Quality Review Report

2016-2017

Wings Academy
High school 12X684
1122 East 180th St.
Bronx
NY 10460

Principal: Tuwanna Williams Gray

Dates of Review:
April 27, 2017 - April 28, 2017

Lead Reviewer: Lenneen Gibson
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

Wings Academy 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

Instructional Core

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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>Developing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessment and grading practices, and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### 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 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults</td>
<td>Additional Finding  Proficient</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  Proficient</td>
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</table>

### 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 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  Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Establish a coherent vision of school improvement that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are tracked for progress and are understood and supported by the entire school community</td>
<td>Additional Finding  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>Area of Celebration  Well Developed</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  Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Evaluate the quality of school-level decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school, with particular attention to the CCLS</td>
<td>Additional Finding  Proficient</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings

Teachers receive feedback that captures strengths, challenges, and next steps through cycles of observations and analysis of student data.

Impact

Feedback to teachers articulates clear expectations and next steps with cycles of observations that support and are aligned to the teacher and school goals, and supports teacher development.

Supporting Evidence

- Next steps in observation reports are grounded in the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Sample observation reports, mid-year evaluations, and initial planning conferences consistently align with school and teacher goals to improve teacher practice. An initial planning conference notes were reviewed and cited the teacher’s goals which included improving the design of coherent instruction and assessing student learning. The mid-year evaluations cited improving of pacing and student engagement. Observation reports commended the teacher for planning a structured and engaging lesson that promoted collaborative student groups. The recommendations to the teacher mentioned strategies for maximizing student engagement, lesson planning, and moving the teacher’s practice in assessment to employ strategies to monitor student learning throughout the lesson. Subsequent observations revealed the teacher improving in both of these components. Additional observation reports commended a teacher for providing reading material that intellectually engaged the students and designed well-structured group activities. Subsequent observation reports showed the teacher vacillating between attempting and meeting the school’s instructional focus of checks for understanding with adjustment to the lesson, providing opportunities for students to engage in productive struggle, and students using evidence to make claims through writing and discussion.

- An additional review of initial planning conferences noted a teacher’s goal of designing coherent instruction, and mid-year evaluations cited lesson planning and student self-assessment. The feedback to the teacher recommended that lesson plans be revisited to design learning goals and objectives that were discernible for students to understand.

- The Administrative team has created teams of teachers that conduct frequent cycles of observations in the form of informal observations, quick talks, and classroom visits. These events transpire in ranges of weekly to monthly occurrences that provide teachers with feedback and next steps rooted in student data. Sample observation reports cited student’s exit slip data and whether students mastered the learning objective and provided student responses to the exit slip as evidence of meeting the objective. Recommendations mentioned using rubrics to assess the student’s exit ticket summary and provided the teacher with an example of an exit ticket rubric.
Area of Focus

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

Teaching strategies, student discussions, and student work products inconsistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula.

Impact

Missed opportunities in providing multiple entry points into the curricula and providing student-to-student discussions reflect uneven levels of student thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher strategies inconsistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula leading to uneven engagement in appropriately challenging tasks and demonstration of higher-order thinking skills. In an English Language Arts (ELA) class, the learning objective required students to identify characters in the play and the conflicts they faced, and how these conflicts affected their relationships with others. Student groups worked on differentiated tasks such as a writing station, literature circles station, character analysis station, vocabulary station, and an evidence retrieval station. Students in their groups had assigned roles and used scaffolds in their station activities. In their groups, students cited evidence from the text while conducting character analyses. In another ELA class with diverse learners, students were using Google slides to construct a presentation that answered the prompt, “What racial problems exist in America and what is the best way to solve them?” Students were required to cite evidence from the documentary, “Thirteenth” and one piece of evidence from the text, Between the World and Me. Due to the uneven pacing of the lesson, instructional time was spent on the teacher modeling the assembly of the slide presentation. Students did not have enough time to delve into the text and cite their evidence regarding race relations in America which led to uneven student engagement. Scaffolds to deconstruct the task were not observed being used.

- In a math class, the aim of the lesson stated, “How do we model problems using a system of linear equations?” Students used white boards to demonstrate their problem solving process. Students were provided opportunities to engage in a turn and talk to discuss their solutions and where the first coordinate would be in their answers. Students were able to articulate their next steps in the lesson when queried. In a social studies class, the learning objective was, “Explain how the Constitution promotes relations among the states?” Student in their groups were each given a different question on different topics such as full faith and credit, interstate compacts, and privileges and immunities. All students in the groups did not participate in the activity and student engagement began to wane, which was monopolized by certain group members. When queried about their next steps, students were unable to articulate their next steps, thus hindering student thinking and complete participation of all students.

- In a science class with diverse learners, students were performing an activity on the beaks of finches and their abilities to grasp food because of the adaptations of their beaks. Students in groups used different tools such as a tweezer, binder clip, spoon, or a pair of scissors to symbolize the beaks. Students used a scaffold during the activity and were engaged in discussions regarding the activity. An Advanced Placement Computer Science class was observed in which students showcased processes for building a virtual app for visiting the Intrepid museum. Students built their own websites, worked as learning partners in the class, and used scripts to code program animations. In a social studies class, the aim of the lesson stated, “How did the spread of nationalism affect Eastern Europe and Russia?” Students were given a Frayer model scaffold to use and were given an opportunity to engage in a turn and talk, but were provided limited time to engage in this activity. A class discussion ensued, but the responses were teacher centered.
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

School leaders ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core and integrate the instructional shifts. Curricula and academic tasks emphasize rigorous habits.

Impact

Curricula are aligned to the Common Core and promote college and career readiness. Curricula and tasks are accessible for a variety of learners.

Supporting Evidence

- Curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts of citing textual evidence and writing from sources to inform or make an argument to promote college and career readiness. An ELA lesson plan required students to cite textual evidence from the play, *A Raisin in the Sun* that supports their analyses of specific characters. A social studies lesson plan required students to cite textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources to evaluate the impact of the Cuban Missile Crisis on Cold War politics, and why this event was a serious threat to world peace. Another social studies lesson plan required students to analyze and articulate primary and secondary source documents on the ideas contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

- Curricula and academic tasks emphasize rigorous habits for all learners. A mathematics lesson plan required students to use real world applications when modeling systems of linear equations. Students had to discern whether the elimination or substitution methods were best for solving linear equations. A science lesson plan for diverse learners required students to simulate Darwin’s Theory of Natural Selection by conducting an activity that addressed the adaptations of the beaks of finches and their ability to gather food.

- A mathematics task required students to graph a scatter plot, find the regression equation, and interpret the data from the graph. Another mathematics task required real world applications using the concept of series and sequences. Students were tasked with designing the school auditorium with a specified seating capacity, by allotting the number of seat and rows by forming an arithmetic sequence. An ELA task required students to write a strong theme based on the text, *A Long Way Gone* and identify the central theme and author’s writing strategy to develop the structure of the text. A social studies task required students to write an essay that responded to the New Deal being a turning point in the role of government and to what extent was there continuity and change during that period.
Additional Finding

<table>
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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
Teachers use assessments that are aligned to the school's curricula. The school's common assessments determine student progress towards goals.

Impact
Teachers provide feedback to students regarding their achievement. The results of common assessments are used to adjust curricula and instruction.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use common assessments such as Regents exams to determine student progress and use the results to adjust curricula and instruction. The June 2016 Global History Regents exam was reviewed, trends and patterns on student performance was noted. Teachers adjusted the Global History curricula by creating a mini unit on Japan and adopted the Frayer Model Map scaffold to deconstruct content on Japan, the League of Nations. The June 2016 ELA Regents exam was reviewed and trends revealed that student questions on poetry, the central idea, and theme posed a challenge to students. As a result of analyzing the data, teachers incorporated more poetry into the curricula and included strategies for annotation, paraphrasing, summarization, figurative, and connotative language. January 2017 Regents data in ELA and Global History showed a fifty-six and fifty-nine percent passing rate for students with disabilities.

- Teachers use assessments that are aligned to the school's curricula and provide actionable feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement. A sample of a student's mathematics work that was assessed, used a rubric. The student was commended for using the correct arithmetic sequence and provided clear and correct justification for his/her work. A science task showed the student being commended for using the correct strategy for his/her graphical representation of the data but did not use an accurate scaling on his/her graph to plot all the data points. An ELA task required students to cite evidence based on a comparison of Classical, Medieval and Renaissance art. A recommendation to students cited the use of more details in their reflection of the artwork.

- Additional samples of student work show feedback in the forms of “glows” and “grows.” Feedback on a students’ ELA presentation commended the students on their teamwork in presenting the content. The recommendation to a student cited improving one aspect of his/her presenting skills, such as making constant eye contact with the audience. A mathematics task commended a student for the accuracy in his/her work, as well as the justification of it. However, the student needed to check his/her work to improve on the accuracy of the work. A social studies task commended the student for using outside information but recommended that the student use information that satisfies the requirement of the task and to specifically answer the task at hand.
Findings

High expectations are conveyed to the staff on instruction and communication and reflect the Danielson Framework for Teaching. School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to families connected to a path of college and career readiness.

Impact

School leaders are consistently communicating high expectations to the staff, with a system of accountability that ensures that expectations are met. School leaders and staffs’ ongoing feedback helps families understand their children’s progress toward expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders consistently communicate high expectations for instruction and communication grounded in the Danielson Framework for Teaching to the entire staff. Expectations for instruction are delineated via non-evaluative classroom walkthroughs with feedback in the form of “glows” and “grows.” Teachers receive comments on the classroom environment and arrangement, visibility of learning objective(s) and learning charts. Expectations are delineated in tools such as the Frayer Model graphic organizer to support vocabulary building in instruction. In addition, expectations for instruction are articulated through “quick talks” between teachers and an administrator that align instructional practices to the school’s instructional foci. The school has a suggested lesson planning template and regular unit plan submissions to support the school’s expectations on instruction. A daily schoolwide briefing bulletin articulates the school’s mission, vision, instructional foci, school events, and lauds staff for their contributions to the school community. Teachers are held accountable for these expectations through the observation process.

- Expectations for professionalism are conveyed through a staff handbook, and a guide that includes calendar dates for marking periods, assessment, and unit calendar submissions. Expectations for schoolwide pedagogical strategies such as, “See, Think, Wonder” and “The 4-Step Method to Solve Math Problem” are articulated through written communications. Teachers were provided training that occurred in cycles that were aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Teachers were provided training on writing effective lesson plans and curriculum maps while incorporating the Common Core and Webb’s Depth of Knowledge questions. Additional training included peer evaluation and rubrics to drive rigorous instruction, incorporating the instructional shifts in mathematics and ELA, strategies for using evidence to make claims, and using assessment data to drive instruction.

- Expectations connected to college and career readiness are conveyed to families through an online grading portal such as PupilPath, quarterly progress reports, report cards, meet the staff events, parent teacher conferences, a parent and student handbook, phone calls to the home, and written communication on important calendar dates. The school hosts workshops for the parents on PupilPath, and transitional plans for diverse learners. Parents are also invited to town hall meetings that discuss the school’s grading policy, credit accumulation, and the cell phone policy. During the parent meeting, parents attested that they can access their child’s academic data from PupilPath. Communication is frequent via emails and calls from the school and welcoming through the school’s open door policy. Parents also mentioned the workshops offered, such as information on the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process, cyberbullying, mental health, and gender identity.
**Additional Finding**

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<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 consistently analyze student work and assessment data. Distributive leadership practices are in place.

**Impact**

Teachers have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning across the school. Analysis of assessment data and student work results in improved teacher practice and student achievement.

**Supporting Evidence**

- A social studies team was observed engaging in inquiry work by analyzing student work and the efficacy of implementing strategies to support content vocabulary acquisition and vocabulary deficiencies. The targeted group of foci were the lowest-third and students with an Individualized Educational Program (IEP). Using a prescribed protocol, teachers captured their noticings of student work on a “Capturing Evidence of Impact” template. Trends noted in the students’ writing samples were: students identified the main idea and used strong evidence to support the main idea. Students’ demonstrated challenges with aligning their evidence with the main idea. Teachers talked about next steps to move the students forward such as cross curricular connections with ELA in using transitional words, phrases, sentence starters, the Frayer Model scaffold, and resources, such as *Writing Revolution*. Because of teacher professional collaborations, teachers mentioned being more cohesive in their instructional practices, and in the process fostering intervisitations among colleagues, focusing on specific students, and students improving in vocabulary acquisition. Teachers also mentioned adjusting their practice by introducing vocabulary as an approach to a topic.

- A review of teacher team notes showed an ELA teacher team meeting analyzed a mock ELA Regents exam results for ninth and tenth graders. Teachers observed that the students performed well on the multiple choice and essay portions of the assessment. However, the ninth graders demonstrated challenges with the multiple choice and the essay component, specifically, multiple choice questions on the topic of the central idea. The teacher team decided that their focus should be on the central idea and developed a strategy of using guiding questions to ascertain central idea. Subsequent meeting notices revealed the creation of scaffolds on guiding questions to deconstruct central idea coalesced with citing textual evidence. As a result of the strategy, teachers noted moderate impact of students improving on central idea. A review of the mathematics department team minutes described teachers analyzing student work and noticed that students demonstrated difficulty with substituting negative values into the slope formula. Teachers suggested that they adjust their instruction to assign this problem in a do now exercise. Subsequent meeting minutes showed teachers analyzing student exit slips and recommending strategies to their colleagues to clarify student misconceptions.

- Distributive leadership practices and teachers have a voice. Teachers facilitate onsite professional development for their colleagues. Teachers facilitate professional development session such as programs such as *Writing Revolution* and Mathspace. Integrated Co-Teachers have conducted workshops modeling parallel and tag team teaching strategies. Teachers also serve as mentors to new teachers, and teachers serve in roles such as English as a Second Language coordinator and student with disabilities coordinator. Teachers are also instrumental in conducting training on implementing technology into the classroom. Teachers stated that administrators are building leaders.