THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

School Quality Review Report

School Name	Robert E. Lamberton School
Principal	Antoinette Powell
Grades	K-8
Dates of Review	November 15-16, 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 Leta Johnson-Garner, Office of Leadership Development and Evaluation Brandon Cummings, Office of Leadership Development and Evaluation Jo Ann Berkley, Office of Planning and Evidence Based Supports Megan Conley, Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment 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 Donna Pavlovcak, Parent Representative (Lamberton)

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 12 team members representing multiple offices in the SDP central office and a member of the Lamberton community. 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

Robert Lamberton 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.

As a new principal as of the 2018-2019 school year, the principal as identified three primary goals:

1. Establish consistent, effective, learning communities
2. Revisit school norms with an intentional focus on three pillars-respect, responsibility and kindness. The most significant need is to be intentional about establishing an effective school-wide PBIS system that builds, celebrates and honors students. The impact will lead to better student engagement in a culture that is safe and nurturing.
   a. Establishing an effective PBIS system that will focus on the three pillars of respect, responsibility and kindness.
   b. Building a Student Government
   c. Creating quick wins and celebrations for students doing great things.
   d. Developing a school wide culture action plan that includes a rubric for monitoring and assessment
3. Rebuild relationships with school families. Establish the expectation that all classrooms use ClassDojo to communicate with families.

SQR Main Findings

Unwavering Focus on Academic Success

Practices that Support Student Learning

Findings

- In K-5 classrooms, objectives/agendas, standards/learning goals were posted and clearly visible.
- Leadership recognizes 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 the important historical knowledge of students and the community.

Impact

The teachers' lesson goals 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. Some teachers know students exceptionally well (e.g. knowledge of interests, strengths, needs, etc.).

Supporting Evidence

- The leadership team explicitly stated several times that while students are ready and eager to learn, instructional engagement is low. They are working to build an academic vision for the school.
- The majority of classrooms for grades K-5 were well organized,with anchor charts, learning goals, and standards posted to reinforce learning; these included
  - word walls present and visible for all students
  - learning objectives framed as "Students Will Be Able To" (SWBAT)
  - daily schedules posted
  - anchor charts for most subject areas (e.g., reading connections, rules for the rug, setting, characters, strategies for turn and talk, writing checklist, math operation words)
  - character terms on front walls
- In a 1st grade classroom, students were actively engaged in independent reading; students were seated in various places around the room quietly reading different books. The classroom assistant supported learning while the teacher was running late. It was clear that the assistant knew the morning routines and she was able to step in and avoid a great loss of instructional minutes. The teacher explicitly modeled the phonic focus for the day, shared what a contraction is, and showed examples on a chart.
- In a 2nd grade classroom, the enthusiasm that the teacher utilized to engage students in their books for the day was effective as all students wanted to read with the teacher and answer questions. The classroom organization including spaces that were organized around a culture of literacy with clearly defined spaces for independent reading, student goal-setting, and positive behavior reinforcements.
- In a 4th grade classroom, students were engaging with a common text where the teacher reinforced the idea of students using textual evidence to support their thinking about the text being studied.
- In a 6th grade classroom, the teacher utilized the do now as a way to revisit skills (e.g., greatest common factor) that students struggled with on a previous assessment.

- There is a large presence of veteran teachers that have worked at the school for 10 or more years, who show deep care of the students and larger Lamberton community. They are eager to want to improve learning conditions and raise academic expectations for students.

Practices that Limit Student Learning

Findings
- Standards and learning goals were not visibly present in most middle school classrooms.
    - When they were posted, there were limited demonstrations of students understanding the targeted learning goals.
    - Student engagement was limited in middle school classrooms.
    - There were often missed opportunities to really push students academically and use assessments to drive higher learning for students.
    - There were limited demonstrations of students being asked to use deeper level thinking in student work products.
- Strategies to differentiate learning were used inconsistently in classrooms.
- The vision around instruction is not specific enough because the school is still focusing on improving its climate.
- Teachers seem to be receiving minimal professional development (PD) on making sure instruction is at grade level.
- Staff are not consistently using their deep knowledge of students and the community to hold themselves, students and other adults accountable to high instructional expectations.

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.

Supporting Evidence
- The vast majority of classrooms demonstrated the following:
    - Students engaging in minimal or low-level questioning, and low rigor tasks that are misaligned to the standards/objectives/goals posted. There was a consistent demonstration of below grade level work in core instructional classes, including tasks that were often purely memorizational or procedural based.
    - Assignments lacking purpose, with little higher order thinking required. Student work were either not clearly aligned to grade level expectations or contained little teacher

feedback that supports learning.
- ○ Teachers failing to scaffold lessons and differentiate instruction.
- Multiple middle school classrooms had minimal to no standards, anchor charts or student work visible, with limited student engagement. In an upper grade classroom, students were working on a 'Do Now' for almost 30 minutes, limiting time for core instruction. There was a lack of classroom expectations for student behavior and for engagement, as indicated by multiple incidents of off-task behavior with little to no teacher redirection. In another upper grade classroom, the learning environment was characterized by a complete lack of perceived systems for classroom behavior and academics. Students were either talking over the teacher or walking around and in/out of the classroom during instruction; they were not engaged with the content being shared. Although smart boards were present, teachers were not consistently leveraging it to engage students. The 2nd floor, where the middle school grades are located are generally uninviting and messy in classrooms and hallways.
- In a kindergarten classroom, a teacher was implementing phonics instruction; however, there was no mini-lesson provided. The teacher utilized a shared poetry reading and then students worked on a handout focused on a specific letter. Students were seated while the teacher modeled writing the letter on the front board. Students circled the letter on the paper as the teacher did the same on the front board. It was unclear what students were expected to learn during this time.
- In a 4th grade classroom, students were completing a "cootie catcher" where they were asked to identify fact vs. opinion; however, the work did not appear to be textually based.
- In several lower grade classrooms, there were gaps in teacher content knowledge when attempting to engage students in identifying text features in their shared text. As a result, students were struggling to identify features in their text or engage with the learning target for the day.
- Several support classrooms were disorderly, with no clearly defined system for books in the library, clutter surrounding table groups and around the room, or unclear learning spaces organized to build student differentiation and independence.
- There was little indication that teacher planning time is being used to focus on instructional content.

School Culture and Climate

Practices that Support Student Learning

Finding
- In K-5 and Autistic Support (AS) classrooms, students are aware of behavioral expectations for the school and there are clear systems and structures in place to address and support appropriate behavior.

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 provide some support structures to address emotional needs of students.

Supporting Evidence
- Students followed procedures during multiple fire alarm and said excuse me and please/thank you to one another.
- Teachers established clear classroom routines including how to transition between spaces and redirected behavior as needed.
- During hallway transitions for lower grades, there was adult presence and follow-through with asking students to meet hallway expectations.
- Students conveyed that overall, they feel that the adults in the building try to keep them physically safe.
- School wide behavioral expectations are outlined and reinforced through morning announcements and assembly. School leadership recently reset some PBIS expectations for the school (e.g.,teachers have been taking and sharing pictures of students being respectful, responsible, and kind). There was some evidence of ClassDojo being used to reinforce positive behaviors.
- For lower grades, the lunchroom was fairly orderly. Students are given games and activities to engage in. School leadership is consistently visible.

Practices that Limit Student Learning

Findings
- There is not a fully built system for rewards/consequences that is balanced and implemented consistently schoolwide.
  - Few systems and structures are in place to support a positive learning environment in emotional support and middle school classrooms.
  - Strategies to de-escalate students in distress were not consistently implemented.

Impact
The school building is generally safe and clean, though there may be some litter. Staff mostly demonstrates polite but distant interactions with one another and visitors. 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
- There is constant student traffic in the hallways on the 2nd floor where the middle school grades are located. On multiple occasions, there were several students observed coming and going from

classrooms, some going to the bathroom but mostly appearing to run, hang out, or meet up with friends in the hallway, including interrupting other classrooms and "picking up" friends from another room. Where there was a lack of adult presence or where adult presence was ineffective, students pushed one another, called each other names, and were even observed throwing things across a classroom.

- During a post-lunch hallway transition, the principal came to the 2nd floor early to model effective student and adult behaviors during the transition - including, how to instruct students to stand and how to usher students into their classrooms in an orderly manner. When the actual transition began, teachers were not able to effectively replicate what was just modeled - leading to a prolonged and chaotic transition**.**
- In emotional support classrooms, there were minimal individual behavior plans for students implemented (as opposed to class-wide behavior plans). There was limited demonstration of teachers and support staff creating, monitoring and executing individual behavior plans in classrooms. Teachers and staff conveyed that they feel ill-equipped to support these students.
- Although ClassDojo exists, it is not used with school-wide fidelity. Middle school students in particular are not responsive to the points system. Leadership cited the need for consistency around higher expectations, ownership, and shared accountability amongst adults for climate and culture.

Leadership and Systems

Practices that supports student learning

Findings
- There are systems in place for various staff meetings – leadership team, teacher teams meetings.
- School Leadership is described as positive, optimistic, supportive, and visible/present in all areas of the school. Leaders are also described as realistic, honest, and transparent. This has enabled an environment of trust between leadership and teachers and leadership and students.

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
- Leadership team members meet 1:1 with the principal, although not collectively yet. There is a nascent PLC structure in place, where teachers are starting to unpack math standards and undertake cross-curriculum planning. Teachers have common prep time, which has recently been used to work to support the overall culture and climate of the school. The climate staff meet monthly with the Assistant Principal.
- Teachers consistently acknowledged the positivity and responsiveness of leadership and named how that has changed in a positive manner from the previous school year. Several teachers

described the principal and leadership team (LT) as 'open and honest". One teacher indicated that they consider the LT as true leaders and not merely bosses. Another teacher described the principal as "always at a 1, which helps with school-wide morale". The principal is consistently described as having set a positive tone for how adults and students should treat one another. The principal has demonstrated efforts to quickly understand the learning community of her new school and for continued efforts to establish strong expectations for climate and culture.

Practices that Limit Student Learning

Findings
- Meetings do not consistently engage teachers in collaborative activities, particularly when it comes to reviewing instruction.
- There is little evidence that learning from PDs/meetings and school-wide strategies are transferred into classrooms.
- High expectations set by leadership are not transferred into practice throughout the school.
- The school is significantly understaffed and is unable to ensure students are supported in all areas given the high needs of the student population.

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 always strategically align resources with all school goals - climate and instruction.

Evidence
- Common planning time for teachers has been used to triage student behavioral issues as opposed to consistently focusing on instruction. Teachers create agendas for planning time; however notes and next steps are only sporadically captured electronically. Teachers are not engaged in inquiry-based, structured collaborations.
- There was little indication that teachers and administration work closely together in making school decisions, including those surrounding professional development opportunities.
- Teachers and staff expressed some mixed messages about the school's progress and their continued commitment to the school community given the challenging culture. Some teachers named both personally driven reasons to stay (e.g., "I am a dedicated person") and community-based reasons (e.g., "the children have had so much turnover already. . .").
- Teachers report not feeling supported by the District's central office in dealing with the acute challenges that stem from students' behavioral and emotional issues. Both leadership and staff cite the need for more climate support.