Quality Review Report

2016-2017

Pan American International High School
High School 24Q296
45-10 94th St.
Queens
NY 11373

Principal: George Badia

Dates of Review:
May 16, 2017 - May 17, 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

Pan American International High School serves students in grade 9 through grade 12. You will find information about this school, including enrollment, attendance, student demographics, and data regarding academic performance, at http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/report/default.htm.

School Quality Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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. 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>
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### School Culture

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations</td>
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### Systems for Improvement

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school’s instructional goals and meet student learning needs, as evidenced by meaningful student work products</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>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>
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<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

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

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
Consistent and focused feedback from observation cycles supports the development of teachers and elevates instructional practices.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders engaged in an exercise that ensured their consistency in use of the Danielson Framework for Teaching rubric. The administrative team then determined which assistant principal would observe the different content area teachers. Each teacher first received one non-evaluative class observation so that at least one coaching session could take place prior to evaluative observations. By January, all teachers received a minimum of one official observation. For teachers under consideration for tenure or who earned a developing rating at the end of the prior school year, the principal conducted the first official observation. In January, school leaders met to revise the tiers used to determine the order in which teachers are observed. School leaders then conducted a minimum of one evaluative observation for each teacher in February. After this observation round, assistant principals switched the content area teachers they would observe for all remaining observations for the 2016-2017 school year to ensure that all teachers had been officially observed by each school leader.

- Teachers offer actionable feedback to each other after peer classroom visits. For example, notes from a feedback conference after an intervisitation pointed out that even though the learning target for the lesson involved all students annotating a text, a majority of students were not annotating while they read. The host teacher was advised to model annotation during the lesson to ensure clarity for students. In another example, two teachers visited a science colleague and noted that students were unsure as to what steps should be taken during the experiment portion of their lab class. The host teacher was advised to plan and deliver a mini-lesson that contained specific time frames and expectations so that students would be empowered to completely engage in the assigned task. One teacher reported that he would not be using the online tool that provides differentiated readings had it not been for an intervisitation during which he observed it in practice.

- School leaders accurately capture teachers' strengths, weaknesses and next steps for improvement in observation reports. For example, in one report the school leader noted the absence of differentiated materials. The teacher was advised to provide differentiated texts so that all students could have access to the lesson. In response to observed excessive downtime, the same teacher was also advised to provide clear timeframes within which activities are to take place. In another example, a teacher was advised to group students based on English acquisition and provide an appropriate amount of translated materials so that students can have equal access to the course materials while also being challenged to strengthen their use of English. Additionally, school leaders make use of a detailed spreadsheet of teachers' professional goals prior to and after each observation to ensure alignment between teachers’ goals and the feedback offered.
Findings

School leaders and teachers use common assessments to determine student progress. Across classrooms, teachers’ consistently use ongoing checks for understanding.

Impact

Although data is used to adjust instruction in both English Language Arts (ELA) and algebra, it does not yet reveal that there has been an increase in mastery for students across all grades and subjects. Additionally, while some teachers are making effective adjustments to instruction based on in-class formative assessments, this was not observed across the vast majority of classrooms.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use data from mock ELA and Algebra Regents exams to modify and adjust instruction. For example, data from a mock Algebra exam revealed that students were struggling with responding to the extended response questions. As a result, math teachers decided to employ the solve the questions, organize all facts, line up a plan, verify, and examine your result (SOLVE) protocol. Similarly, analysis of mock ELA exam data revealed that students struggled with identifying text-based evidence. After schoolwide implementation of an annotation protocol, data from subsequent mock and actual ELA Regents exam scores evidenced an increase in students’ success in identifying applicable facts from reading passages as well as in using them in essays to support their claims. Data from mock ELA Regents exams revealed that in addition to issues with identifying text-based evidence, students were struggling with making inferences. Currently, the grade eleven teacher team is experimenting with various strategies that are candidates for use across the school. Student success in passing the Algebra and ELA Regents exam is tracked until each student passes that exam. However, once students have passed these two Regents exams, there are no common assessments, besides the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT), used to assess their academic growth in either ELA, math, science, or social studies.

- In addition to the data resulting from mock ELA and Algebra Regents exams, data from the NYSESLAT is collected and shared with all faculty. Teachers use this data to determine how students will be initially grouped and the ways in which students would benefit from differentiated materials and scaffolded supports. However, the school is not employing any other common assessment that would supply the school with data around students’ language acquisition level that would allow for an across-the-school analysis and subsequent schoolwide adjustments. Although the school tracks students’ progress toward their portfolio-based assessment tasks (PBATs), there is no assessment from which data could be gathered and used to determine schoolwide initiatives around any common gaps or struggles after they have passed the ELA or Algebra exam, limiting the positive impact that adjustments made in other content areas can have.

- Across classrooms, teachers were checking-in with individual and groups of students. From these check-ins, teachers were able to redirect students, reteach, as well as draw attention to fellow students for support. For example, during a discussion in a grade nine ELA class, the teacher asked for the whole class to direct attention to one student as he had made a poignant remark regarding the characters within A Raisin in the Sun. Additionally, during a lesson on the use of annotation skills in an English as a New Language (ENL) class, the teacher assessed that students were incorrectly using two annotation symbols. As a result, the teacher redirected students to brief reteaching sessions, following up with group check-ins. Although there were multiple examples of teachers checking for understanding, this was not observed across the vast majority of classrooms.
Additional Finding

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

Through curriculum committee and teacher team inquiry work, along with school leaders’ work in assessing the effectiveness of those structures, curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and strategically integrate the instructional shifts. Curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

Impact

Integration of the instructional shifts has ensured that students are acquiring academic vocabulary, using text-based evidence, and applying math to the real world across content areas. All students have access to the curricula and are cognitively engaged through differentiated groupings and leveled materials.

Supporting Evidence

- Across the vast majority of curricula there is alignment with the Common Core and New York State content area standards. Additionally, there is evidence of integration of the instructional shifts. For example, academic vocabulary and the requirement that students support written arguments with text-based evidence are addressed uniformly across curricula. Literacy experiences are also emphasized by content area teachers outside of ELA classrooms. In a trigonometry class, students are expected to write short entries for each leveled task that would detail the challenges they encountered and how they met those challenges. A U.S. history lesson plan includes an activity in which students are to formulate arguments as to which of two models of immigration policy would best serve the U.S. and support their arguments with text-based evidence. An Earth science lesson plan details how students will watch an interview in which Donald Trump discussed whether he believes in the existence of climate change and then write a summary of his opinion, supporting their determination with text-based evidence, direct quotations and paraphrased comments.

- Curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined using student work so that individuals and group of students, including the lowest and highest achieving students, must demonstrate their thinking. For example, teachers of all content areas have analyzed students’ sentence writing in order to strengthen writing instruction across the school. Lesson plans across all grades and content areas included plans for maximizing student engagement connected with the major steps and activities covered. Lesson plans also include the different strategies utilized to ensure that the school’s diverse learners, including all levels of language acquisition for English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, are engaged in rigorous work and must demonstrate their thinking. Task directions are translated for all ELLs ensuring appropriately challenging levels of English for the purpose of supporting both English language learning as well as all students’ ability to equally engage in rigorous work. Other examples include heterogeneous students groupings based on language acquisition levels, a global lesson plan that utilizes differentiated readings, math lessons that have translated directions, and four examples of extension activities for which translated directions are also provided.

- Evidence of planning for students with disabilities is exemplified by a U.S. history lesson plan that includes two copies of Andrew Jackson’s message to Congress titled On Indian Removal. One copy is the unchanged original text while the second copy is modified to include footnotes and boldface type so that academic vocabulary will be easily identifiable. Another example is a package of lessons for the resource room in which students are engaged in activities that guide them in understanding their individual education program (IEP) and to create goals that directly address their areas of need as identified in their IEPs.
Additional Finding

| Quality Indicator: | 1.2 Pedagogy | Rating: | Proficient |

Findings

Across classrooms, teaching strategies consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula. In addition, students are engaged in creating meaningful work products.

Impact

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

Supporting Evidence

- Across classes, students were grouped based on language acquisition and were supported within those groups by either differentiated readings, varying levels of Spanish translation, differentiated tasks, or a combination thereof. For example, during a U.S. history class covering immigration policy, students had access to an online translation platform as well as leveled sentence starters. Students in a living environment class were grouped initially on language acquisition levels. Within these groups, students were also homogeneously paired based on data from content-specific assessments. Each group received differentiated assignments with Spanish to English dictionaries and glossaries were available to all students.

- During a grade nine ELA class, students were engaged in a whole-class discussion over whether characters in the play *A Raisin in the Sun* were static or dynamic. Students were then directed to turn to a neighbor and talk about the two characters that had not been included in the whole class discussion, focusing not only on their status as either static or dynamic, but also about how the play would have been different had they not been in the play at all. In a U.S. history class, students were engaged in a debate about the benefits and detriments of two different models of immigration policy, one based on points and the other on a lottery. Other examples of students engaging in student-to-student discussion involved students making an argument either for or against President Donald Trump’s views on climate change while questioning their partner’s views.

- In an ENL class, students individually annotated reading passages within their groups. Afterward all students with each group shared their findings with a partner and ensured that their work products were all in alignment with the consensus of the group’s findings. Students in a living environment class worked within their groups to complete worksheets that required a number of steps that needed to be taken in order to completely understand newly introduced academic vocabulary words. Students accomplished this by deciding which students were to assume a variety of roles as these worksheets required students to define any one of a variety of organisms, create a visual symbol of that same word, as well as create a list of synonyms and antonyms. Additionally, students in a grade ten global studies class shared with partners the claims they had written and supported with text-based evidence. After giving feedback to their partners, students edited their claims and subsequently worked with their partners in order to cooperatively write thesis statements.
## Additional Finding

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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### Findings

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

### Impact

Communication and professional development around high expectations results in a culture of mutual accountability. Additionally, through consistent support programs and activities, such as the College and Career Passport and advisory, students are inspired to own their preparation for college.

### Supporting Evidence

- High expectations are shared with faculty through a handbook and newsletters. Examples of expectations shared in the faculty handbook are around lesson planning, setting and maintaining a positive learning environment in classrooms and hallways through celebrating student work, using formative and summative assessments, offering actionable feedback to students, and optimizing instructional time. High expectations around professionalism and responsibilities that fall outside of the classroom are also covered. Some examples of these are being aware of all opportunities that are available to students so that all teachers can accurately promote those opportunities to students, managing discourse and possible disagreements between colleagues in a professional manner, as well as information around expectations for classroom management, student discipline procedures, and participation in professional development opportunities. Teachers reported that school leaders regularly review their unit and lesson plans and that they receive suggestions and next-steps as to their planning. The culture around preemptive training around instructional planning has become embedded to the point that if a school leader fails to return submitted lesson and/or unit plans with feedback in a timely manner that teachers hold their school leaders accountable for this. One teacher reported, and all present agreed, “We’ve developed a culture of preemptive training here and it has to stay that way!”

- The school provides a college and career newsletter for students in all grades. These newsletters contain descriptions of the many programs and resources available to students, along with online links to those resources’ web pages. Students in grades eleven and twelve also benefit from workshops and presentations covering the PSAT, SAT, as well as from organizations that offer supports beyond the school that are geared toward helping students obtain college acceptances and succeed while at college. Students in grades eleven and twelve also benefit from a targeted series of lessons and workshops around college during an advisory class. Examples of the topics covered in this format are how to search for colleges, diving into the benefits of attending college, the myths and realities of college degrees, campus life, managing the increases in freedom and responsibility that come with college attendance, and time management. The school also supports students’ attendance at college fairs and other workshops around the application process through the maintenance of a College and Career Readiness Passport in which each page is stamped after attending any number of related activities. Completely filled passports serve as students’ tickets to trips or other rewards.

- Supports and programs in place ensure students are prepared for the next level and own their experience. Currently, 100 percent of grade twelve students have applied to college, representing the highest number of students to reach this goal. In addition, thirty students earned college credits at the end of the fall 2016 semester. Collectively, the graduating class of 2017 has already earned over one million dollars in scholarship money. One student reported and all present agreed that “there are college fairs, college visits, colleges that come and make presentations, and all the teachers who won't stop preparing us!”
**Findings**

All teachers are engaged in grade level teams that consistently analyze student work in cycles of inquiry that reveal targeted areas of student need and actively address them. 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**

Inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations have strengthened teacher instructional capacity, resulting in schoolwide instructional coherence and increased student achievement. Distributed leadership structures have resulted in teachers leading teams and directing intervisitations, as well as deciding upon tools that can be developed and used across the school.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The math team met to review student work as part of their inquiry cycle around the schoolwide implementation of the SOLVE strategy in math. After analyzing fifteen students’ work, teachers found that six students did not list all of the relevant information and planned for a future meeting during which the team would discuss strengthening their modeling practices around this step in order to help students across the school. Additionally, teachers discussed the regularity of students’ conceptual errors and whether reteaching alone or along with the provision of a menu of different examples would assist students in this step. All teachers present at this meeting agreed to investigate and subsequently employ adjustments to their instruction, pertaining to the struggles revealed around the success of the SOLVE initiative, and add items that need further discussion to the agenda for the next meeting. Data around the consistently increasing graduation rate, projected to increase again by the close of the current school year, makes clear that students are benefiting from the work of the school’s teacher team inquiry work.

- Teachers reported that as a result of collaborations within teacher teams, their instructional practices are strengthening. One teacher reported that as a result of one teacher’s presentation at a team meeting about how he uses an online platform to search for differentiated readings, she is using this in her classroom as well. This teacher spoke highly of the platform and how it has made planning for a diverse group of learners easier. Another teacher reported that as a result of her intervisitations, she observed the use of an assessment tool that allows for students to answer questions on their cell phones and that this immediately creates a set of data so that all students can see which answer was correct and how many students chose that correct answer, along with each of the incorrect answers. It was reported that students then use the information as to which of the incorrect answers was chosen most often in any given question to spark discussions within groups and extend their understanding of the topic.

- Teachers serve as team leaders and take key roles in decision-making. Teacher leaders launched an initiative to have activity guides become a tool for students and teachers across the school. They delivered professional development on activity guide design, provided model activity guides as resources, and developed the rubric that would be used to support all activity guides. In support of this initiative, teacher leaders facilitated a mid-year check-in survey with teachers and are currently using this data to plan for the year’s remaining professional development sessions around this initiative. Additionally, leaders of each instructional team meet weekly as part of the coordinating council to make decisions that affect the grading policy, programming, exam coordination, and intervisititation foci.