Quality Review Report

2016-2017

Careers in Sports High School
High school 07X548
730 Concourse Village West
Bronx
NY 10451

Principal: Johanny Garcia

Dates of Review:
March 30, 2017 - March 31, 2017

Lead Reviewer: Buffie Whitfield
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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To what extent does the school...</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>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 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>Additional Finding</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>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</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>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings
Most of the teachers are engaged in inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations. Distributive leadership structures empower teachers to create curriculum by department.

Impact
Teachers assume ownership in refining curricula and instruction based on the inquiry work that they do in teams, strengthening their professional capacity. These refinements impact student learning, increasing students’ access to rigor and achievement for all learners.

Supporting Evidence
- All teacher teams, such as department and grade-level instructional are involved in structured, inquiry-based collaborations. Teachers meet weekly in their respective teams to work on their practice, analyze student work, and discuss specific instructional strategies. This ensures that collaborations improve their practice and progress toward student goals. The school leader provided Advance-tracker data to show evidence of teachers improving in competencies from the Danielson Framework for Learning, specifically around designing coherent instruction. Currently, the school’s foci are student discussion and engagement.

- During both teacher team meetings attended, teachers spoke about having a strong voice in making schoolwide decisions. Teachers shared that they meet weekly to discuss schoolwide goals to ensure coherence and consistency. The teacher teams, department teams, grade teams, drive support for teachers and students. The department teams collaborate to write syllabi and unit plans that ensure appropriate tasks are embedded in content courses with consistency across classes. The grade teams examine student work to identify characteristics or trends of an individual or group to determine where support is needed. Teachers brainstorm to make modifications, decide actions to take, and execute unified team action plans. They discuss findings and prepare feedback for the teachers they visited. Teachers agreed these visits are helpful in improving their own practice.

- The principal strongly supports initiatives led by teachers’, including mentoring of new teachers, collegial team teaching and interdisciplinary projects that encourage teachers to work together across content areas. For example, a math teacher shared student work where students struggled with functions and graphs. The teacher shared that their colleagues improve instructional practice to provide more student opportunity to demonstrate their thinking. Department chairs and grade level leaders can collaborate across grades to make key decisions around curriculum, instructional strategies, and professional development of their colleagues. Teachers state that the principal trusts and empowers them to make decisions. They feel supported by the leadership and appreciate the opportunities to be creative within their subject and grade level responsibilities.
Area of Focus

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

Findings

Though pedagogy, anchored in common beliefs, provides consistent instructional supports, including scaffolds and questioning, the use of strategic extensions that foster higher-order thinking demonstrated in rigorous student work and discussions varies across classrooms.

Impact

Across classrooms, multiple entry points support student engagement in rigorous tasks. However, supports and extensions are not always strategically planned so that all learners, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, have opportunities to be highly engaged and demonstrate critical and analytical thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- Across all classrooms, there was evidence of clear learning targets and lesson planning aligned to the workshop model. In most classrooms, teaching strategies included teachers using and requiring students to use academic vocabulary, scaffolding techniques and student-choice that is encouraged when choosing a strategy to use. For example, in math classrooms, students are encouraged to evaluate which strategies are most effective for each of them to use, which will help them be most successful with the problems they encounter.

- Across classrooms, students had structured opportunities to engage in tasks on their own or with their peers to build critical thinking skills through an intense focus on project-based and problem-based instruction. In some classrooms, however, tasks are still heavily scaffolded and teacher-directed, hindering student independence, and ownership. For example, in a math class, although the lesson plan stated that students would be given tasks on varying levels of difficulty to work independently, the teacher dominated the lesson, focusing on one problem. Now, there were few opportunities for students to turn and talk and to work independently on problems that offer extension into more academically challenged material. Similarly, in a science class, the warm up lasted longer than necessary, and the lesson did not strategically provide multiple entry points and high quality supports and extensions into the curricula for all learners to be cognitively engaged.

- Teachers use Smartboards to display visuals and discuss the content and skills being taught throughout the lesson. Currently, there is an emphasis on Danielson (3b), Using questioning and discussing techniques to engage all learners and increase student participation in discussions. Because of this, teachers use questions to guide the class discussion. In a United States History class, the teacher posed to the class, “Which taxes do you prefer – progressive, regressive or flat tax?” Students compared regressive, progressive and flat taxes and then debated with each other.
## Additional Finding

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

The school has aligned curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards with the integration of the instructional shifts. Critical thinking skills and analysis are consistently emphasized and coherently planned for all learners across grades and subjects using student work and data.

### Impact

The curricular planning promotes coherence, ensuring students are college and career ready. Curricula and academic tasks across grades and content areas encourage access and cognitive engagement for all students.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school uses a uniform school-wide template to create lesson plans that include the New York State content standards and Common Core Learning Standards. The school’s focus is included with essential questions, materials, literacy and differentiation strategies, vocabulary, content knowledge, language, and performance skills. Thematic connections and assessments and reflection activities are specified on lesson plans.

- Curricula maps provide evidence that the school develops rigorous academic tasks through the adaptation of instructional materials from EngageNY, Common Core Library, and the Science and Social Studies Scope and Sequence. Most lesson plans included differentiation for students, learning objectives, “do now,” Common Core Learning Standards, vocabulary, aim, assessment, materials, essential questions, and homework.

- Curriculum planning and refinement take place two to three times a year based on data and authentic student work. Teachers look at student work regularly to determine students' understanding, and to evaluate and modify curricula and academic tasks. Moreover, teacher teams regularly engage with data gathered from assessments to reflect student growth, as well as, gaps in student learning. For example, on a recent English assessment, students demonstrated skill deficiencies when engaging with informational texts. English teachers adjusted their instructional focus to include more informational texts, and to explicitly address Common Core Learning Standards that focused on vocabulary development and comprehending central ideas. Teacher teams have ensured continued improvement of the quality of their curriculum planning and mapping with the utilization of peer evaluation of unit plans.
Findings
The school uses common assessments in all subject areas, tracks student progress, and consistently checks for understanding.

Impact
The school’s systems to monitor progress through data analysis, as well as during instruction, are used regularly to guide adjustments in units and lessons to meet students’ needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use standards based and task specific rubrics across grades and subjects to assess student work. This consistency enables teachers to analyze work together to determine student progress within the unit of study or exact lesson. Students say that the teachers are open and allow them to come visit them for tutoring. They feel the feedback given to them about their writing, projects and classwork has helped them to improve. Another student spoke of a teacher who gave her feedback about the content of her writing and explained that it lacked details. She shared that the feedback relating to grammar kept her motivated to write and believes the feedback has helped her in all subjects. Student work across the school also reflects teachers’ written comments based on rubric elements. During the student meeting, students spoke about how they use rubrics in class and when working on projects. Students use an online grading platform to inform them of their progress.

- Teacher teams regularly review data from grade and content common assessments, rubric-based analyses of student work, and responses to classroom tasks and end-of unit-assessments. They use the information from their collaborative review of student work to adjust lessons and provide actionable feedback to students about their next learning step. Students indicated that teacher feedback is helpful to them as they work to improve their writing and learn from their mistakes.

- Classroom visits and meetings with teachers indicated that the school uses ongoing assessments to group students and adjust lesson plans, as well as provide feedback on student work including next steps. Students say that teachers confer with them and give them strategies on how to improve their work. However, visits also indicated that teachers across most of the classrooms do not always utilize checks for understanding to make immediate adjustments in daily lessons. For example, in one math class most students understood the task but the teacher still gave a lengthy explanation to the entire class. Similarly, in a science class observed, the teacher did not accurately assess that most students understood the task but the teacher still gave a lengthy explanation to the entire class. Similarly, in a science class observed, the teacher did not accurately assess that most students understood the task. The teacher dedicated a great deal of lesson time to explanation and introduction before sending students to work independently, thereby minimizing independent work time and opportunities for students, particularly for higher achieving students, to engage in rich, high-level thinking and discussion with peers.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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Findings
The school communicates high expectations to staff, students, and parents, to communicate accountability for continuous student progress.

Impact
Structures that support the school's high expectations amongst staff, students, and their families help to provide a path towards elevated student achievement and college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders communicate high expectations for staff, as evidenced by the professional development opportunities and faculty conferences. Additionally, teacher handbooks and orientation folders set expectations and norm pedagogically practices. School leaders have aligned the school's instructional foci and use the Danielson Framework for Teaching to provide feedback.

- Parents shared the many opportunities the school affords their children, such as preparatory courses and tutoring. Parents stated that the school communicates via email, phone calls, and mail. Parents shared that the school uses an online grading platform that allows parents and students to view student and school information, such as student attendance records, class schedule, and grades. This provides continuous feedback to support families with understanding student progress. The parents are dedicated to their school. One parent was unable to make it and called in to share how the school positively impacted her daughter by assisting her daughter prepare for the Global History Regents. Parents access their children's grades from the school's online grading platform, receive standards-based report cards that delineate students' academic accomplishments and expressed appreciation for the intuitiveness of standards-based grading.

- Parents receive information about their children's progress towards graduation. Parents stated that administrators and teachers are focused on ensuring that their children complete all the requirements for their courses. Families are pleased with the initiatives, such as college trips that widen students' options when making decisions about career and educational goals. They feel supported in helping their children meet the high expectations that have been articulated by the principal.
Additional Finding

| Quality Indicator: | 4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision | Rating: Proficient |

Findings
School leaders provide teachers with effective feedback that articulates clear expectations and next steps for professional growth that lead to growth for teachers.

Impact
Due to the effective feedback provided to teachers, the pedagogical practices across classrooms has improved.

Supporting Evidence

- The effective implementation of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* has resulted in the development of a schoolwide system for providing all teachers with frequent actionable feedback, as well as clear next steps for growth. The principal and assistant principals utilize the Advance Measures of Teaching Practice data to systematically analyze trends in schoolwide growth across domains. Observation data trends are shared with faculty to provide an open dialogue regarding teacher development.

- Through the thoughtful analysis of teacher practices, the school’s professional development plans are modified to include identified trends in teacher practice and need areas. Succession plans are currently in place where veteran staff members are strategically placed to provide opportunities to engage in extensions to their practice. For example, strong and effective teachers were asked to become lead teachers allowing administration to support them, as they support their peers. Based on previous successes with student achievement, an additional layer of teacher support is in place, enabling the staff to benefit from the peer support for new teachers. Because of both targeted professional development and multiple layers of support for improvements in creating more rigorous tasks, provided by school leaders, unit plans confirmed teachers’ increased ability to develop and plan challenging activities.

- During feedback sessions, teachers are also encouraged to seek support from lead teachers, administrators and mentors who are an integral part of the feedback loop. These collaborative endeavors allow administrators and selected teacher peers to provide meaningful feedback to all teachers, resulting in their improved levels of effectiveness across domains evaluated by observations to date, as evidenced by Advance data.