Quality Review Report

2016-2017

Leadership and Public Service High School

High School 02M425

90 Trinity Place
Manhattan
NY 10006

Principal: Philip Santos

Dates of Review:
January 5, 2017 - January 6, 2017

Lead Reviewer: Heidi Pierovich
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<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>Developing</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>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>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Developing</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## 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>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</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>
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<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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</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>Developing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.4 Positive Learning Environment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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Findings

The school’s approach to culture building, discipline, and social-emotional support are informed by a theory of action, restorative circles, which are combined with advisory structures in place throughout the school.

Impact

The theory of action results in a safe environment and inclusive culture that support progress toward yearly goals and meaningfully involves student voice. All students are known well by more than one adult who helps to personalize attendance supports and coordinate social-emotional learning, child development, and guidance supports.

Supporting Evidence

- Restorative circles, which began several years ago, are embedded into the fabric of the school, such that administration, cabinet, staff, and students all participate. Administration conducts cabinet meetings using the restorative circles process. Weekly faculty circles are a platform for staff to discuss methods to further increase equity, as they participate in activities to address divisions between and among staff and that beliefs extend into expectations for students. This work includes common readings. An administrator stated, "We moved away from ‘color blindness’ toward recognizing color, culture, and having conversations with staff [and] students." To this end, staff intentionally incorporated texts from the cultures represented in student demographics as a method of recognition of history, culture, and engagement. Staff agree that restorative circles has added to student engagement in class as well as in advisory. Students use the circles to discuss and address the social and emotional aspects of development.

- Students have between two to three grade-level representatives in student government, that along with setting senior activities and provides students with platform for involving their voice. Students won a grant from an insurance company for school improvement projects and community service awards named after 9/11 victims. Student government is also involved in [New York City] NYC Against Gun Violence, where students spoke in Albany with a senator regarding gun-safety bills. Students agree the school community addresses differences as "We are part of the community, we are all different, and we want to explore our differences, get to know you better because that is what makes you unique." Students agreed, "We have the power and trust each other as students have trust to do things." Students embody the school’s core beliefs community, leadership, empathy, accountability, non-violence (CLEAN). As a result, the school community has moved to full implementation of restorative circles, incidents have decreased by more than half, from 157 to 77 from 2014 to the 2015, and from 29 to 22, 2015-2016 schoolyear, year-to-date.

- In advisory, to ensure strong relationships and trust, each student loops with the same advisor for all four years. The advisory supports students through multiple measures; checking grades and referring students to tutoring and Saturday school, coordinate attendance and behavior, and the curriculum. The advisory curriculum promotes student discussion about anger and coping mechanisms and is refined to meet each students’ needs. Each grade level focuses on a different yearly topic, as ninth grade is health, tenth is psychology, eleventh and twelfth is college and career readiness. Students stated they have at least two or three adults to whom they can go to if needed. Advisory also supports a consistent college and career readiness through an early focus with freshmen and sophomores on Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) prep and college trips, Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) family night, college application week, college-gear day, and career week.
Area of Focus

Quality Indicator: 2.2 Assessment
Rating: Developing

Findings

There are common assessments in place and administered across classrooms. Teachers’ assessment practices inconsistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact

Assessment results are not always used to adjust curricula and instruction. During instruction, teachers inconsistently make effective adjustments to meet students’ learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Checking for understanding is inconsistently implemented across classes. In an Advanced Placement (AP) world history class, the teacher checked for understanding during student discussion and shared out whole class to clarify expectations and redirect students. In a geometry Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) class, the teachers moved from group to group to check on students’ work and level of discussion. In an AP United States (US) history class, the teacher moved from group to group and supported students’ ownership of the discussion. Yet other classes did not implement this level of checking for understanding in the moment or making effective adjustments to meet all students’ learning needs. In an algebra ICT class, teachers walked around to speak with students but did not make adjustments to instruction, leaving some students without clarity on certain problems they were working. Similarly, in an English Language Arts (ELA) ICT class, teachers rotated from small group to another. Yet, no adjustment to instruction was made because the group work was solely teacher-directed.

- Teachers have implemented scheduled graded common assessments. However, they do not yet consistently analyze assessment results to determine instructional and curricular adjustments to meet all students’ needs. There was no data to view to determine students’ growth toward goals or evidence of how the results were used to inform curricula and instruction. Some departments were in the midst of grading the newest assessment, but did not demonstrate the analysis of the previous assessment or provide evidence of formative assessments and use of those to inform instruction or curricula. Although teachers spoke to the data-cycle process, minimal adjustments to curricula and instruction were evidenced, limiting students’ progress toward goals across grades and subjects.

- Teachers are in various stages of the process of grouping students per results from Regents exams and common assessments. According to administrative expectations, staff are expected to provide a rationale for groupings in the lesson or on posted chart paper. However, neither lesson plans nor the chart of student groupings consistently contained these rationales. Teachers collected the results from some multiple assessment data and a few demonstrated the use of data to inform adjusted curricula and instruction based on students’ needs. Although teachers spoke to the data-cycle process, minimal adjustments to curricula and instruction were evidenced, that may limit students’ progress toward goals across grades and subjects.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Developing</th>
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Findings

Across grades and subjects, curricula and academic tasks inconsistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills or reflect planning to provide access for all students.

Impact

The curricula and academic tasks across classrooms are in the beginning stages of providing access for all students, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, to ensure they are cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence

- The administrative expectations include teachers knowing their students’ data to adjust curricula to meet students’ needs. To this end, administration in concert with the ELA and math departments’ data determined goals schoolwide efforts to target specific groups of students to improve, as written in the Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP). Some detailed planning and refined, data-determined revisions to curricula were evident by the math department. The math department demonstrated revisions to the algebra curriculum based on Regents’ exam data analysis, showing how the scope and sequence is diminished and the result has been an increase in students passing algebra. However, only some individual teachers provided evidence of such revisions to curricula based on data. In the AP US Government and Politics course, the teacher planned developing two different lessons, to be ready for additional teaching on the topic or to move forward in the curricula, depending on students' quiz results. Additionally, the global history teachers gave students a mock Regent exam, before the winter break, found some trends, but did not provide the revisions to curricula because grading is currently in progress. In an ELA class, a teacher provided a revised lesson to reteach archetypes and to analyze figurative language. Although a follow up assessment was noted to determine if the re-teaching was successful, no data was provided for the pre-assessment or post-assessment to demonstrate that a diversity of students had access to the material. Additionally, although all departments administer uniformed mid-term exams twice a year, there was little to no evidence to demonstrate that the data is used to inform instruction as intended.

- With approximately 23 percent of students, either ELLs or students with disabilities, administration and staff determined a need to ensure that all students have access to the higher-order thinking skills and rigorous habits. To that end, staff collaborates and is in the process of aligning tasks and lessons to Hess’ Cognitive Rigor Matrix levels. Although staff is currently making these alignment adjustments, it is unclear as to whether a variety of students have gained access to higher-order tasks and are cognitively engaged, because the student work and data have not yet been analyzed to determine growth. Additionally, these revisions are not yet being retained in a manner that will be available for future use to determine student access. Thus, lessons and tasks inconsistently emphasize higher rigor levels.

- As agreed upon by administration and staff, grouping of students based on data should be noted in the lesson or in class and include a rationale for the grouping. However, there were little to no lessons observed that included this rationale. Although there are a few graphic organizers and other similar measures planned to support student learning, most lessons denote that all students receive the same measures. Some unit plans showed revisions based on student work, while others remained without modification for the current population. As a result, the support for all students to engage in rigorous and appropriate tasks is inconsistently provided.
Additional Finding

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

Across classrooms, teaching practices are becoming aligned to the curricula and beginning to reflect a set of beliefs that students learn best from experience, with opportunities to work collaboratively, with sufficient time on task, and to make connections to learning. Across classrooms, teaching strategies inconsistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula to support student work products and discussions.

Impact

There is uneven engagement in appropriately challenging tasks and inconsistent demonstration of higher-order thinking skills and high levels of student thinking and participation in student work products for all learners, including ELLs and students with disabilities.

Supporting Evidence

- With a high percentage of students with disabilities and ELLs, the staff and administration have developed beliefs and instructional focus to meet their needs. They believe that students learn best via academics, connectedness, and environment (ACE). The ACE beliefs state that students should have access to cognitively engaging tasks that have connectedness with real-world applications, and require a safe and supportive environment. The instructional focus is on authentic literacy and cognitively engaging tasks that provide scaffolds and multiple entry points for students.

- Although components were observed in a few classes, ACE and the instructional focus were inconsistently evident across classrooms. In a geometry class, students self-selected the level of task, whereby the tiered tasks were on different color paper provided students with the multiple entry points as needed. Students also had the choice to switch tiered tasks if they felt it was too difficult or easy and were provided with manipulatives to complete the tasks. Additionally, students were in pre-determined groups such that students working on multiple levels were evident in the groups. In an algebra ICT class, the tasks provided multiple levels of rigor and students had the choice to complete four of seven problems. Yet, many classes provided all students with the same materials, without tiers, scaffolds, or choices to support students. In a living environment class, all students had the same lab without scaffolds, which led to inconsistent engagement; one group finished quickly waiting without a next step or extension, one was just beginning, and others were at various stages of completion. In an ELA ICT class, all students used the same graphic organizer to analyze poetry and some students had a vocabulary list, yet the task was teacher directed. The teacher read the poems, asked questions, and decided on answers as students filled in the answers on the graphic organizer. The levels of questioning, scaffolds, and extensions unevenly demonstrated higher-order thinking skills.

- Grouping is often noted on the wall charts as in an algebra ICT class, the wall chart listed student groups, but the rationale was not noted as per the administrative expectations. Similarly, in a global class, students had groups for their project and presented in these same groups. Yet, as students presented their legal representation of leaders to three student judges, and the remainder of the class secretly worked on their upcoming presentations or sat watching. In another ELA ICT class, students worked independently and silently while sitting in groups on the same task, writing quotes.

- Student work and discussions are uneven across classrooms. In an AP US history, class students had deep conversations about a project and research while in a global history class, pairs discussed and the teacher shared out student ideas. Yet, in an ELA ICT class, students were not provided opportunities to discuss or when they were working together, because it was teacher directed, resulting in student work that was low level, fill-in-the-blank.
### Additional Finding

**Quality Indicator:** 3.4 High Expectations  
**Rating:** Proficient

#### Findings

High expectations connected to professional and instructional goals, as aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching, are consistently communicated to the entire staff. Teacher teams and staff consistently communicate high expectations to students.

#### Impact

Structures, that provide training and foster the existing culture of accountability, support the school's high expectations for teaching. Ongoing and detailed feedback provides support toward next level preparedness and learning amongst students.

#### Supporting Evidence

- Administration communicates expectations and non-negotiables to staff through multiple ways including the weekly newsletter called the P Weekly, formal and informal observations, and weekly faculty circles. Teachers agreed that school leaders hold the expectations of consistently using “Language equity when communicating Hess [Cognitive Rigor Matrix], and restorative practices to support those who needed it the most.” As a schoolwide focus, it appears in teachers’ actionable feedback in their observations from administration. At the beginning of the school year, administration conducted over 75 informal observations to be used to norm staff work. The administration provided informal feedback and staff had the option to use it as a formal observation. Throughout the year, the administration conducts walkthroughs and observations as a method and structure for monitoring the implementation of the high expectations and providing actionable feedback to staff. To support staff in meeting schoolwide focus, staff receives professional learning opportunities and common readings. Additionally staff visits other schools outside of the district and in turn, other school leaders and teachers visit their school.

- The lead team plan, deliver, support professional learning sessions for colleagues, as evidenced by the professional learning plan. The sessions are created based on teacher need as per feedback from administrative observations and by teacher. Additionally, staff attends outside professional learning that supports the school’s instructional focus and beliefs. The Lead team also has adopted a critical friend protocol that shares feedback to others informing the team of areas of growth they need to work on and asking the team to hold the recipient accountable. Teachers spoke about this culture for learning among and for themselves and for their students.

- Students spoke excitedly and proudly about Being Official, a newly instituted incentive program. Students are incentivized to stay on track for the next grade or graduation by receiving t-shirts, certificates, and celebrations with parents. Staff provides students with high expectations of college and career-ready skills including thoughtful annotation, research, and reflectiveness. Students appreciate the opportunity to reflect on their work and being given to option to self-select to go for tutoring or support. Many students take AP courses and share their pride of passing the college-level tests. Students stated they are being prepared for college and careers with opportunities to participate in a professional job-shadowing program at Junior Achievement and another business program. They are able to take free college classes Touro College and Pace University, and SAT preparation at Touro. Students felt these helped them by allowing them to “Not go blindly into college courses and put our best foot forward.” At Syracuse University Mentor Mentee Alliance or SUMMA, once a month mentors guide students through college life, careers, and support through the college selection process. Students spoke highly of their mentors stating that the relationships helped them to understand college life and select a campus to best suit them. Students spoke of the different college trips attended and the career week.
## Additional Finding

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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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</table>

### Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in organized, inquiry-based professional collaborations. Distributed leadership structures are in place.

### Impact

Professional collaborations promote the achievement of school goals and the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards, strengthening the instructional capacity of the teachers who have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning across the school.

### Supporting Evidence

- Distributed leadership is evident across the school. Not only do teachers have leadership roles but supporting staff members as well in such roles as department chairs, grade team facilitators, and Lead team members. Department teams focus on lesson plan alignment to Hess’ *Cognitive Rigor Matrix* and the Common Core Learning Standards. Student support and intervention is done by grade teams. The Lead team members participate in administrative cabinet meetings and then consistently communicate the instructional goals and focus messages to both departments and grade teams. Additionally, Lead members collaborate with other staff members to create, plan, and implement professional learning. The three deans are also on Lead and make all the safety and security decisions. Staff members coordinate programs and partnerships with Syracuse SUMMA, business partners, advisory, and grant writing. Staff also lead the revisions to and maintenance of the advisory program. Teachers’ voice is respected and they are empowered to make such key decisions that positively impacts student learning, college and career readiness, leadership, and social emotional skills.

- Teachers meet in their department teams to engage in inquiry-based collaborations. Based on the Regent data, teachers have determined the problem of practice is that not all classrooms engage all students intellectually. To that end, they have determined the need to raise high expectations by aligning their lessons to Hess’ *Cognitive Rigor Matrix*. Staff adopted a new protocol to conduct this alignment as they pair together and give each other feedback. Throughout the course of meetings, the pairs rotate so that all teachers work together.

- Teachers shared that their teamwork is collegial. One teacher stated and others agreed, “It’s about the work and collaborating to see how we can improve student outcomes; it is not personal.” Teachers said that looking at student work has improved their instructional practice as well as working toward the goals for this schoolyear. One teacher stated that the teacher team members have been essential to her work as a new teacher. Another teacher stated the impact on her has been invaluable, as a teacher who is new to the building. Teachers share strategies and best practices for supporting students, such as grouping, differentiating, and increasing the rigor.