Quality Review Report

2014-2015

High School for Dual Language and Asian Studies
02M545
350 Grand Street
New York
NY 10002

Principal: Li Yan

Date of review: January 8, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Mark Ossenheimer
The School Context

The High School for Dual Language and Asian Studies is a high school with 414 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 3% Black, 6% Hispanic, 2% White, and 89% Asian students. The student body includes 28% English language learners and 2% special education students. Boys account for 47% of the students enrolled and girls account for 53%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 98.0%.

School Quality Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area of:</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.1</strong> 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</td>
<td>Additional Findings</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
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<td><strong>1.2</strong> 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</td>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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<td><strong>2.2</strong> 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</td>
<td>Additional Findings</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
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<tr>
<th>School Culture</th>
<th>Area of:</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3.4</strong> Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations</td>
<td>Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
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<th>Systems for Improvement</th>
<th>Area of:</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
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<td><strong>4.2</strong> Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
<td>Additional Findings</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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Area of Celebration

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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Findings
School leaders consistently communicate high expectations regarding elements of the Danielson Framework for Teaching to the entire staff and provide ongoing training. A unified set of high expectations is communicated to all students with focused feedback and guidance supports.

Impact
The school has created a culture for adult and student learning resulting in shared accountability among staff. All students, including the large population of English language learners own their educational experience and are prepared for the next level.

Supporting Evidence
- School leaders consistently communicate the belief that hard work by both teachers and students will result in higher levels of learning for adults and students. This growth mindset is embedded in professional development trainings documented in the 2014-2015 Professional Learning Plan and discussed by teachers during the teacher team meeting. School leaders developed trainings in growth mindset versus fixed mindset that modeled for teachers how to incorporate this expectation into lesson plans.

- While school leaders have established a system of inter-visitation for teachers based on elements of the Danielson Framework, teachers frequently visit each other to further their learning and practice independently. During both teacher team meetings, every teacher had both hosted and visited another teacher to build specific areas of practice such as checks for understanding and structuring class discussions.

- The expectation and academic program support that all students will comprehend, speak, read, and write in both English and Mandarin by the time they graduate. All students take the state English Regents exam and the Advanced Placement exam in Mandarin. This is made possible by effective guidance supports that ensure students receive the appropriate level of English language arts, English as a second language, or Mandarin for a double period across all grade levels.

- Leadership, faculty, families and students all communicate high expectations toward college readiness and preparation. In addition to dual language fluency, the school requires all students take four years of math and science. While the High School for Dual Language and Asian Studies is a small school, every student is also programmed into appropriate Advanced Placement courses, which allows the school to offer seven possible options. This ensures 97.7% of all students complete approved rigorous courses and assessments according to the College and Career Preparatory Course Index captured in the School Quality Guide.

- Students form study groups with peers that meet in the mornings, lunch, free periods, and/or after school. The groups are independently formed and are a student-designed support so that everyone is successful in meeting the high expectations. One student in the student meeting referred to these groups as an essential part of the school culture and why she considers the school a “second home.”
Area of Focus

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

Findings
Across most classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect an articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best that includes instructional strategies providing multiple entry points into the curricula however, these strategies are not yet fully integrated across the vast majority of classrooms.

Impact
Teaching practices reflect the Danielson Framework for Teaching so that all learners including English language learners are engaged in challenging tasks, but all teachers are not yet implementing these strategies strategically and thus missing opportunities to provide high quality supports and extensions into the curricula for all learners.

Supporting Evidence
- The belief that all learners benefit from heterogeneous grouping was evident in an observed English as a second language class with the students paired high/medium or medium/low for a peer feedback activity on an essay. However, while students were grouped in a college writing class, students indicated that the teacher assigns groups by counting off students so that grouping is random and not strategic.

- Most classrooms observed provided opportunities for students to engage in discussions with peers and explain their thinking with either a small group or the whole class. For example, a Global 1 class had students working in groups of four, presenting posters on a topic of industrialization to the class and providing written feedback on those posters. An advanced placement calculus class had student-groups problem solving and sharing their process with the class leading to an open discussion of strategies. However, a Global 3 class and a living environment class had missed opportunities for student discussions and resulted in a pattern of teacher-student-teacher discourse.

- Teaching practices in most observed classrooms were informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching, particularly student engagement and questioning. For example, in a chemistry class the teacher asked a mix of lower order content and higher order thinking questions, as well as engaging students in accountable talk in explaining their thinking. If students agreed or disagreed with student responses, they were consistently asked to explain their process and/or thinking.
### Additional Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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#### Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and strategically integrate the instructional shifts. Rigorous habits and higher order thinking skills are emphasized in curricula and embedded across grades.

#### Impact

The school’s curricula decisions result in coherence across grades that promotes college readiness and all learners including English language learners (ELLs) must demonstrate their thinking.

#### Supporting Evidence

- There is strong coherency in English language arts (ELA), English as a second language (ESL), and Mandarin curricula across grades, which ensure students reach college level standards. This alignment and coherence results in a 75% pass rate on the state ELA Regents exam for students designated as English language learners and 50% to all ELL students scoring a 75 or above earning college ready status in the CUNY system. Every student takes the Advanced Placement Mandarin course and exam.

- A review of math curricula demonstrates strategic integration of the instructional shifts and thoughtful alignment within the algebra II and trigonometry course. This is designated as a college-ready course and is a one or two year sequence, but provides flexibility so that students may successfully move from one sequence to the other during the school year to accelerate or de-accelerate the pace based on student need.

- Tasks had embedded rigorous habits such as the Common Core standard of “cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis.” A beginning ESL course writing task on *The Little Prince*, a ninth grade course essay on *The Joy Luck Club*, a ninth grade global history presentation on industrialization, and an eleventh grade English course essay and presentation on *Macbeth* all addressed and built upon this standard.

- Regents level science classes living environment and chemistry had embedded Common Core literacy standards for writing and reading within unit and lesson tasks such as creating visuals/diagrams with written explanation of the processes of mitosis/meiosis, and predicting products and writing ionic equations. The tasks ensured all students demonstrate their thinking through the use of tiered vocabulary tools, purposeful grouping, and reciprocal teaching.
Quality Indicator: 2.2 Assessment  
Rating: Well Developed

Findings
Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers use assessments and rubrics that are aligned with the school’s curricula. The school uses common assessments to create a clear picture of student progress toward goals across grades and subjects and to adjust curricula decisions.

Impact
Assessments provide actionable and meaningful feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement. Curricula and instructional adjustments ensure all students, including English language learners, demonstrate increased mastery.

Supporting Evidence
- Across all subjects, teachers develop rubrics for performance-based assessments that embed content and Common Core standards providing students a clear portrait of mastery. Detailed rubrics were used for a blog regarding *The Little Prince*, a travel brochure for either ancient Athens or Sparta, an oral and written presentation connecting a current leader to *Macbeth*, a circle graph drawing using and solving quadratic equations, and two different argumentative essays regarding *Of Mice and Men* and the democracy protests in Hong Kong.

- All posted student work in hallways and in student folders had rubrics attached for performance-based tasks with clear feedback connected to the rubric, as well as next steps. For example, one student in the student meeting showed and discussed the feedback on an argumentative essay she received regarding a strong claim, but a next step to increase further develop her use of counter claim to increase objectivity. The feedback suggested a one on one tutoring session, which the student attended and revised her essay.

- Students were observed using rubrics during class to self-assess and provide their peers feedback on presentations and writing within an upper level college writing course, global history, and an English as a second language course.

- The school uses summative and formative assessments connected to the New York State English as a Second Language Test (NYSELAT), unit assessments, and course grades to adjust curricula and programming for ESL students. For example, based on student data an additional ESL course was developed as students moved to the advanced level and initially test out of ESL services before being placed into a college-writing course in order to better prepare them for this required college ready course.
**Findings**

Teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations that promote the achievement of school goals and analyze student work.

**Impact**

Professional collaborations strengthen the instructional capacity of teachers and academic progress groups of students, including English language learners.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The school’s professional learning plan for this year details a series of whole faculty meetings connected to school goals with either a Professional Learning Team (subject area) or a Small Teacher Team (across subjects) as follow up designed for teachers to design and implement respective goals. For example, after a whole faculty workshop on growth mindset and student motivation, teacher teams developed activities or strategies within departments to implement in the classroom. One result was the descriptor of “Effort” being added to rubrics in order to encourage the idea that hard work is needed for success.

- Teachers participate in Small Teacher Teams focused on problems of practice and action research. Teacher team meetings as well as a review of agendas and minutes showed how one team focused on infusing writing and Common Core Learning Standards into the health and art curricula, and how another focused on improving student performance through increased differentiation and student engagement.

- An observed team meeting of ESL teachers demonstrated the use of a student work analysis protocol that had one teacher present a problem of practice connected to the student’s writing that included a review of previous work and intervention steps. The team then developed strategies to use with the student that had not been previously tried, such as previewing vocabulary before and during the writing process.

- The science department identified the need to increase teacher capacity in developing appropriate scaffolds for ESL students to provide multiple entry points into the text heavy curricula. Each science teacher now collaborates weekly with an ESL teacher to review and revise unit and lesson plans. The use of tiered vocabulary and think-pair-share strategies has increased scholarship reports.