Quality Review Report

2016-2017

The Global Learning Collaborative

High school 03M403

145 West 84th St.
Manhattan
NY 10024

Principal: Karla Chiluiza

Dates of Review:
May 23, 2017 - May 24, 2017

Lead Reviewer: Adam Breier
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


School Quality Ratings

### Instructional Core

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

**To what extent does the school...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</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>
</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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

**To what extent does the school...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<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>
</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>
</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>
</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>
</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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings
School leaders and teacher peers strategically use effective feedback and next steps from classroom observations to support teacher development. Clear expectations and feedback to teachers are constructed using the Danielson Framework for Teaching and are aligned with teachers’ professional goals.

Impact
Classroom observation and student assessment data are periodically reviewed and used to inform professional development (PD), observation cycles, and intervisitation focus questions. Additionally, official and non-supervisory classroom observations result in actionable, written feedback aligned to teachers’ professional goals.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders have planned classroom observations to occur quarterly and for all teachers, to include an initial non-supervisory observation for coaching purposes. Additionally, formal observations would take place during the third quarter while informal observations would occur during the first, second, and fourth quarter of the year. School leaders meet weekly in order to review classroom observation data trends and use that information in planning future observations as well as professional development for identified areas of need. Review of the PD plan reveals adjustments of which two examples are additional sessions covering the Reteach/Retool process and lesson planning. In addition, teachers are supporting each other through intervisitations that are planned over the course of three cycles, all through the lens of the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Math teachers’ intervisitations focused on using assessment and questioning. English Language Arts (ELA) teachers’ intervisitations focused on planning instruction to maximize impact on the schoolwide writing improvement initiative. Social studies teachers visited each other using differentiated focus questions all regarding assessment.

- There are multiple examples of observation reports in which school leaders capture teachers’ strengths and weaknesses and offer next steps directly connected to the school’s instructional focus. For example, in response to students’ struggles in using textual evidence, one teacher is advised to reteach and purposefully model. In another example, a teacher is advised that to increase student-to-student discussion time, an activity should be adjusted so that only one student in each pair reads the text aloud while the other would be instructed to take note of questions that would have driven the subsequent discussion. Other examples of feedback advised teachers to frontload academic vocabulary in order to free up time for student writing, use a timer to strengthen time-on-task, and actively check for understanding before transitioning into new sections of a lesson. Additionally, all teachers engage in a goal-setting activity at the beginning of the year during which an action plan is developed which is then supported through classroom observations and mid-year goal check-ins.

- In addition to the reports that result from official classroom observations, valuable written feedback is offered to teachers in emails resulting from non-supervisory classroom visits. In one email, the school leader discusses how teacher modeling could prevent future student confusion. In another example, a school leader advises the teacher to reteach note-taking and to reinforce this skill through providing model notes translated into students’ home languages. In addition, teachers praised school leadership for the feedback they have offered. While one praised school leadership for feedback on maximizing the do now activity by using it as a formative assessment tool, another teacher recalled the advice on preparing students with a focus question before launching a reading activity instead of asking that question after the reading was done.
### Findings

Teachers use common assessments to determine student progress toward goals across grades and subject areas. Across classrooms, teachers’ assessment practices reflect checking for understanding, but not student self-assessment activities.

### Impact

While teachers are using data to adjust instruction for individual classes as well as within departments, this practice has not yet resulted in a demonstrated increased mastery for students with disabilities and English Language Learners (ELLs). Across classrooms, teachers’ assessment practices that lead to effective adjustments meet the learning needs of all students.

### Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use Regents Exam data from the previous June in designing student groups and in initial instructional planning for the school year. Data resulting from the fall semester mid-term exam, either a mock Regents exam or a commonly planned assessment for classes not ending in a Regents Exam, is collected and disseminated. Teachers then use this data to create a Reteach/Retool plan which details a focus standard and lists each student in a class as either partially, completely, or not mastering the objective. A fourth column details plans for reteaching or retooling for all students. For example, a Reteach/Retool plan for an ELA class focusing on revising unelaborated paragraphs describes modifications such as adding details for students who did not master the objective while students who did master that objective would be assigned to an extension activity involving the revision of additional unelaborated paragraphs. Review of Reteach/Retool plans evidence that this practice is employed by teachers across grades and content areas. Examples of objectives covered by other plans include interpretation of functions, using linear systems to solve word problems, graphing data from a table, developing a thesis statement, and using text-based evidence to support an argument.

- A schoolwide focus on writing instruction involved a monthly collection and analysis of writing across ELA and social studies classes. Writing samples are collected from a target student group including students with disabilities, ELLs, and general education students. Additionally, each academic department creates an Impact Plan. These plans include an instructional goal and the rationale behind that goal which states the data used in the plan’s creation. For example, the math impact plan indicates that analysis of data from the prior Regents exams made clear that students struggled with conceptual understanding. Other examples include the world language department’s focus on vocabulary acquisition, the ELA department’s focus on developing students’ ability to analyze and connect evidence to a thesis, and the history department’s finding that students show persistent weakness in higher-order thinking. Review of impact plans reveals that although common assessment data is collected and analyzed over time, the data does not yet reveal demonstrated increased mastery for all students, as well as for students with disabilities and ELLs separately.

- Across the school, teachers check for understanding and adjust instruction accordingly. Teachers use trackers to monitor their students’ progress as well as employ strategies to elicit targeted data. After discerning that students were confused about whether to use a dashed or solid line when creating graphs, an algebra teacher redirected all students from their work so that she could reteach that skill. Another example occurred in a grade nine ELA class during which the teacher noticed that students were struggling to recall characters from the different texts read throughout the year. As a result, the teacher asked students to conduct a turn-and-talk. However, there was no evidence that students are engaging in self-assessment activities that result in goal-setting and ownership/awareness of their next learning steps.
### Findings
School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and the instructional shifts. Curricula and tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

### Impact
Curricula promote college and career readiness for all students. Faculty members adjust materials through guides that make texts and lesson objectives more accessible to the school’s diversity of learners.

### Supporting Evidence

- Curricular documents across grades and content areas evidence consistent alignment with the Common Core Learning Standards and integration with the instructional shifts. For example, an ELA lesson plan has students supporting their beliefs as to whether government should have the right to force families to immunize their children with textual evidence from a non-fiction reading. Academic vocabulary is also supported in science, math, social studies, ELA, and physical education lesson plans. The instructional shift that seeks to increase rigor in math through real-world application is integrated into an algebra lesson plan wherein students are to determine, using regression models, which types of weather result in the greatest sales of soda in order to determine how to stock a soda machine using weather forecasts. Additionally, a math project required that students measure the impact of solar energy against fossil fuels and conduct a cost-benefit analysis in determining which is a better source of energy.

- In a grade-nine ELA lesson plan on the issues between civic liberties and civic duties, students are to respond to a quote that details the possible side effects of different vaccines. A modified version of this quote is provided for students depending on their homogenous student grouping. Students can also utilize a graphic organizer that contains buckets into which students can place their notes in order to support them in organizing their essays. A grade-ten ELA lesson plan on exploring the character Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet* includes graphic organizers and heterogeneous student groupings to support students with disabilities and ELLs. Similarly, student groupings purposefully designed to support students of different proficiency levels were indicated in all ELA lesson plans provided.

- An earth science lesson plan that covers how different weather patterns affect different regions includes leveled worksheets for the different student groups. An algebra lesson plan on the different ways of graphing equations and inequalities includes leveled tasks for paired student assignments as well as identification of a reteach student group and leveled tasks including students who meet the lesson objective early. The lesson plan for an integrated co-teaching trigonometry class includes indication as to which point in the lesson would be taught by both teachers to two different student groups, as well as the leveled student groups into which students would report after the mini-lesson. These groups were identified in the lesson plan as either reteach, mid-level, or extension. Each group level received work that reflected their students’ evidenced needs based on formative assessment data as well as data gathered from in-class trackers. A living environment lesson plan also includes differentiated student groups that were to respond to questions scaffolded to meet each group’s evidenced need.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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Findings

Teaching strategies consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula. Student work products reflect high levels of student thinking and participation in most classes.

Impact

The consistent use of manipulatives and student-to-student discussion protocols result in students demonstrating higher-order thinking in work products and in discussions reflecting high levels of thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- During a grade-nine ELA lesson, a graphic-organizer support was available for all students that included visual buckets to be used in organizing an essay prior to writing. One of the students using this scaffolded support reported, “I’m using the buckets to place the information I annotated from the article. It makes writing the different paragraphs a lot easier.” During an algebra Integrated-Co-Teaching (ICT) class, both teachers circulated throughout the room and checked-in with each group, more so with the reteach group and the two mid-level groups. Additionally, there were multiple examples of classes in which students were working in groups that were designed based on student need and in which they received work leveled to their groups’ demonstrated need.

- Students in an earth science class were asked first to turn to a partner and discuss which air masses would be associated with four different weather patterns shown to students on photos. In an algebra class, students turned to their partners to discuss the different methods they could use to solve equations and inequalities algebraically and graphically and on how to find the similarities and differences between them. Additionally, in order to prepare students for a lesson in which they were to compare characters from one text to a previous work, students were directed to turn and talk with a partner and work with each other to recall major characters and their defining characteristics. Furthermore, review of student work reveals students’ ability to consider implications of solar versus fossil fuel energy in a math and science cross-content area project, compare characters from *Romeo and Juliet* to characters from one of five other major literary works read during this school year, determine how different weather fronts would affect a variety of land masses, and use a protocol to parse paragraphs in order to detail the main idea and pieces of evidence used to support it.

- In addition to facilitating student-to-student discussions, there were multiple examples of teachers facilitating lessons in which students were required to work with each other. In an algebra class, students were assigned to partnerships and were required to solve three equations with their partners. During an ELA lesson in which students analyzed Juliet from *Romeo and Juliet*, students were assigned to partnerships in which one student was tasked with finding two pieces of textual evidence to show how Juliet was being controlled. The other student in each partnership was to find two pieces of evidence that revealed how Juliet was establishing her agency. In an earth science class, students worked in partnerships in studying the effects of recycling by asking each other questions they had written in response to reading materials and visual representations of pollution and other forms of impact from an overabundance of non-recyclable garbage and when recyclable refuse is not properly discarded. Additionally, in a grade-eleven ELA class, students were instructed to share their annotation work with their partners. Students could not begin their written responses until they had received their partners’ feedback about their annotations.
**Additional Finding**

| Quality Indicator: | 3.4 High Expectations | Rating: | Well Developed |

**Findings**

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations and provide training to the entire staff. Teacher teams and staff establish a culture for learning.

**Impact**

Communication and PD around high expectations results in a culture of mutual accountability. Grade-level teams foster student ownership of high expectations through an advisory program.

**Supporting Evidence**

- School leaders communicate high expectations through a faculty handbook that contains information connected to the Danielson Framework for Teaching as well as sections covering the school’s philosophy of education and how the classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities reflect that philosophy. Some examples of specific handbook topics are curriculum, assessment, instructional delivery, professional development (PD), common planning, grading policy, maintenance of a positive school-wide culture, and parent engagement. Additionally, school leaders have provided PD sessions on the different Danielson Framework for Teaching domains. School leaders have supported school improvement initiatives through repeated sessions on how to create a Reteach/Retool plan and on the use of the school’s lesson plan template. Mutual accountability has resulted from these efforts as evidenced by the wide use of the lesson plan template by individual teachers and as resulting from common planning as well as the multiple Reteach/Retool plans developed by individual teachers and content-area departments.

- A culture of learning in which high expectations are made clear to students is maintained through an advisory program. The advisory topics plan reveals a differentiated plan for each grade. Grade-twelve students explore topics related to the college application as well as time management, the necessary attitudes college students need to be successful, role plays in which students prepare for the challenges they may face in college, as well as search for internships that may further a career interest. In addition to these topics, students create goals not only for the college application process, but also to help ensure that they remain on track for on-time graduation. Grade-eleven students begin the search for colleges early in the school year as well as explore the application process, prepare for the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT), and begin the process of obtaining recommendation letters. Grade-eleven students, along with students from grades nine and ten, also create and revisit goals that they set within the advisory course. One student reported, and all present agreed, “Whenever we get our report cards, we record the grades and set goals so that we can improve all of them or keep them up where they already are.” In addition to the advisory program, grade-based teacher teams conduct sessions during which advisors bring their respective advisory students’ report cards. This team prioritizes the students who need intervention based on the number of classes failed.

- High expectations are resulting in increases in students’ enrollment in Advanced Placement (AP) courses as well as students taking a fourth year of math and science. AP course offerings have increased from three in the 2015-2016 school year to five during the 2016-2017 school year. Enrollment in those courses over the same period has increased from fifteen students to eighty-five students. Additionally, eighty-one percent of grade-twelve students are enrolled in either Trigonometry or AP calculus while sixty-six percent are enrolled in a fourth year of science. Additionally, as of the date of this review, ninety percent of grade-twelve students have applied to college. Of those students, seventy-eight percent have been accepted into and are enrolled in a college for the fall 2017 semester.
**Additional Finding**

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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</table>

**Findings**

All teachers are engaged in teams that consistently analyze student work in cycles of inquiry that reveal targeted areas of student need and actively address them in their work toward fulfilling the school's goals. Teachers are empowered to positively affect student learning through service as grade-team leaders as well as the open-door policy in bringing ideas for initiatives and professional development to school leaders.

**Impact**

Collaborations within grade teams and the vertical inquiry team have strengthened teachers’ instructional capacity while data reveals increases in student achievement. Across the school within a variety of team structures, teachers have built leadership capacity and have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning.

**Supporting Evidence**

- All teachers take part in department teacher teams in which teachers analyze lessons, co-plan instruction, analyze student work samples, and conduct intervisitations. Teachers reported improvements they were able to make to their instructional practices as a result of these intervisitations. One teacher spoke about observing how a colleague teaches students to begin detailing a counterclaim within an essay by using a subordinating conjunction and that she is now using this process and seeing positive results in her students’ writing as a result. Another teacher reported that she began structuring handouts and worksheets to include additional prompts and other modifications because of the successful way in which this method was implemented during an intervisitation. Review of department impact plans reveals that student work is periodically collected and analyzed as departments make adjustments to their impact plans and track student success toward goals. In addition, a team consisting of ICT and content-area teachers formed a team with the purpose of creating school-wide instructional coherence around supporting students who formerly or currently are designated to qualify for alternate assessments. This team studied a target student group and presented to the entire faculty a variety of technological and non-technological resources they could employ to support them. Data reveals that students’ overall achievement has increased each year for the last three years in graduation rate and college readiness upon graduation.

- Teachers also serve on professional learning communities (PLCs). Each PLC is focused on either providing support for first-year teachers, integrating alternative assessment strategies into instruction, maximizing the use of technology during instruction, and developing the systems regarding a positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) system. During PLC meetings, teachers analyze data such as incident and suspension reports, unit and lesson plans, as well as PD offerings and the results of intervisitations as steps within their respective cycles of inquiry in assessing the success of their initiatives and modifying next steps accordingly.

- Each department is led by a teacher who facilitated planning sessions at the start of the year so that teachers could make informed decisions as to what each team’s focus question would be for the school year. For example, the math department decided that they would focus on strengthening students’ conceptual understandings while the ELA department decided that they should focus on students’ ability to analyze evidence. Similarly, PLCs met in February to determine the overarching questions that guide their work. In addition, while working within the grade-team structure, teachers determined that students would benefit from more time devoted to their advisory activities. As a result, the Friday advisory period was extended by forty minutes for students of all grades.