available in separated topics on their shared drive. The first day of school for staff is focused on PL in order to understand and connect the district goals and how they align with school goals. Upon receiving their handbooks, teachers review a wide variety of expectations ranging from day-to-day professional conduct, student safety, grading and academic policies, classroom environment guidelines, and the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Expectations are further described in their weekly staff newsletter. In the beginning of this school year, in order to address National Bullying Prevention Month, a schoolwide assembly was convened to launch the school rules titled Be Safe, Be Kind, Be Responsible. A system of accountability includes walkthrough protocols that reinforce expectations and others such as those regarding classroom environment. Categories include charts, student work, learning environment, classroom libraries, behavior management with positive incentives, technology, and bulletin-board displays. Teachers spoke about the schoolwide classroom library reorganization that was focused on including books representing more diverse characters in environments that introduce a wider range of settings. In addition, books with outdated references were removed from classrooms.
- School leaders and staff communicate expectations to students and their families through regular communications via phone and email as well as a comprehensive handbook. Their handbook includes expectations regarding students' daily attendance, academic and personal behaviors, and grading policies. Information about school-based parent meetings in the Parents as Learning Partners organization as well as information sessions is shared via newsletters and emails. Parents are also invited to student celebrations of project work. Two Parent-Teacher Conferences are face-to-face and are regarded by parents to be opportunities to solidify progress of students and how parents can help. Throughout grade five and the second half of grade four, students lead their own parent-teacher conferences, during which caregivers hear the student's perspective and evidence of moving toward mastery of goals. Caregivers spoke of the confidence that students showed during these conferences. Parents also shared that teachers and administrators are easy to reach and responsive.
- Through the Middle School Transitional Program, staff provide parents with information that leads to a smooth transition to middle school as voiced by parents, teachers and school leaders. There are several information sessions and guest panels, as well as alumni who come together to answer questions and present relevant information. Parents receive ongoing communication via regular newsletters with updates and reminders. Individual parent meetings are also held to support this process. Parents stated that the school sets-up students for life by tapping into staff strengths to teach how to be committed to something and win and lose gracefully. Coaches and volunteers give up their time and reinforce the importance of schoolwork. They also spoke about staff teaching students how to be accountable and to integrate technology. Step-up meetings are places to explore expectations, set new expectations.

Additional Finding

Quality Indicator:	4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development	Rating:	Well Developed
---------------------------	---	----------------	-----------------------

Findings

Teacher teams systematically analyze key elements of teacher work including classroom practice, assessment data and student work for students they are focused upon. Distributed leadership structures, such as coaches and grade-level leaders, are embedded.

Impact

Teacher team work results in shared improvements in teacher practice and mastery of goals for groups of students. There is effective teacher leadership and teachers play an integral role in key decisions that affect student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams meet to analyze, research, and determine action steps for groups of students they share. An observed grade-four teacher team was focused on main-idea questions on the nonfiction performance assessment in order to determine where students are located on the continuum of this skill. Student work samples were analyzed to determine where they scored on a one-through-five-scale writing rubric. Teachers discussed what common characteristics the writing samples had. After examining student work, teachers placed students in small groups based on needs observed in the writing samples. There were five different levels of progression. The team then reviewed and revised small-group lessons, discussed approaches and strategies, and created an implementation plan moving forward in order to more strategically support improvement in writing. As a result, teachers voiced more clarity about distinguishing the various levels regarding main idea with supporting details and possible ways to teach next steps.
- Results as expressed by teachers, coaches and school leaders state that classroom practice, assessment data and student work samples are systematically analyzed by teacher teams as evidenced in meeting minutes. In addition, data has shown that subgroups including students with disabilities, English Language Learners, boys, and girls have shown mastery of goal areas as groups of students. In one data set, reading level progression from third grade through fourth grade showed a comparison of end of third grade with end of fourth grade for boys and girls. Of the 69 total number of students, 50 percent of boys made one year's progress while the other 50 percent made greater than one year's growth. For girls, 34 percent made one year's progress while 66 percent made more than one year's growth. An analysis of math State assessment results for students with disabilities showed growth over three years by an increase from 62 percent at levels 3 and 4 to 75 percent: an increase of 13 percentage points. In ELA, the growth over three years is from 53 percent to 75 percent; an increase of 22 percentage points.
- Teachers discussed distributed leadership structures that are embedded in the development of teachers as leaders. These include grade-level leaders, who meet separately as a team in addition to their own grade-level teams. Also, coaches are staff members who were teachers in the school and then became coaches in literacy and math and, in one case, a coach is also an assistant principal. Teachers also have opportunities to present professional development sessions to other teachers. The embedded structures are also found in the School Leadership Team that supports teachers who play integral roles in key decision making that have an impact on student learning across the school. In addition, the annual June meeting included annual reflection and problem solving with teachers analyzing and proposing solutions to be designed for the following school year. A major area of development is in word study and grammar that resulted in an action plan to move forward for this school year.