Quality Review Report

2017-2018

Automotive High School
High school 14K610
50 Bedford Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11222

Principal: Kevin Bryant

Dates of Review:
April 11, 2018 - April 12, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Rosemary Stuart
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

Automotive 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>To what extent does the school...</td>
<td></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 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>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</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>
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</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>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</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>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>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</td>
<td>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</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</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, including those new to the profession, receive effective feedback to improve from frequent cycles of observation conducted by school leaders. This feedback documents strengths and suggests next steps.

Impact

Teachers regularly implement strategies, including frequent reflection on their practices at the beginning of the school year and as part of the cycle of evaluation, that lead to professional growth and improved pedagogy.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and coaches conduct frequent and strategic observations and classroom walkthroughs and provide immediate feedback verbally and in writing. The principal conducts all required formal observations, while the assistant principals conduct informal observations after norming the interpretation of the ratings for components of the Danielson Framework for Teaching. School leaders jointly conduct observations at the beginning of the school year and norm their ratings based on the low-inference evidence they each collect. The principal reviews low-inference notes from other school leaders to ensure that teaching practices are evaluated consistently.

- Leaders have a practice of conducting all observations in each department during the same period of time. By doing this, they provide immediate feedback on the implementation of suggestions from recent observations. In addition, they identify trends and patterns in instruction by observing lessons and analyzing student work products from the same lessons and units of study across classrooms.

- Teachers are praised for their successes and provided with suggestions to improve their practices. One observation noted that a science teacher had incorporated procedural writing into the lesson and that students had opportunities to make conceptual connections through the writing prompts. The observation report went on to suggest that the teacher “remove yourself from the lesson” in order for students to take ownership of their own learning by activating prior knowledge and only rely on the teacher for support. A suggestion for another teacher was to “build students’ public speaking and presentation skills” by incorporating multiple opportunities for students to do mini-presentations.

- Teachers reflect on their practices with a focus on the attainment of their goals and discuss their reflections with school leaders during every post-observation conference. One teacher outlined a goal with respect to the component of using assessment in instruction, indicating that she wanted to work on timely and consistent feedback to help students understand their progress in completing performance tasks. An informal mid-year observation for this teacher specifically noted that students understood the assessment criteria for a current project and that the teacher monitored student learning and provided “specific feedback on their process.” One teacher reflected on advice from a school leader on strategies to help students identify mood through word usage. As a result of this feedback, the teacher developed a set of cards, outlining strategies for students to use, that would be implemented the next day. In a teacher meeting, one teacher summarized that school leaders help them reflect on problems with their own practice, and that “nine times out of ten, we are able to identify the issue.” Another teacher added that school leaders help them find the strategies to address these problems of practice.

14K610: April 11, 2018
Area of Focus

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

Findings

Standards-aligned teaching practices reflect a belief that students learn best through tasks, evident across most but not all classrooms, which promote critical thinking and academic discourse.

Impact

Although students in all content areas, including automotive technology courses, engage in high levels of thinking and produce meaningful work, student ownership is not yet evident in all classes.

Supporting Evidence

- Students annotated texts in literacy, science, math, and social studies classes to document their thinking as they read. In one class, students annotated a word problem to help them define the variables. The students engaged in a lively discussion about different strategies and debated the ways to assign meaning to variables. One student argued that the variable represented the number of students on a school team, while another student referred to his annotation to disagree saying, "It says that x equals the number of years since 2010." In a social studies class, students similarly used annotation strategies to help them identify cause and effect in news articles about the Harlem Renaissance.

- Most teachers facilitated high-level discussions and assigned tasks that engaged students in topics with relevance to their own lives. In an English class, the focus of the lesson was on identifying the author’s purpose. Students grappled with separating the article’s author, Clint Smith, from the subject of the article, “James Baldwin’s Lesson for Teachers in a Time of Turmoil." The teacher reinforced the central question of the lesson which was about the relevance of James Baldwin’s writing in our current social and political life by urging students to discuss why Smith would reference Baldwin in 2017. Students discussed how Baldwin’s writings connected to the recent surges in youth activism regarding gun violence. In another English class, the teacher urged students to write their thesis statements by telling them, "You want to come up with a theory, a concept, an original argument you want these sources to illustrate."

- In some classrooms, students had autonomy in choosing the tasks they were to complete. For example, in one social studies lesson on nationalism in India, students chose from a menu of tasks labeled appetizers, main dishes, side dishes, and dessert. Although the students could choose the specific task, video, or text to read according to their personal interests, they all had to complete the same summary questions for each menu category. There were some instances when students did not demonstrate ownership of their own learning. For example, in a science class, the model demonstration did not fully illustrate the focus of the lesson on topographical maps, and the students were not clear on their next steps as they approached the task of writing predicted outcomes.

- Students in all content areas engage in extended writing tasks designed to prepare them for success on Regents exams as well as State licensing and certification exams. Students in an automotive course wrote goals for themselves and evaluated the skills they need to acquire to achieve those goals. Students preparing for the United States History and Government Regents exam wrote essays based on multiple source documents about the Louisiana Purchase. Students in an engineering class created a text-based automated teller machine interface, which required that customers receive options to withdraw, deposit, or transfer funds.
**Findings**

Curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and incorporate a consistent emphasis on making claims, citing supporting evidence, and annotation. Tasks are rigorous and emphasize higher order skills for all students, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities.

**Impact**

There is curricular coherence across grades and subjects that consistently promotes college and career readiness for a variety of learners.

**Supporting Evidence**

- School leaders purposefully integrated the use of annotation as a schoolwide practice in order to enhance curricular coherence. Teachers emphasize annotation in all content areas and, in doing so, reinforce its schoolwide structured implementation. Lesson plans incorporate the use of annotation as a tool and teachers utilize the Four A’s Annotation Protocol which requires students to ask questions regarding the text, agree with something the author states, argue with something the author states, and identify assumptions the author makes. Another coherent curricular feature is the use of the claim, evidence, analysis, link (CEAL) protocol to help students organize their argumentative and thematic writing.

- Tasks assigned to students often reflect the skills and demands of the State Regents exams to prepare students for success in meeting graduation requirements. For example, an essay writing assignment in one class was modeled after a document-based question from the United States History and Government exam. The teacher extended the scope of the assignment to involve annotating both the task prompt and the texts associated with it, creating an outline, and editing and revising first and second drafts. Thus, the students were receiving feedback on all aspects of writing an essay as well as experiencing the types of questions they will encounter on Regents exams and college-level work.

- Lesson plans include modifications and supports for students with disabilities and ELLs. One lesson plan outlined specific supports including sentence stems for both citation and inference and specified multiple-choice questions to assess how well students understand structure, writing craft, main idea or author’s purpose, and context clues. Other lesson plans include strategies for parallel teaching in a class with general education students as well as students with disabilities. In a history lesson plan, the teacher identified two versions of the same text on the Harlem Renaissance, one on a Lexile level for ninth grade, the other on a Lexile level for twelfth grade.
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 align assessments and rubrics with schoolwide curricula and routinely check for understanding using a variety of assessment practices, including online surveys and peer assessment.

Impact

Teachers provide actionable feedback on most student work and effectively adjust instruction based on their assessment of student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- Many teachers use systems, such as online grade books or clipboard checklists, to capture low inference notes on how well students are engaging in the lesson as well as their performance on introductory activities and group projects. In one class, the teacher used an online survey tool to gather in-the-moment information about how well students understood Chatelier’s principle. The survey revealed that 11 out of 12 responses indicated understanding. A discussion followed during which students explained their responses in order to clarify errors in understanding. In other classes, students use self-assessment checklists and feedback from their peers to improve their work products. One teacher commended a student for revising an essay having considered feedback received from a peer.

- When teachers in one course noticed that students were struggling with skills, they decided to adjust their lessons to focus on skill acquisition, particularly with multiple-choice test taking strategies. They incorporated the course content into the opening activities, giving students more practice with the skills of synthesis and managing pacing on timed tasks.

- Students indicated that almost all work products are assessed using rubrics aligned to the school’s curricula, many of them similar to those used for Regents exams. In addition, teachers give actionable feedback to students in the form of comments and suggestions for improvement as well as praising students for work done well. One teacher reminded a student not to forget to address all elements of the prompt and to include a reference to the primary document in the second paragraph of an essay. Another teacher admired the program a student wrote for an automated teller machine transaction and added, “The code is more elegant this way!”

- Although actionable feedback from teachers was observed on the majority of student work, a few pieces of student work had feedback that was not as closely aligned to the associated rubric. For example, on one essay, the teacher indicated that the grade for the work was greater than three out of four or 88 percent. The rubric with this work was a four-point performance rubric from the Common Core Regents Examination in English Language Arts, which does not include such a rating. On another piece of student work in a math classroom, the teacher indicated a check plus for work that included incorrect mathematical equations.
Additional Finding

| Quality Indicator: | 3.4 High Expectations | Rating: | Proficient |

Findings

School leaders establish clear expectations for teachers based on the components of professionalism outlined in the Danielson Framework for Teaching. The multiple pathways to graduation and college and career are consistently communicated to students and their families.

Impact

Teachers are held accountable for meeting expectations through a clear cycle of observation and support. Families understand the progress their children are making toward graduation and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- In the process of consolidating the staff from two schools, school leaders provided consistent and effective feedback and professional development to teachers, reinforcing professional expectations. Teachers stated that the interaction between teachers from both schools has enriched their practices as they share successful practices and problems of practice with each other. One group of teachers agreed that the staff has been successful in coming together this year with common expectations about instructional practices. The principal reinforces the expectations for all teachers in a weekly newsletter. A recent edition reported on the current schoolwide average ratings for various instructional components and reminded teachers that achieving intellectual engagement relies on increasing the level of challenging tasks and improving the acquisition of skills.

- School leaders hold teachers accountable for meeting professional expectations through a cycle of observation that includes a focus on improving performance on specific components of the Danielson Framework for Teaching. School leaders expect that teachers will plan lessons with strategic support based on evidence-based evaluation and summarize this expectation with an equation using the components of effective lesson planning, student engagement, and assessment to yield higher levels of intellectual engagement.

- Support for students and families in understanding the importance of college and career readiness starts with orientation the summer before freshman year. School counselors partner parents of incoming students, including those with disabilities, with parents of upper-grade students so they can share information about successfully supporting students in the transition to high school. In addition, counselors hold parent meetings focusing on the requirements for students to be promoted to grade 11 in order to stay on track for graduation. College and career pathways are emphasized through internships with the New York Police Department automotive shop, and a program at Medgar Evers College that provides students with summer job opportunities that may lead to early college credit opportunities. Parents agreed that they are advocates for their children and that teachers support their children and help them graduate. A community-based organization held a workshop for parents on the financial aid process.

- Parents indicated that they have ample resources to understand the progress their children are making toward graduation, specifically PupilPath and Kinvolved, a smart phone tool that facilitates communication in the home language. School leaders reported that there has been an increase in the number of parents participating in school functions and teacher conferences and that over 7500 messages are sent to parents each month. Parents also noted the improvement in the graduation rate, which has risen from 56 percent in 2016 to 72 percent in 2017. Based on the progress students are making in passing Regents exams, accumulating credits, and increasing enrollment in Advanced Placement courses, school leaders predict an increase in the College and Career Readiness index and that the four-year graduation rate will continue to improve.
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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</table>

Findings

Teachers engage in frequent departmental and grade-level structured inquiry-based collaborations during which they routinely analyze student work and performance data.

Impact

Team work improves teaching practices, promotes the achievement of school goals, and increases the coherence of instructional strategies across content areas. Students are progressing toward graduation and college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- Members of a teacher team used a protocol to determine how to share their instructional strategies and their reflections on student performance with each other. One teacher in each pair randomly cut a paper into two pieces which determined the length of time each of them had to speak. The team was modeling a strategy to use in instruction in order to build stamina so that half of the students would be required to speak for a longer period of time by including more details and the other half of the students would practice the skill of summarizing important information for a shorter period of time. Teachers spoke about the value of these collaborations in improving their practice, noting especially how they eagerly use new instructional strategies with their students.

- Teachers meet three times a week by department to focus on improving instruction and planning curricula to meet the evolving needs of their students. They meet monthly in grade level collaborations to discuss issues that cross content areas. Records from teacher team meetings demonstrate that collaboration is structured with the consistent use of protocols and includes normed practices such as presenting problems with solutions in mind, grounding statements in evidence, and reviewing prior team decisions to identify the positives and the things that should be changed or improved, called deltas. One teacher stated that collaborations are so embedded now that everyone is “getting face-to-face with other staff several times a week.”

- During one team meeting, teachers reflected on the effectiveness of an instructional strategy they had implemented in the prior week by analyzing the lesson’s work products. The challenges they identified ranged from students not recognizing the historical significance of some events to students not being able to distinguish between effect and impact. They determined that they would focus their upcoming intervisitations on the implementation of the strategies they developed to improve how students write about cause, effect, and impact. Teachers have noted increased scores on writing tasks in classes for students who are preparing to retake Regents exams with a marked improvement in the number of students who attempt and persist in extended response questions such as those found on Regents exams in social studies and English. One teacher claimed, “All of my students are now expressing themselves in writing like never before.” From 2016 to 2017, there was a 15 percentage point increase in the percent of students passing the Common Core English Regents exam, with a score of 65 or higher, and an increase of 22 percentage points for students with disabilities on the Common Core Algebra Regents exam.