Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Thomas A. Edison Career & Technical Education High School
28Q620

165-65 84th Avenue
Queens, NY 11432

Principal: Moses Ojeda

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Lead Reviewer: Juan Mendez

The School Context

Thomas Edison Career and Technical Education High School is a high school with 2168 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 22% Black, 22% Hispanic, 4% White, and 50% Asian students. The student body includes 1% English language learners and 20% special education students. Boys account for 64% of the students enrolled and girls account for 36%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 93%.

School Quality Criteria

Instructional Core		
To what extent does the school…	**Area of:**	**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 Findings**	**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	**Focus**	**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	**Additional Findings**	**Proficient**
School Culture		
To what extent does the school…	**Area of:**	**Rating:**
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations	**Celebration**	**Well Developed**
Systems for Improvement		
To what extent does the school…	**Area of:**	**Rating:**
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning	**Additional Findings**	**Proficient**

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed

Findings

The principal has orchestrated a culture of high expectations for learning via multiple methods of communication to all constituents, while partnering with families and supporting students with effective feedback and supports.

Impact

A clear path to college and career readiness has been established through transparent channels of communication with families and students that deepen their understanding and ownership of expectations and prepare students for the next level.

Supporting Evidence

- The use of Skedula, Pupil Path and Daedalus across all grade levels ensures that essential information is communicated to families on their children's progress towards mastery of Common Core Learning Standards and overall performance. Additionally, parents partner through ongoing Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, collaborative workshops on topics, such as college and career, immigrant parents and supporting students' individual needs. Parents highlighted, "The school offers many Advanced Placement and College Now classes and has a long history of success."

- Student ownership of their learning process is evident through support and participation in ongoing tutoring sessions (before and after school), school websites such as Edison English with access to summer reading assignments, Common Core tasks, and access to library databases promoting inquiry-based research.

- All students are provided with an opportunity to thrive. For example, at-risk students are identified and enrolled in Operation Graduation and Operation Green to ensure classroom expectations, attendance and graduation requirements are met within four years. In addition, Career and Technical Education courses are aligned to certification examinations which allow students the opportunity to graduate with a Technical Endorsed Regents Diploma. Students' earning a Regents diploma has increased 5% from 80% to 85% in the past year.

- High expectations are manifested through structured guidance supports for individual students with one-on-one conferencing, and a prevalent "continuous learning" school-wide motto for all. Also, a key element of the school's instructional focus is student engagement. The SkillsUSA Chapter, a partnership that supports engagement in career and technical education in classrooms, won 10 first place Gold Medals at the 2013 Citywide Career and Technical Education Competition. A student stated, "SkillsUSA has transformed me."

- Multiple opportunities are present to allow students to meet college and career expectations embedded with rigorous habits, such as Advanced Placement Literature, Advanced Placement Calculus, career and financial management, SkillsUSA and Model UN.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Proficient

Findings
School leaders and faculty share a cogent set of beliefs on how students learn best informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching allowing multiple pedagogical approaches. Teaching practices and student ownership of work products varies across the school.

Impact
Teaching practices aligned to the Common Core instructional shifts support students to engage in high level discussions and to produce meaningful work products, yet there are missed opportunities for all learners to take ownership of their learning.

Supporting Evidence
- In most classes, students are engaged in a collaborative learning, such as in Algebra I, students work in groups to write, draw and solve linear equations. In 11th grade Journalism, students reflect on their writing and collaboratively share strategies for improvement.

- Technology is utilized as a strategic learning tool for discussion and higher level thinking in many classrooms. For example, students edited film clips of important events during the Civil War using iMovie software in U.S. History. In Earth Science, students use the interactive board to identify waves on a seismograph. In Advanced Placement Biology, students use computer simulations to analyze photosynthesis.

- Student work products display collaboration and critical approaches. For example, in a 10th grade English class, students worked in groups to write a sequel to Shakespeare's *Macbeth* fusing Common Core Learning Standards such as author's purpose and voice. A Model United Nations Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) class has won awards at two conferences including, "The International Model UN 2013-Best Position Paper Award (Regional Bodies Asia)" and "Yale Model United Nations 2014 Honorable Mention Best Delegate (Economics and Finance) highlighting high levels of critical thinking."

- Varied prompts and learning activities engage most learners, with some missed opportunities for student ownership of work products. In an Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) Geometry class, students apply coordinate geometry methods to show whether a triangle is isosceles, right or congruent to a given triangle and justify their conclusions in writing. However, in a U.S. History class, student groups edit a video with one student leading while providing little opportunity for others to reflect and assess the process/product.

- Academic vocabulary and student discussion reflect higher order thinking skills. In a 10th grade social studies class, students evaluate and discuss the impact of Lenin's policies on the Soviet Union and compare Marxism to Leninism using higher order questions to guide discussion.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient

Findings

The school uses common assessments in all subject areas, tracks progress of students and teachers use ongoing checks for understanding in classrooms.

Impact

Systems to monitor progress through data analysis as well as assessment practices during instruction are regularly used to inform curricula amendments in units and lessons in order to meet student learning needs and improve the school's four year graduation rate.

Supporting Evidence

- Student self-assessment is evident in most classrooms, but not the vast majority of classrooms. For example, in English students use graphic novel checklists with established criteria to write, as well as categorical rubrics to self-assess learning.

- Common assessments are evident in all subject areas culminating in four significant student "tasks" per year, fostering coherence across the school. Teacher teams work collaboratively to create these common assessments incorporating Common Core Learning Standards and Common Core Regents skills in tasks and rubrics in all subjects and grades.

- Item analysis of previous Regents examinations is conducted to identify gaps at the student, individual class and department level. For example, in mathematics and science, student work is examined for strengths and weaknesses based on this summative data.

- Teachers' assessment practices include exit tickets as a check for understanding, in order to make effective adjustments to subsequent lessons to meet the learning needs of all students, as evidenced in English classes and global history classes. For example, the students' exit slip in Global History and Geography asked: "Would Karl Marx have approved of Lenin? Why or why not? List at least two details to support your claims."

- School-wide tracking of student progress on baseline and common assessments and subsequent adjustments to curricula and instruction have bolstered the four year graduation rate by 4% over the past year to 88% and a College and Career Preparatory Course Index (CCPCI) Rate increase of 5% from 73% to 78% in 2013-14.

Quality Indicator:	4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development	Rating:	Proficient

Findings

The majority of teachers consistently analyze data and student work in inquiry based teams. Distributive leadership structures have been developed to allow teachers to plan and facilitate meetings.

Impact

Structures for teacher teams foster shared leadership, while building team capacity, to make key decisions that result in strengthening curricula and pedagogical approaches while embedding Common Core Learning Standards to steer improved student progress.

Supporting Evidence

- A select group of teachers participate in monthly inquiry-to-action teams at Teachers College, Columbia University focusing on increasing literacy and positive approaches to student behavior which are then turn-keyed to other teams.

- Teacher teams meet weekly and engage in collaborative inquiry on curricula, assessment and pedagogy. For example, one team was modifying tasks on common assessments. Teams meet by content area, grade level and subgroups. Gains in four year graduation rates by sub-groups is evidenced among Black and Hispanic males (whole group and lowest third) where the school attained the second highest tier city-wide, with 75% of Black and Hispanic males graduating in four years.

- Data inquiry teams analyze credit accumulation and examination results to determine supports needed, such as tutoring or parent outreach. This inquiry process has bolstered the credit accumulation for lowest third of second and third year students to the second highest tier in the city with over 70% of students earning 10+ credits.

- Shared leadership is evidenced by team leaders, teacher-led department meetings, teacher led-faculty meetings, assistant principal –led meetings to provide professional growth opportunities for all. For example, a teacher-led workshop focuses on technology integration using Google Docs while another group explores questioning and discussion techniques.

- The school has implemented a Best Practice committee to address and share best classroom practices, research-based strategies and curricular needs. Teachers welcome the opportunity to collaborate and reflect because as one teacher stated, "there is always room for improvement."

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient

Findings
Across grades and subject areas, the curriculum is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). Academic tasks are planned and refined using data and student work.

Impact
Purposeful curricula improvements result in coherence and promote college and career readiness for all learners. A diversity of learners has access to the curricula and is cognitively engaged in tasks.

Supporting Evidence

- Curricula is planned and refined across grade levels and content areas. English Language Arts and mathematics curricula are aligned to the EngageNY curriculum tasks. In social studies, teacher teams met to adapt the curriculum to the new NYC Social Studies Scope and Sequence adopting unifying themes and college readiness skills by grade level. In 9th grade social studies, graphic organizers were inserted into the curriculum to improve map skills and deepen students' knowledge of geography.

- Instructional shifts are integrated into academic tasks. For example, in English Language Arts, a balance of informational and literary texts is embedded in classroom instruction and culminating tasks with students reading non-fiction texts alongside classics such as *Of Mice and Men*. Twelve Career and Technical Education programs have aligned their curriculum to college and career standards with the inclusion of argumentative essay writing projects.

- English language learners (ELLs) and Students with Disabilities (SWDs) have access to the curriculum with textual supports, vocabulary scaffolds, visual and audio aids as well as the use of an online program Achieve 3000 to improve literacy skills. The city-wide percentage of ELLs graduating within four years is in the highest tier in the city at 82%. A Model UN class is an Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) class with SWDs recognized by an award in 2013.

- State-approved curricula lead to required mastery in career and technical education (CTE). For example, CTE Robotics Engineering is a course allowing students to apply concepts and skills in order to compete in competitions such as Carnegie Mellon-Lego Robotics (plastics).

- Lesson plans emphasize prompts to engage students in higher order thinking skills. For example, in Algebra I students collaboratively solve systems of equations with no solution and many solutions in order to understand the core concept of varied numbers of solutions using algebraic and graphing approaches.