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

International High School for Health Sciences 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To what extent does the school...</td>
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</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>Area of Focus</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 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>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>
</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>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>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>
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<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>
Findings
Culture building is accomplished by all stakeholders promoting a safe and inclusive environment for staff and students. Socio-emotional supports, including a school advisory program, are in place and all students are known by at least one adult.

Impact
Student voice is accepted and appreciated resulting in students adopting effective and academic personal behaviors.

Supporting Evidence

- All teachers and students spoke of the high levels of respect that are exhibited throughout the school. Both school leaders and teachers shared that the school’s core values are something that they “live by.” School leaders believe everyone deserves dignity especially their students. All of the students in the school are children of immigrants or immigrants themselves and many have gone through difficult times in their lives. During the teacher meeting, one teacher shared the following “we recognize how difficult it has been for many of our kids, and treating them with dignity and respect is something we do on a daily basis.” Students appreciate the way they are valued and treated and expressed how much this positively impacts their learning. One student explained “I feel safe and respected at all times because the teachers treat you like their own child.”

- The school’s advisory program provides one on one sessions with a specific teacher. The student and advisor remain a team until the student graduates. During the advisory sessions, students have opportunities to work on academic as well as personal and socio-emotional issues. Teachers believe that having this time to work with their students is valuable and gives them opportunities to build “those close personal relationships” that make a difference in student achievement. Students believe the advisory program promotes success. One student said, “I like the time we have for advisory, I feel like this is a time where I can talk about anything with my teacher and he will listen and help in any way he can.”

- Everything that is done at the school is done with the idea of collaborating with all constituencies. School leaders have an open door policy for teachers and students, and teachers have an open door for their students. Student voice is heard and valued in this school. Recently some students came to the school leaders and expressed their interest in establishing a lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender group (LGBT). During the student meeting students explained how the principal and assistant principal sat with them and assisted with the process and the LGBT club is now an after school club in their school.
Findings

Teaching practices across classrooms are aligned to the school leader’s beliefs about how students learn best. Classrooms displayed student work with high levels of student thinking and participation.

Impact

Although students are producing meaningful work products that demonstrate critical thinking, rigorous discussions in the vast majority of the classrooms were not apparent.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers and the school leadership believe that group work and opportunities for students to share their thinking and learning is a primary way that students learn best. During a social studies lesson, students took part in a Socratic seminar addressing the question “What did Booker T. Washington believe African Americans should do when faced with oppression?” A student facilitator, who kept his focus on the discussion taking place as well as the timer, ran the seminar. Students were able to make connections to their own lives as they shared their thoughts. Addressing Booker T. Washington’s statement that African Americans needed to work hard for what they want in life, one student shared he could make a connection because he knows he has to work hard if he wants to work in the financial field.

- During a social studies lesson, students were separated into groups based on their native language. The teacher asked several questions and the students discussed the questions in their groups. When a student was unsure or had difficulty understanding, they were able to ask the group leader or other group member who spoke the same language or use an iPad in order to translate the question. Although there were some obstacles based on language, student discussions were rigorous and all students actively participated. In some other classes however, this was not as evident. During a Social Studies (SS) lesson, students were engaged in a peer review of their classmate’s thesis statement and offered written feedback to their classmates. During the classroom visits, opportunities for group discussions were not as prevalent across all the subjects.

- During a math lesson, students were given ample opportunities to answer questions and engage in group and partner discussion. The focus of the lesson was to have students understand how geometric models describe spatial relationships. During the lesson the teacher asked students to turn and talk to their partner and decide whether a circle is a Polygram. During the group discussion, students were heard sharing responses such as “no, because it doesn’t have three sides,” and “I think it is because a Polygram is a geometric figure.” Throughout the lesson the teacher reminded the students to support their answers. He explained that they would need to provide specific evidence if they decide that a circle is a Polygram.
Findings

Rigorous and challenging academic tasks are consistently emphasized throughout curricula and offer multiple entry points for all students most notably through the use of technology.

Impact

All students, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, are cognitively engaged in rigorous academic tasks.

Supporting Evidence

- Opportunities for rigorous and higher-order thinking for all students were in evidence in lesson plans. A social studies plan requires students to formulate written responses addressing why individuals and/or institutions violate human rights? Students are to introduce a precise claim and distinguish the claim from alternate and opposing claims, counter claims, reasons, and evidence. Once formulated, the position was to be supported with text-based evidence. A grade twelve plan for a government class involved a Socratic seminar that focused on Booker T. Washington’s belief regarding how African Americans should behave when faced with opposition. Students were expected to describe and evaluate his beliefs and use text-based evidence to support their claims and ideas through open conversations with their peers using the seminar protocol.

- As an international high school, the school’s population is 100 percent ELLs and all aspects of the curricula ensure higher level thinking for these learners. Native language supports and resources are available in every classroom and in every subject. Students are grouped during every lesson with students that speak the same language. All lessons offer students a variety of entry points into the curriculum. For example, students have access to iPads and use them to translate class discussions and assignments by using Google translate and other translation apps. Students also have opportunities to share their responses to questions in their native language and their peers translate if the teacher is not proficient in that particular language.

- Every lesson offers all students opportunities to engage in an interdisciplinary approach by linking all subjects together. For example, in a math class students will look at health careers, their expected yearly salary and how to make a smart investment in their own education. Teachers review the various curricula regularly and adjustments are made in order to provide more consistent access for all students. The school has an English as a New Language (ENL) teacher who has opportunities to meet with every student in the school to offer student support. Students believe support for their English Language skills is monitored closely. One student shared, “I feel that when I have trouble understanding something or writing something down, I can turn to my teacher, a classmate or the school’s ENL teacher to help me.”
Additional Finding

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

All teachers use rubrics that are aligned to the curricula and the shared expected outcomes. Teachers consistently check for understanding through a variety of ways, especially using the school specific Graduation Worthy Portfolios.

Impact

Teachers provide students with feedback that is actionable, timely, and specific. Adjustments to lessons provide the necessary supports to meet the needs of all students resulting in increased student achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- Rubrics are used by all teachers and understood by all students. Additionally, all of the feedback that is provided to students is aligned to the rubrics and the common outcomes expected for all learners. From the time that students start in ninth grade they are working on their final required graduation project called Graduation Worthy Portfolios (GWP’s). According to the teachers and school leadership, these portfolios represent a student’s highest-level academic work products. The CWP consists of a written portfolio all students must successfully complete and orally present in order to graduate from the school. Students have a rubric throughout the four years they work on this project. They are offered ongoing specific, timely, and constructive feedback from all of their teachers that ultimately leads to completing their high school requirements. During the student meeting, one student shared, “Feedback starts when we are in ninth grade with our graduation projects.” A second student explained, “I am getting ready to graduate and have been working on my graduation project for the last four years and during this time, teachers have been giving me feedback to make my project perfect.”

- Teachers use varied methods to regularly assess their students. At the start of all assignments students are shown exemplars and are given the rubric for each of their tasks. In all the classes visited, teachers conferenced with students and documented meetings on their checklists. Teachers use this data to adjust their lessons and curriculum. Entrance and exit tickets are consistently used as well as student self and peer assessment.

- Evidence of feedback to students is actionable, timely, and aligned to the school’s expectations for achievement. The concept of providing warm and cool feedback with follow-up questions is employed. In addition, there are specific lessons that teach students how to give feedback to classmates. During an ELA lesson, students learned how to share feedback that was positive, specific, and rubric based with classmates. Students exchanged paragraphs and engaged in offering their classmates practical suggestions. The feedback was then used to revise their writing. This copy was then submitted to the teacher to review and receive additional recommendations and next steps.
Additional Finding

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

High expectations are communicated regularly by school leadership to teachers and by teachers to students. The Principal’s weekly memo to staff outlines the happenings and expectations for the school community so everyone understands what needs to be accomplished in a set time frame.

Impact

Teachers are provided with support and training for all expectations. Teachers offer students ongoing supports along with detailed feedback providing clear understanding of the path towards next level learning.

Supporting Evidence

- Expectations for all staff are communicated in a variety of ways including the principal’s weekly newsletter that is sent to all staff every Saturday afternoon. This communication captures all of the upcoming programs and events that all staff should be aware of. In the December fifth edition of the principal’s newsletter, staff was reminded to regularly review their assessment data and implement interventions as a way to keep students on track for graduation. Schedules for portfolio presentations to be completed prior to the winter holiday recess were highlighted.

- There are high expectations together with the necessary supports in place for all students as they prepare for their next level of education. During the advisory period, a college-based curriculum is used to inform the students about the entire college application process. Staff feels this has contributed to the effective manner in which students have applied to their colleges of choice. Currently 100 percent of all seniors have applied to college and have completed all of the documentation required.

- Training and professional learning opportunities that support the instructional expectations for all teachers are in place. The professional development calendar was developed by the collaboration of all stakeholders. The school has a Coordinating Council that helps to oversee and develop all of the committees, including professional development. School leadership and staff collaborate on the professional learning opportunities and ensure they are aligned not only to staff needs and goals, but to leadership expectations as well. Professional learning and training is provided in areas such as literacy, student portfolio development and inter-visitation with other high schools. Through pre and post observation meetings teachers review and understand the expectations. During the teacher meeting, teachers stated they know what is expected of them, and are offered support in those areas that require improvement.
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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Findings

Teacher teams are consistently monitoring student progress, especially through the Graduation Worthy Portfolio process that is required of all students. The school offers numerous opportunities for teachers to take on leadership roles throughout the school.

Impact

Improved teacher practice is in evidence. Active distributive leadership positively affects student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- One of the most obvious ways that teachers track student progress toward goals is through the GWP’s. Students begin this process when entering the school and are supported and tracked by their teachers. Teachers regularly meet as teams and analyze student work to ensure that students are meeting their goals each for each marking period. Strategies are developed to support groups of students that they teach and guide through the four years in all subject areas. Teacher meet with department teams and grade level teams as well addressing the progress demonstrated by student work products. When students enter their junior year they are officially given a mentor who will support them as they present their final project as seniors. Through these team meetings teacher practice is addressed to support the learning that is necessary for the students they are mentoring.

- There are many opportunities for teachers to take on leadership roles throughout the school. Opportunities begin with the coordinating council, which represents all of the teacher committees and groups throughout the school and acts as a liaison with the school leadership. The council oversees committees focused on professional development, GWP, and the advisory program. In addition, there are teacher leaders that act as discipline coordinators for each core subject that is selected by leadership based on their interest in the position. These positions are filled based on input from school leadership and interest from the teachers.

- School leadership feels the improvement that has evolved in the school is due largely to the distributive leadership roles of the teachers. These roles have led to increased growth in teacher capacity. Both the leadership and teachers believe teachers are looking for ways to help improve the school. One teacher shared, “It’s all about leadership opportunities for teachers here.” Another teacher explained that her role as a liaison has taught her a great deal about leadership. Holding all teachers accountable for what takes place in the school is something they helped to develop. Teachers believe their ownership of all aspects of school life this year has resulted in the improvement in student learning and engagement.