Quality Review Report

2016-2017

Automotive High School
High school 14K610
50 Bedford Ave.
Brooklyn
NY 11222

Principal: Kevin Bryant

Dates of Review:
April 25, 2017 - April 26, 2017

Lead Reviewer: Tracie Benjamin-Van Lierop
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

Automotive High School serves students in grade 9 through grade 12. 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Developing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Developing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## School Quality Ratings continued

### School Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school’s instructional goals and meet student learning needs, as evidenced by meaningful student work products</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Observe teachers using the Danielson Framework for Teaching along with the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection</td>
<td>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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 the CCLS</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

| Quality Indicator: | 4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision | Rating: Well Developed |

Findings
School leaders and teacher peers support the development of teachers, including those new to the profession, with effective feedback and next steps. Feedback to teachers accurately captures strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Impact
School leaders use strategic and frequent cycles of classroom observations and analyze student work and data. Supports for teacher development are aligned with professional goals for teachers and school leadership’s expectations for teacher practice.

Supporting Evidence

- Frequent cycles of observation are aligned with what administrators, coaches, and the peer collaborative teacher see during classroom observations, in addition to student work products. The observation calendar is adjusted based on the need for teacher support, with an emphasis on scheduling not overwhelming teachers. There is a specific lens the administration and others agree to focus on during scheduled observations. For example, using questioning and discussion techniques is an area that teachers were typically rating lower in and there was a collective effort to support teachers in this component, particularly with the new teaching staff.

- Prior to all formal observations, there is a coaching round with a member from the School Leadership Team with a follow-up discussion before formal observations begin. As reported by administration and teachers, previously there was minimal follow-up, which resulted in teachers not following through with implementation of the recommended next steps. The faculty agrees there has been a positive shift in the culture regarding giving and receiving feedback. A review of observation reports included feedback that captured areas of strength, growth, articles, and additional evaluator notes that aligned with teachers’ professional goals. A portion of an evaluation note from an assistant principal that was provided to a first year teacher read, “It is encouraging to see a first year teacher have such great respect and rapport with students, and to have created a positive learning environment. I look forward to visiting soon, and seeing the recommendations implemented on March 1, 2017.”

- Administrators and teachers use Advance, and an internal school data system that focuses on all components of the Danielson Framework for Teaching. The school community decided to focus on designing coherent instruction, using questioning and discussion techniques, and using assessment in instruction, which the faculty believes will facilitate greater engagement of students in their own learning. Teachers, coaches, and administrators review the data together, which is connected to classroom observations, to collectively determine where teachers are struggling. Using this structure, teachers have improved in all focused components based on data from September, 2016 through March, 2017. Based on target teacher component goals, teacher ratings have increased in both student engagement and use of questioning and discussion techniques.
Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are becoming aligned with the curricula and beginning to reflect a set of beliefs about how students learn best that are informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching and the instructional shifts, so that all students will be able to produce meaningful work products.

Impact

Student work products and discussions that reflect high levels of student thinking and participation are not yet consistently evident across classrooms.

Supporting Evidence

- The school community believes that students learn best through a structured implementation of the workshop model in which students engage in both guided and independent Common Core aligned tasks. These include opportunities for reading, writing, listening, and speaking based on focus or provocative questions that promote critical thinking and generate discourse and dialogue in various group settings.

- In a geometry class, the focus question was “Can we prove triangles are similar if we have side measures?” The teacher used a document camera to project the mini-lesson for students before assigning them to work in pairs. As evidenced by work products and discussions, students were able to articulate their thinking and explain their responses. The teacher incorporated academic language such as scale factor, proportion, similarity, and dilation and there was an attempt to create a sense of urgency, however, the discussion centered on the teacher’s comments and the questioning asked of students did not generate high levels of student discussion and thinking.

- Students in an English Language Arts (ELA) class were engaged in the focus question, “Within your reading section, what is the tone used to describe the working conditions?” Students responded and built off of each other’s responses after taking part in a jigsaw activity to describe their examples of how tone was being used in the text. Although students understood the lesson progression and how they were being assessed, there was a lack of clarity in their individual roles during the jigsaw activity, which negatively impacted the level of discussion achieved.
Findings
School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Curricula and academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills for all students.

Impact
Purposeful decisions build coherence and promote college and career readiness for all students. The curricula are accessible to a variety of learners.

Supporting Evidence
- The school community uses EngageNY for math and ELA and New Visions curricula for science and social studies. A focus of the school’s curricula is writing across content areas and use of Writing Is Thinking through Strategic Inquiry (WITsi), a program that teaches students who are lacking fundamental writing skills. Grade-level teachers focus on a small number of students, looking at their work to determine areas of success and areas to be retaught.

- Units and lessons reviewed included essential questions, Common Core Standards being taught and assessed, and either a provocative or focus question. An Advanced Placement ELA course plan included the question, “To what extent does concept of ownership influence ethics, the economy, freedom, and psychology?” Possible discussion questions to pose if students were struggling during the Socratic seminar component of the lesson were tiered using Webb’s Depth of Knowledge.

- An anti-lock braking system (ABS) unit learning objective tasked students with describing the operation of the ABS sensors and electronic control unit by identifying placement and communication between the two components. Students also had to demonstrate their understanding of how the vehicle speed sensor sends a signal to the electronic unit by describing the operation in stages of wheel movement and electrical impulse. The focus question of one lesson asked, “How are the electrical components on an ABS different from the hydraulic brake system?” The lesson plan incorporated a WITsi task charging students to complete two “because” statements based on their responses to the multiple choice questions connected to the assigned text.

- A genetics unit included an essential question, “What are the advantages and possible risks of using biotechnology approaches?” Students had to create a written response either supporting or refuting the use of genetic engineering. Included in the unit were visual representations of a genetically modified tomato plant, graphic organizers, and the specific roles for each teacher in this Integrated Co-Teaching class.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Developing</th>
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Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use or create assessments and rubrics that are inconsistently aligned with the school’s curricula. Teachers’ assessment practices loosely reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact

Limited feedback provided to students and teachers regarding student achievement contributes toward a lack of actionable feedback to students. Teachers inconsistently make effective adjustments to meet students’ learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- The school’s grading policy was revised during a summer institute and now each department has a policy that is consistent across grades and emphasizes assessments ranging from 20 percent in electives and foreign language to 40 percent in math and science. For example, in math and science, students are assessed on organization, participation, analysis, activities, and assessments. In ELA and social studies, students are assessed on organization, participation, writing process, activities, and assessments. In art, students are assessed on production pieces, written assignments, work ethic, sketchbook, and participation in critique. Teachers are developing more student-friendly rubrics to support students’ understanding of their performance tasks.

- Some students mentioned that they receive feedback from their teachers regularly both verbally and in writing. Although students commented on receiving both verbal and written feedback, the student work submitted and reviewed included minimal comments to inform students on how they were to improve, and few work products had rubrics attached.

- An end-of-lesson student self assessment on Romeo and Juliet by Shakespeare included a goal students accomplished during the class, editing directions reminding students to proofread their essay, and then signing off that that they completed the proofreading. Additionally, students were asked how many pieces of textual evidence they included and “What is one thing that you have improved since [your] last essay? Make sure to give a specific example of how you have improved your writing.” A student replied, “One thing I improved from [the] last essay was including more textual evidence. The more you have, the better your writing.” The student received a “check plus” without comments.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff on professionalism, instruction, communication, and other elements of the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Faculty establishes a culture for learning that consistently communicates high expectations for all students.

Impact

Training is provided to the entire staff, and there is a system of accountability in place for meeting high expectations. Ongoing and detailed feedback and guidance supports prepare students for the next level, particularly in Career and Technical Education.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal sends out a weekly campus newsletter, entitled Administrative Corner, highlighting a different instructional strategy of the week, as well as cultural, social and emotional foci, announcements, and super shout-outs. A shout-out was given to a faculty member who worked tirelessly throughout the summer and the beginning of the school year to ensure that students with disabilities were correctly programmed. One of the instructional strategies included in a newsletter was on how teachers assess learning, on the spot assessment tools, and effective use of exit tickets.

- The leadership team believes supporting teachers using coaching methods in combination with evaluations has increased the level of accountability teachers expect. “Teachers are taking risks and supporting each other,” stated the principal. When asked to describe their current school year experience in one word, teachers stated, “phenomenal, invigorating, faith, uplifting, collaboration, and collegial.”

- Teachers agreed that the support they are receiving on providing feedback to students, using document cameras to showcase student work in class, and lesson planning, that includes higher order questioning and assessment, is yielding student gains. As explained by both staff and students, in the past, there was an acceptance of earning only a passing grade. For example, a student scored a 69 on the ELA Regents exam and with the support of his teachers and counselors, he will be re-taking the exam to aim for a college and career readiness score of 75 or higher.

- According to the most recent School Quality Snapshot, the faculty is closing the achievement gap by helping students with disabilities and the city’s lowest performing students graduate in four years, receiving a rating of “Excellent” and “Good,” respectively. The same report indicates that 89 percent of students say that adults at this school help keep them on track for college or career, which is four percentage points higher than the city average.
Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations that promote the achievement of school goals and the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards. Teacher teams consistently analyze assessment data and student work for students they share or on whom they are focused.

Impact

The instructional capacity of teachers is strengthening, typically resulting in improved teacher practice and progress toward goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers are assigned to grade teams based on content area with the goal of providing a cohesive experience for students, coordinating curricular themes and topics, sharing best practices, and analyzing grade-wide and content-specific data. The majority of teachers work together to design instructional programs and feel responsible that all students learn. However, according to the school’s most recent NYC School Survey results, 59 percent of teachers responded that they trust each other. When asked about this data, a teacher replied, “This year there is more of a focus on team building, morale has increased, and there is a comfort in sharing best practices now.” Teachers agreed that in previous years, there was greater attention on behavior and with the current administration, the concentration is on academics.

- During a teacher team meeting, a WITsi team focused on work products for eight students to identify which students needed additional writing support. Teachers noticed students were making progress in writing five paragraph essays and were able to move onto writing more complex sentences using more sophisticated textual evidence. Teachers also noticed that some of the lower performing writers were experiencing improvements in their introductory paragraphs but that there was still room for improvement. By the end of the meeting, teachers decided which students needed criteria and a checklist to write a stronger introduction and those students who were no longer in need of modifications and were ready for more advanced writing.

- Teacher team action plans include a focus, connection to classroom instruction, instructional strategy, and action steps. For example, a close analytic reading instructional strategy included the following action steps with a point person and a due date, “create target group of students and ensure the target group is representative of all students.” Additionally, plans include working with an ELA lead teacher to learn close analytical reading strategies, drafting lesson plans with department inquiry teams, and providing feedback on lessons. Furthermore, teachers review student work, track the achievement gap, discuss instructional adjustments, and chart data on the tennis chart tracking tool for review.