School Quality Review Report

School Name	Avery D. Harrington School
Principal	Joe Dixon
Grades	K-8
Dates of Review	November 13-14, 2018
Reviewer(s)	Rahshene Davis-Bowie; Assistant Superintendent, Learning Network II Melissa Gude, Professional Learning Specialist, Learning Network II Lisa Mesi, Office of Leadership Development and Evaluation Estelle Acquah, Office of Leadership Development and Evaluation Laurena Tolson; Principal, Add B. Anderson School Leta Johnson-Garner,Office of Leadership Development and Evaluation Brandon Cummings, Office of Leadership Development and Evaluation Emily Magee, Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Martha Schlatter, Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Jaimie O'Sullivan, Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Content

The School Quality Review Report

The School Quality Review (SQR) is a process that assesses how well schools are organized to support student learning and teacher practice. The SQR provides a comprehensive picture of a school's strengths and areas needing improvement. The SQR occurs over two days, wherein the SQR team gathers information that will be used to determine further structural supports or recommendations for the school. During the review, the review team visits classrooms, talks with students, teachers, and school leaders and uses the quality review rubric to assess how well the school is organized to support student achievement. The rubric outlines three key categories for the school review, as outlined below.

Unwavering Focus on Academic Success	School Culture, Climate, and infrastructure that support personalization and academic success	Leadership and systems that supports high achievement for students and schools
a. Quality classroom instruction a. Forming a professional teaching and learning culture and professional development b. Data based decision making to guide and personalize instruction and intervention	a. Respectful, responsive, safe environment that maximizes learning time b. Personalized environment for all students and staff c. Collaborative parent and community engagement	a. School-based leadership focused on instructional improvement b. Strategic alignment and management of resources (time, people, and money) c. Shared leadership with staff, family, and community with clear goals of supporting academic success

This report presents written findings, impact, and site-specific supporting evidence for school practices that support and limit student learning.

Findings
Findings reflect the school as experienced during the review and accentuate the practices that support or limit student learning and achievement at the school.

Impact
Impact is a mid-inference statement that connects to rubric language and describes the effect on instruction/academics, culture/climate, and leadership/systems.

Supporting Evidence
There is a summary of site-based evidence of practice that clearly support the findings and the impact. Each bullet includes a mid-inference statement, evidence reflecting the experience of the review, or carefully selected quotes or data.

SQR Process

The SQR team consisted of ten team members representing multiple offices in the School District of Philadelphia (SDP) central office. During the two day review, the SQR team visited classrooms, reviewed student work, and interviewed the school leadership team, students, teachers, and support staff.

SQR Item/Stakeholder	Description
Classroom Visits	Reviewers gathered evidence on instruction and engagement, student work, and assessment of learning. Visits are followed by an exchange between review team and principal about what was heard and observed. ● every instructional and speciality (e.g., physical education, art, dance) classroom, for an average of 25 minutes ● lunch room ● hallway transitions
Student work	For each grade level, the SQR team reviewed three samples of student work for the same assignment differentiated by tiers - high performing, medium performing, lower performing. Additionally, the SQR team assessed how well the assignment aligned to the standard provided or any rubric used to grade student work.
Principal/School leadership Team	Discussion about school practices in place and the impact of those practices on teaching and learning.

Teachers and School Staff	Discussion about school practices in place and the impact of those practices on teaching and learning.
Teacher Team or Grade Group Meeting	Reviewers observed teachers engaged in a process that addresses the connection between student work and/or data and resulting teacher actions.
Students	Reviewers discussed with students specific pieces of their work, their experiences as learners, and overall school culture.

The SQR team also reviewed the school self-assessment, provided by the school leadership team. The self-assessment provides an overview of school practices, aligned to the key domains of the SQR rubric, and the impact of those practices. It is an entry point to understanding key practices, decisions, goals, and impact prior to the school quality review.

School Background and Context

Avery D. Harrington School serves students in grades K-8. Information about this school, including enrollment, attendance, student demographics, and data regarding academic performance, can be found here. The school leadership team provided the following additional context for the school:

- 25% of the student population is special education (SPED).
- The leadership team is most proud of the positive behavioral gains achieved through a transformation of the school climate and culture.
- The school-wide goals that communicate Harrington's vision are:
  - Increase student achievement,
  - Create self motivated learners,
  - Create classrooms where students are learning at a high level.
- The school has significant community support as demonstrated through:
  - Partnership with WePac to refurbish the library.
  - A 21st Century grant to provide a free after school program.
  - Partnerships with Saint Montico Church and The Warden Wesley Community Catholic Church.

SQR Main Findings

Unwavering Focus on Academic Success

Practices that Support Student Learning

Findings
- Structures are in place in classrooms and around the school to post objectives, agendas, standards and learning goals.
- Timing is clear and tight for most instructional blocks.

- Leadership acknowledges the need to prioritize a focus on instruction going forward and that students are ready for more rigorous instruction.
- There is a core group of teachers and support staff that have deep historical knowledge of students and the community.

Impact

The teachers' purposes of lessons or units are available for students to observe. Teachers have the opportunity to provide learning goals, ensure or check that students understand, and provide feedback to each student to help them understand where they are in their learning and what to do to improve. Leadership team articulates general goals for student learning. Teachers know students exceptionally well (e.g. knowledge of interests, strengths needs etc.).

Supporting Evidence
- The majority of classrooms had anchor charts and standards posted to reinforce learning. Several lower grade classrooms had the following:
    - word walls present and visible for all students
    - individual student learning goals posted
    - learning objectives framed as "Students Will Be Able To" (SWBAT)
    - daily schedules posted
    - anchor charts for all subject areas
    - character terms on front walls
- In an autistic support (AS) classroom, the teacher utilized classroom dividers to effectively create space for individualized supports for various students. There were also individualized schedules for students and they were told to "check your schedule" when transitioning from one thing to another. There were several adults in the classroom and each of them was supporting certain students in identified areas around the room. The ratio of adults to students were typically high in AS classrooms, allowing for personalized and differentiated supports for students.
- In several 1st grade classrooms, it was evident that teacher used classroom level data to track student progress; students were grouped in centers for math and according to their DRA levels for reading blocks.
- The school has implemented math block expectations, which pushes teachers to provide instruction according to students' instructional needs. During multiple math blocks, students practiced open response math items where they need to explain their thinking. This was evidenced through student work posted in the classroom.
- In some classes, there were instructional groups that were organized by student strengths, weaknesses, and performance levels. There were instances of promising small group strategies in lower grades. One teacher circulated the classroom and prompted the following: "Student A will comply with no more than 1 verbal prompt" "Student B will remain seated" "Student C will read the first 25 sight words". Overall the teachers use iReady data to drive small group and individualized instruction.
- Some students articulated that they receive high level feedback on their work.

- The leadership team articulated that ensuring grade-level high quality instruction is the school's biggest area of focus at this time. Leadership team members understand the need to shifting their focus from culture and climate to instructional improvement as students are ready and eager to learn.
- There is a large presence of veteran teachers that worked at the school for 10 or more years.

Practices that Limit Student Learning

Findings
- There were limited demonstrations of students understanding the targeted learning goals. Strategies to differentiate learning were used inconsistently in classrooms
- Not all instruction was aligned to grade level expectations.
- The academic vision is currently too broad.

Impact

As a result of inconsistent teaching practices, students are not always exposed to tasks that provide opportunities for them to engage in discussions and higher-order thinking activities leading to varying levels of quality student work products and classroom engagement. Most classrooms provide little to moderately challenging tasks (e.g., students summarize, apply formulas). Tasks are loosely differentiated and aligned with grade-level standards. Tasks give students some opportunities to respond verbally or in writing. In most classrooms, students have limited opportunities to participate in dialogue. Many students are not invited to participate in discussion or have few opportunities to respond to questions (e.g., questions may be open-ended i.e. "What do you think?" but without enough wait time). There are missed opportunities for student-to-student discourse and for students to take ownership of their learning. Leadership team articulates general goals for student learning. Leadership occasionally visits classrooms and generally provides feedback that is relevant to meeting targets.

Supporting Evidence
- The vast majority of classrooms demonstrated the following:
  - Students engaging in minimal or low-level questioning, and low rigor tasks that were misaligned to the standards/objectives/goals posted.
  - Students asked to engage in a "turn and talk" but with little to no accountable talk expectations.
  - The teacher spends large chunks of instructional time having students copy problems from the board as opposed to engaging in rigorous tasks.
  - School-wide, classroom instructional time dedicated towards PSSA practice tests; however, teachers were not supporting students with specific test-taking strategies.
  - Minimal student work posted in classrooms.
  - Assignments lacking purpose, with little higher order thinking required.
  - Teachers failing to scaffold lessons and differentiate instruction.
- In lower grade classrooms, students were observed at centers and could explain at a very simple level what they were doing. However, students struggled with explaining why they were doing it.

- Students did not know their individual reading levels and could not explain the habits of good reading and writing.
- Most feedback on student work did not support learning; teacher would share "good job" or an overall number correct but not qualitative feedback to support students' next steps.
- In several middle school classrooms, there was a significant lack of student engagement during the lesson. The teacher modeled an example and then gave students a problem to do; few, if any, students were able to complete the problem. There was also a potentially missed opportunity for one teacher to support students with small group instruction while students worked in groups on their social studies packet.
- In discussions with the leadership team, leadership articulated unclear school-wide academic goals or goals for supporting academic success that are too broadly defined. (e.g., "we need to focus on math and ELA PD" vs. specific goals within each content area).
- Middle school students could not clearly articulate whether their instructional studies adequately prepared them for competitive high schools. Some also mentioned that there could be more after-school enrichment activities aimed at helping them improve academically.

School Culture and Climate

Practices that Support Student Learning

Findings
- Students believe that adults provide a physically safe space for learning.
- A core group of teachers and support staff have important historical knowledge of students and the community.
- Students are aware of behavioral expectations for the school and understand the ClassDojo system.
- Students and staff were able to clearly talk about the need for everyone to feel accepted and respected in the school.

Impact
Students and adults experience some personalization (e.g., clear behavioral expectations are defined and expected, adults and students address one another by name). Most students have access to adult support (e.g., most students are known by at least one adult). School staff attempt to provide some support structures to address socio-economic needs of students. The school uses some standard forms of communication. Most families have access to updated student information.

Supporting Evidence
- Students in upper grades and teachers with three or more years at the school clearly articulated that there has been a drastic improvement in climate and culture since Principal Dixon's tenure. Multiple students and staff described the culture prior as "chaotic"; "dangerous for both students and staff", and "lacking discipline." They described the building as previously being extremely unhygienic. Currently students feel safer at school and students tend to stay in

classroom more, as opposed to occupying hallways and stairwells. Students are clear in that they need order and appreciate that teachers create a safe environment for learning.
- SLANT is posted in lower grades to encourage students to be more attentive in class.
- Behavioral incentives (e.g., ClassDojo) exist and are implemented with varying fidelity in the school.
- Hallway transitions are organized and orderly. There were minimal observed behavioral issues; it appeared that students understood and enacted hallway protocols.

Practices that Limit Student Learning

Findings
- Physical safety is in place in the building, but there is room for improvement to make all students feel welcomed and cared for in order to maximize their learning.
- There is not a fully built system for rewards/consequences that is implemented consistently schoolwide.
- Students and staff do not always feel they can suggest changes or take risks that would positively affect themselves and the school.

Impact
The school building is generally safe & clean, though there may be some litter. Staff mostly demonstrates polite but distant interactions with one another and visitors. Order is maintained, with a generally positive environment with clear expectations of behavior for all. Some interruptions in classrooms and transition spaces interfere with instruction. Students and adults experience minimal personalization (e.g., behavioral expectations are defined, social climate of the school is respectful, but superficial or not especially supportive). Some teachers, counselors, others serve as ad hoc advisors to students, but the school wide vision does not equally motivate all students to succeed academically, personally, socially.

Supporting Evidence
- Students shared mixed experiences with feeling respected by teachers. Multiple students described instances of being yelled at by their teachers. Multiple classroom visits across lower and upper grades showed teachers using extremely raised voices to set expectations or reprimand students. One student described an incident where she questioned why a teacher was speaking to her in a harsh manner; according to her, she received a severe reprimand for deeming to question the teacher's behavior. One teacher was observed pointing in students faces and yelling at students, making them repeat tasks over and over again.
- There is uneven implementation of the ClassDojo system - only 65% of teachers are using it purposefully and strategically to manage behavior - the remaining teachers are treating it as a compliance measure . These teachers used an abundance of verbal direction that was not incentivized through the Dojo system.

- - ○ Students described consequences for behavioral violations as loss of dojo points, inability to participate in class dances, parties, dress down days, popcorn parties, pizza parties and pretzel days.
    - ○ Teachers cite the need for more professional development around additional effective behavioral management for students.
  - Several students cited the need for more air conditioning, better lunches, pest control, and cleaner bathrooms.

Leadership and Systems

Practices that supports student learning

Findings
- Some systems are in place for various meetings – leadership team, teacher teams meetings, and opportunities for collaboration.
- Clear schedule and structure for movement between classrooms and other transitions.
- Students and staff understand what is expected of them in terms of culture/climate.

Impact
Leadership team communicates goals and expectations to staff throughout the school. The Leadership team offers some ongoing teacher learning and leadership opportunities. Leadership team sets expectations for school culture of respect and trust.

Supporting Evidence
- Teachers engage in common planning time through grade group meetings, which often times focus on how to structure math time block and create lesson plans. In order to further distribute leadership, each grade has a lead teacher. It is clear that the work of teams is having an impact on the school's instruction, as demonstrated in coherence in lesson planning. Teacher team meetings are allowing teachers the opportunity to share instructional practices, and this sharing is beginning to create improvements in teachers' instructional practices.
- The school has dedicated job-embedded time towards the development of teacher and School Based Teacher Leader (SBTL) content knowledge in math. In a coaching meeting, the SBTL spent time preparing to support a 3rd grade teacher with internalizing standards and instructional resources.
- Leadership uses a mailbox ticker system to review and address classroom management issues with teachers; this is intended to increase teacher accountability for maintaining behavioral expectations (e.g., redirecting students during hallways transitions).
- There is clear adult supervision and student ownership during hallways transitions and dismissal times. Bathroom schedules are in place for all classes; "bathrooms lock at 2:00pm, can be opened with a code 3." During morning admissions, students enter the building at the front door and proceed into the Auditorium. The SPO greets everyone, giving instructions such as "take off your hoodies," "into the Auditorium,, etc. She greetings students by name and saying, "good

morning." There is staff assigned in the main hall, at doors and the auditorium. Middle year students are sent to the cafeteria where they have breakfast. Everyone is seated and speaking with indoors voices. There is limited staff, but students seem to know the expectations and behave accordingly.

Practices that Limit Student Learning

Findings
- Collaborative systems are not yet fully integrated throughout the school.
- Classroom, hallway transitions, and bathroom breaks are lengthy and can eat up instructional time.
- Few students and staff identified that they receive feedback and recognition for meeting expectations.
- Not all staff could communicate school-wide goals and areas of focus.

Impact
Leadership team articulates general goals for student learning, vague direction and policies in some but not all key areas of school's function. Leadership Team navigates available resources with uneven success, and may not align resources with school goals. Opportunities for teacher learning and leadership are are available based on interest rather than need or skill. Principal entrusts a small group of leaders but may not provide all the necessary supports they need to carry out their duties.

Supporting Evidence
- Teachers indicated that the principal and assistant principal do not provide sufficient personalized instructional feedback. Several teachers stated that the SBTL, a veteran staff of the school, is able to provide more actionable feedback for teachers.
- Several teachers indicated that leadership is highly compliance driven and that there is a communication barrier between leadership and staff. One teacher stated "no one is listening to my feedback"; another stated "I dont always feel like I can make suggestions or ask questions; it feels like there is minimal positive feedback for teachers and staff."
- It is clear that teachers are engaged in professional collaborations that are connected to the school's goals; however, the efficacy of their work is less clear. Review of teamwork across the school shows consistency in some instructional practices but does not demonstrate progress toward goals for groups of students. While teachers are sometimes talking about student need and sharing practices, a lack of a formal inquiry structure makes it difficult to demonstrate impact. Teachers also report that grade group meetings are sometimes based on overall Learning Network II needs, as opposed to classroom or school needs.
- Classroom transitions to and from common area spaces often times take at minimum 8 minutes due to teacher stopping students for low level student misbehaviors (e.g., social chatter). After one transition, a teacher added a "brain break" for students after a transition lasting almost two minutes, further cutting into instructional time.