Quality Review Report

2016-2017

High School for Dual Language and Asian Studies

High school 02M545

350 Grand St.
Manhattan
NY 10002

Principal: Li Yan

Dates of Review:
March 6, 2017 - March 7, 2017

Lead Reviewer: Adam Breier
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

High School for Dual Language and Asian Studies serves students in grade nine through grade twelve. 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

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Celebration</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>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>Proficient</td>
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</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>Well Developed</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>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>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>Developing</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>Developing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

| Quality Indicator: | 1.4 Positive Learning Environment | Rating: | Well Developed |
|

Findings

Structures are in place so that each student is known well by at least one adult. The school community strategically aligns professional development (PD), family outreach, and student learning experiences and supports.

Impact

Case studies of targeted students result in students’ individual needs being analyzed and addressed by teams of teachers. Professional learning around a growth mindset as well as supervised student study-group time result in the adoption of effective academic and personal behaviors.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams conduct student case studies during which, teacher focus discussion on specific students and their needs. During case studies, teachers focus their conversations around areas of identified need as well as areas in which the student is successful. Additionally, discussions move on to consider areas of support on which the greatest impact can be made as well as specific strategies teachers can take to help the targeted students. Review of case study notes reveal conversations around students’ inability to focus, infrequent submission of homework, as well as marked progress in speaking and interpreting, and high participation levels. Some of the strategies recommended for students involved increasing students’ responsibilities, further individualization of work, greater parental involvement, and the providing of modified materials along with consistent individual access to an in-class computer.

- English Language Learners (ELLs) that are at the emerging language proficiency level, primarily in grades nine and ten, are matched with students in grades eleven and twelve who serve as mentors in English language acquisition in addition to and support of the instruction students receive toward that same end. ELLs also benefit from a cultural integration program that provides opportunities for students to attend weekly sessions and learn about diverse topics and themes in American culture. Some topics include food, games, holidays, immigration experiences, self-esteem, and self-care, in order to strengthen students’ comfort level within the school and mainstream culture.

- School leadership has ensured that a great number of faculty members speak fluent Chinese so that students and families feel free to participate and communicate in a language in which they feel comfortable. PD opportunities are provided for faculty on how to embed a growth mindset into their practice, helping to ensure that students are always looking to improve and increase their knowledge. Additionally, students reported that the school provides a setting in which they are able to adopt behaviors that result in greater academic success. During periods for which students are not assigned to a specific class, they report to the cafeteria where they have formed self-directed study groups. Different teachers report to the cafeteria to offer adult supervision while students are in student-led study sessions. At three different times over the course of this school visit, study groups of varying sizes were observed in the cafeteria. Additionally, students reported that the learning environment established by teachers has resulted in a space in which students can freely share misunderstandings. One student said, and all present agreed, “If I have a problem, or don’t understand something, I can go to any teacher and there is never judgement. They always and only want to help us!”
Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured professional collaborations that explore different teaching strategies that would strengthen the impact of their Common Core aligned curriculum. Teacher teams analyze assessment data for students they share.

Impact

Teacher teams primarily explore topics of professional growth and conduct individual student case studies. Analysis of assessment data does not typically result in progress toward goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- The majority of teachers are engaged in teams. However, the use of an inquiry approach is developing across these teams. During a meeting of the English as a New Language (ENL) teacher team, one teacher presented a dilemma she is facing with her grade twelve students. They are struggling with expressing complex thoughts in the English language. The teacher shared writing samples from some of her students. Teachers analyzed the students’ writing samples and discussed them with the use of a student work analysis protocol. During the course of this discussion, a variety of strategies were recommended. Among those recommended strategies were transforming short stories into poems, the use of sentence combining skills, as well as utilizing some high achieving students as resources for other students. At the close of this meeting, it was determined that the teacher for whom these recommendations were made was to implement the different strategies, take detailed notes as to the results of this work, and then report these findings back to the team at the next meeting.

- Analysis of the science teacher team professional learning team cycle planning guide revealed two overarching goals. These goals include increasing students’ critical thinking through discussion and questioning, and conducting intervisitations. Furthermore, four team session-specific goals have also been noted, including researching questioning techniques, deciding which questioning strategies to implement, researching different strategies for promoting student-led discussions, as well as modifying these session-based goals and conducting further research. Additional science team documentation evidences meetings during which individual students and their specific areas of need are discussed. For example, the team met on October 21, 2016 to discuss one student’s areas of need and to brainstorm supports that can be provided for this student. Notes from meetings around other students indicate discussions around attendance, voice volume, ability to follow routines, maturity level, and degree of focus. There is no evidence that this team engaged in a cycle of inquiry involving the identification of an area of need for a group of students and the subsequently delivered supports designed to address the identified need.

- Analysis of the social studies teacher team professional learning team cycle planning guide revealed one overarching goal to improve students’ use evidence in student-to-student discussions. Furthermore, goals for five subsequent sessions included discussing the problem of students’ lack of use of evidence in classroom discussions, sharing experiences in facilitating student discussions and texts used that have resulted in positive discussions, effective facilitation techniques, and the final session goal of determining the success of this work. However, accompanying documentation revealed that the team met for this purpose on September 30, 2016 and on no other occasions. Some guiding questions utilized at this meeting focused the discussion on whether or not the team’s focus was working to improve student learning, how teachers would define the success of their work, which protocols should be utilized to support teacher collaboration, whether or not teacher intervisitations would be included in their work, and what protocols should be used in support of those classroom visits.
Findings
School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core State Standards, integrate the instructional shifts. Curricula and academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills.

Impact
Curricula are coherent and promote college and career readiness. Additionally, curricula emphasize on rigorous habits and higher-order skills across grades and subjects ensure that all students, including students with disabilities and ELLs, are supported.

Supporting Evidence

- Review of lesson plans revealed evidence of alignment to the Common Core Learning Standards and New York State (NYS) content standards where applicable as well as integration of the instructional shifts. In an Advanced Placement (AP) literature lesson plan, students are required to use textual evidence to support their arguments during a discussion of George Orwell’s essay “Politics and Language.” In a Common Core algebra lesson plan, students deepen their understanding through multiple discussions and written descriptions of the processes in which they plot points onto a graph and subsequently analyze the results of their work. Additional examples of planning for students to support answers with textual evidence are evidence in an AP chemistry lesson plan where students are to discuss how to determine entropy of a system during a reaction and in an AP statistics where students are to make inferences with regard to variable when they are related to each other and must write and explain their understanding of the process.

- Curricular documents provided evidence of emphasis on rigorous habits and higher-order skills for all students, including students with disabilities. In an English as a Second Language (ESL) lesson plan, students are tasked with identifying logical fallacies in an argumentative text. This plan accounts for ELL student access through seating them in mixed-proficiency pairs, allowing lower proficiency students to receive additional assistance, with higher proficiency students reinforcing their own learning by helping their peers. A U.S. history class lesson plan indicated that all ELLs are to be paired with students who were once ELLs but have attained a level of proficiency in English warranting the removal of ELL supports. A grade nine global history lesson plan that covered ancient Greece included the provision of an academic text on the development of Greek civilization translated into Chinese. Additionally, in a Common Core algebra lesson plan, the section titled “Learner Factors” stated that students in each group have different levels of math abilities and that students who completed the work would move to the next level of questions. In a living environment lesson plan on how enzymes work, ELLs of different levels were to be paired so that they can support each other with translation and pronunciation.

- In addition to the items listed above are some curricula documents that are without strategies to ensure that rigorous habits and higher-order skills are emphasized for ELLs and students with disabilities. An earth science lesson plan on determining atmospheric conditions and predicting weather patterns contained no strategies or supports for ensuring students with disabilities and/or ELLs. An English Language Arts (ELA) lesson plan in which students read and discussed Jonathan Swift’s essay “A Modest Proposal” also lacked similar supports.
Additional Finding

**Quality Indicator:**

| 1.2 Pedagogy | Rating: Proficient |

**Findings**

Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect an articulated belief that students learn best through engagement. Across classrooms, student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

**Impact**

The articulated belief that has been informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching and instructional shifts has ensured students are engaged through peer discussions and cooperative activities. Students conduct discussions including Socratic seminars that reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The articulated belief that students learn best through questioning and student to student discussion was evident in many classrooms. In a grade nine ELA class, students were engaged in a Socratic circle discussion protocol around George Orwell’s essay “Language and Politics.” Students in the inner circle posed questions to each other and challenged each other to support their response with evidence while students in the outer circle recorded the questions and discussions of the inner circle. In an ENL class, students turned to partners and discussed paragraphs from a non-fiction piece in order to determine the purpose of each paragraph. In a grade eleven U.S. history class, students in the inner circle of a Socratic circle discussed the benefits and detriments of the women’s suffrage movement while students in the outer circle answered three questions in which they evaluated the discussions they heard. Additionally, in an AP Statistics class, students sat in groups of four students. Each group worked on a different problem while each problem required separate steps to be completed by a different student within each group so that to solve any problem, the cooperation of each student was required.

- Missed opportunities to have students engage in discussion with their peers around questions were also observed. In a Common Core algebra class, students were asked to infer the definition of box-whisper plot. The teacher asked for and received a response from a single student instead of asking all students to turn to a partner and conduct a brief discussion as to that question. During the same class, the teacher asked for and received responses from individual students as to questions relating to identity of the median of two sets of numbers and to what a number line would look like given the variables to be represented on it. Instead of directing students to consider these questions in conversation with their peers. During an earth science lesson covering the making of weather forecasts based on atmospheric conditions, the teacher directed students to a map that showed differing weather patterns and asked students if they knew what could be predicted of the weather in areas where there were two different, adjacent weather patterns. Individual responses were elicited without student discussion. Additional questions asked in this same class for which individual student responses were accepted asked students to identify the relationship between latitude and temperature, and the relationship between high pressure and rain.

- A majority of students across grades and content areas was actively participating in discussions and individual work. In addition to the examples identified above, all students in an ESL class were participating in determining if statements in a newspaper opinion article were based on logical fallacies. However, in an earth science class and a grade ten ELA class, all student responses and points of discussion were facilitated by the teacher, limiting student participation and at times eliciting no responses. For example, when a student in an earth science class indicated on a map where there would be freezing rain, the teacher asked if any students agreed with the student’s determination. No students replied to the teacher.
### Additional Finding

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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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**Findings**

Across classrooms, teachers use rubrics and checklists aligned with the school’s curricula. Across classrooms, teachers’ assessment practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding.

**Impact**

Teachers provide students with actionable feedback that students use to improve their work. Additionally, teachers continually check for understanding during lessons and make adjustments in order ensure all students’ needs are being met.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teachers use rubrics to rate personal and argumentative essays and provide actionable, written feedback to students. Some examples of feedback on students’ creative writings draws their attention to the value in being more suggestive and less prescriptive in conveying details, carefully considering the relevancy of characters and setting to a story, and avoiding word repetition. Other comments reference clear identification of the speaker and connecting images in ways that will help a reader understand the poem. Some examples of feedback on students’ essays addressed the inclusion of a clear thesis statement, the relevancy of details in support of thesis statements, properly citing text-based evidence, and to constantly ask oneself “Am I proving my point?”

- One student reported that a teacher gave feedback that advised her to add dialogue to creative writing. This student said, “I added dialogue and once I did, it made my story come to life and I wanted to write more.” Another student stated, and all present agree, that her teachers all give feedback. One system of feedback this student praised was when a teacher stapled a sheet to her essay exam that included a complete paragraph that contained constructive criticism and specific ways to write certain sentences differently.

- Teachers continually check for understanding throughout daily lessons through check-ins and make adjustments or re-address instructional materials according to the results of those check-ins. In an ENL class, the teacher asked students to place their heads down and show a hand signal to indicate their comfort level with the assignment. The teacher took note of the students who evidenced that they needed to hear the directions again. After regrouping those students and ensuring they were aware of the task and its expectations, the teacher then circulated throughout the room and scanned learners’ answers on the graphic organizer they used to record their findings. After scanning all students’ work, the teacher then visited with the learners whose work warranted additional support. In a chemistry class, students all had a cardboard arrow that they would use to answer similar check-in questions. In the case of this lesson, the teacher asked if students understood the difference between an entropic and enthalpic thermal reaction.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

School leaders consistently convey high expectations to staff through ongoing feedback and professional learning aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. The school leaders and staff provide ongoing information to families regarding student progress toward college and career readiness.

Impact

Ongoing communication by school leaders found in feedback from observations as well as embedded within teaching and learning-focused PD make high expectations clear. The school leaders and staff communicate the learning opportunities for families and use an online gradebook system for families to understand student progress towards meeting standards.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders conduct frequent classroom observations and provide feedback utilizing the Danielson Framework for Teaching as the standards for professionalism and high quality instruction. One example of this feedback advises the teacher to include modeling the skill which students are being taught to utilize for them before having students practice while also referring back to the supports and/or anchor charts available for them to use as resources. Additionally, this teacher is advised to allow students to have time to answer a question after it has been asked. Another example of feedback evidencing high expectations memorializes a conversation about formative assessments conducted during a post-observation conference. In this case, the school leader spoke with the teacher about the value that an exit slip can add to assessment and future lesson and unit planning when exit slips are collected and immediately evaluated so that the collected data can have a direct impact on student learning.

- At the beginning of the 2016-2017 school year, school leaders met with teachers to review the professional learning plan from the 2015-2016 school year. This meeting was launched with a comprehensive review of the professional learning plan from the 2015-2016 school year including discussions of the areas of success related to that plan as well as areas where continued development would benefit teachers and students alike. The school-wide instructional focus that resulted from these meetings reveal expectations around teacher collaborations, rigorous instruction founded on high expectations for all students and the school’s high population of ELLs and former ELLs, as well as the design and use of formative assessments that complemented by feedback based on a positive growth mindset.

- The school leaders and staff consistently communicates information with parents and families through emails, phone calls, and a website that is managed and updated by students. An online grade-book is maintained so that parents can get updates as to their children’s progress at any time. This resource also includes assignments and examples of model student work as resources for students. One teacher spoke to the value of posting assignments as it is easy to incorrectly copy Chinese characters from the board into a notebook. To address this common mistake, this teacher often posts Chinese language resources so that students can check their notes written in Chinese with the correct characters. Additionally, teachers have access to all of their students’ grades and progress reports so that whenever they contact a parent, they can also speak to the students’ progress across all content area courses.