Quality Review Report

2017-2018

The Maxine Greene HS For Imaginative Inquiry

High school 03M299

122 Amsterdam Avenue
Manhattan
NY 10023

Principal: Stephen Noonan

Dates of Review:
January 9, 2018 - January 10, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Phyllis Siwiec
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

The Maxine Greene Hs For Imaginative Inquiry 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>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Developing</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>Additional Finding</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>Developing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### School Culture

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults</td>
<td>Area of Celebration</td>
</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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<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>
</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>
</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>
</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>
</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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.4 Positive Learning Environment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings

Structures are in place to support social and emotional growth. Within the school community, professional development, family outreach and student learning experiences are aligned.

Impact

Each student is known well by at least one adult who helps coordinate attendance and support social emotional learning and youth development through the restructured guidance department and collaborative groups. This alignment promotes the adoption of effective academic and personal behaviors.

Supporting Evidence

- One structure that supports student social and emotional learning is the Attendance Team that monitors student attendance and supports. A review of the Attendance Team Meeting minutes from September to December 2017, documents the agenda, decision-making and monthly attendance rates. As the year progressed, the student attendance rate increased from 82.2 percent at the end of September to 85.8 percent in December. By June 2018, the Attendance goal is 85 percent for this school year.

- Theme-based groups meet during lunchtime to provide social and emotional support and to structure small groups of students working with designated adults. The Care Club members participate in community volunteer work while the Identity Club explores topics about race, class, diversity and social justice in a safe space. Circle Facilitator/ Restorative Justice members are upper classmen and women who train weekly on restorative practice. Yoga Mindfulness Group focuses on stress reduction and assistance with self-regulation and focus while ARTE (Art and Resistance through Education) students collaborate to create art murals with a social justice component. As reported by students, these groups support their getting to know adults who help them to guide and advise them in a variety of ways.

- Several years ago, the school leaders, after analyzing student performance data and data on teachers’ instructional capacity, decided to use both teacher and student time more effectively. By aligning increased classroom time with support to expand ELA and Algebra in grade nine with 90-minute classes. The decision was to ensure that teachers who taught the 90-minute periods also had common planning time during the school day. This common planning time allows teachers to work more closely together and develop common structures and practices as a form of embedded professional development. School leadership invited parents to share with them the changes and the rational that supported the increased time. As a result of this alignment, overall college readiness increased from 11 percent to 28 percent in 2017. The decision to increase time to 90-minute periods for Global and Geometry in grade ten occurred this year.

- To more successfully meet the range of supports needed by students and their families to navigate college and career pathways and train teachers on the skills necessary to guide students academically, the Guidance Department and social work support were restructured. There was an increase in staffing with the Social Worker coordinating professional development for the entire staff in the very beginning of the school year on supporting students in their Goal-setting in academic classes. One of the improved benefits is the planning and implementation of Parent-Teacher-Student conferences as reported by teachers, parents and students interviewed.
Area of Focus

**Quality Indicator:** 1.1 Curriculum  
**Rating:** Developing

### Findings

Curricula and academic tasks emphasize rigorous habits and higher order skills inconsistently across grades, subjects and for English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities. Curricula and academic tasks are beginning to reflect planning that provides access for all students through some lessons that articulate differentiation.

### Impact

Consequently, not all students including lowest and highest achievers, are consistently engaged in coherent and rigorous curricula that emphasizes higher order skills.

### Supporting Evidence

- Curricula and academic tasks inconsistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher order thinking skills across grades and content while provisions made for ELLs and students with disabilities begin to be noted within lesson plans. In the school’s curricular unit maps, the planning for ELLs and students with disabilities is nonexistent. However, some lesson plans submitted have sections that range in differentiation from none to a high level of specificity. For example, in a Global Studies lesson plan, each co-teacher's name focused on working with individual students during the poem analysis and construction step while another section had one of the co-teacher's providing translated versions of any text necessary for two specific students. In addition, visual examples illustrated each vocabulary word; visual analysis occurs before a written text analysis; and student peers participate in Trade and Grade that resulted in peer assessment of written work. In another example, in a math lesson plan, differentiation plans list both individual students' names and accommodations such as using a companion graphic organizer for a student who does not show his work and plans for those who finish early or need help to stay organized and focused.

- There is some evidence that teachers are beginning to plan and revise curricular unit designs as a result of student data and work products resulting in access to a diversity of learners including ELLs and students with disabilities that offer cognitive engagement. Adjustments to curricula is based on a number of data points, including but not limited to academic testing results; district-level surveys and student perception surveys; attendance data and ELL and special education data. Evidence of lesson plans that indicate access to cognitively engaging content is documented in a geometry lesson focused on finding the midpoint between two points in a coordinate plane. The lesson is based on content standards, has a variety of methods for students to engage including folders, notebooks, math tool kits, Guided Notes, and calculators. An interactive whiteboard has the Do Now illustrated along with student copies. Students discuss with a partner whom the teacher has strategically selected to process the material using academic language. There are extensions for those who finish early. In addition, the lesson plan also had a list of all students who need accommodations and supports to engage in the main lesson’s activity. There are also language dictionaries for the two ELLs in the class.

- Some lessons reflect planning to provide students access to the curricula as in the social studies unit plans by listing strategies and techniques to cognitively engage a diversity of learners. An example of this is applying APPARTS Document Strategy, (Author, Place and Time, Prior Knowledge, Audience, Reason, The Main Idea and Significance) in exploring primary and secondary sources. Most lessons however do not contain accommodations to make accessibility possible, thus resulting in missed opportunities for some learners.
**Additional Finding**

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

**Findings**

Teaching practices such as the workshop model and student-centered discussions are beginning to reflect a set of beliefs about how students learn best. Teaching strategies inconsistently provide multiple entry points for all students.

**Impact**

Inconsistent teaching strategies lead to uneven demonstration of higher order thinking skills and meaningful student work products.

**Supporting Evidence**

- School leadership shared that students learn best in an inclusive environment where writing and reading are tools used to maximize the engagement of students so that they are best able to think and learn. School leadership and teachers have agreed upon the workshop model as the framework for student instruction that best reflects their beliefs. As described by leadership and teachers, the workshop starts with a minilesson that is described as “I do, You watch,” with the teacher leading and students observing. Then, students work with another student for paired practice, “You do in groups, I guide.” Followed by students working independently as “You do.” An example of this model in action as observed was in a grade nine English class whose unit was entitled “Fate and Fortune.” The minilesson involved an open conversation focused on the question, “What is fate and what is choice?” The pair practice involved a Fishbowl exercise with the Focus Question: “Should people believe in fate/destiny?” The result was a very engaged class with a wide range of abilities who all participated throughout the lesson and produced useful guides to help in the preparation for their discussion using primary resources.

- In other observed classes, instruction reflected an inconsistent approach that was teacher-centered at times with some teacher modeling and whole class discussions that teachers led; at other times, small groups at tables were instructed by checking in, reteaching and with students conversing or with turn and talks. An example of the teacher-led class, in an upper level science class, students had 10 minutes to discuss with a partner or group the topic for that day out of a 48-minute class period. The teacher led the rest of the lesson and at one point, had one student at a time read aloud information from one source. There was no adjustment made because of previous assessments used and only one entrance point. In another class, all students worked individually on a project using technology. The teacher moved around the class of 28 students, checking in and asking questions. Not all students were contacted. Some were distracted by the off-topic conversations of their group members. Even though there was a presentation rubric and a rubric for the written assignment, neither was referenced in conversations and when asked, several students found no guidance in understanding the rubrics and their use.

- In some classes, students grouped in pairs work through assignments as each pair has a team leader who is a higher performing student. The pair consult with each other during the task and in some cases may consult with other teams. Another way that teachers used to provide multiple entry points was observed in a social studies class, where there was three distinct groups based on how well they scored on a previous assignment resulting in each group having differentiated assignments.
**Additional Finding**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Developing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Findings**

Some teachers create assessments, rubrics, and grading systems aligned to the curricula. Not all teachers consistently use assessment data to provide students with feedback on their performance and to adjust curriculum and instruction as needed to improve student achievement.

**Impact**

Data collected from assessments provides limited feedback to students and are inconsistently used to adjust curricula and pedagogy, leading to missed opportunities to accelerate learning by all students.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The range of assessments varies with feedback to students limited. Some teachers use and create assessments including rubrics, interim assessments in English, math, science and social studies that are beginning to be aligned with school's curricula and are beginning to provide actionable feedback to students to guide improvement. The range of feedback is wide and at times, not actionable. Some student work has checks for correct answers and a numerical grade and no additional feedback. Others have rubrics that are circled in values from 1-4 in various categories, sometimes with added comments, such as, “Good Work Try some of the more difficult problems” or “Good Work Keep it Up” in math classes. Some group work is scored with group- determined percentages of value for distinctive categories such as Claim worth 40 percent; Evidence worth ten percent; Reasoning worth five percent; Counter Claim worth 40 percent and Analysis worth five percent. Each member earned 70 percent out of 100 percent. Each group then concludes with specific values that vary by each group and the final score per student.

- Teachers use multiple common assessments that are content based, but many of them are primarily dependent on Regents practice and simulations for student performance evaluation. One report produced by the Algebra I Data Analysis Question Generator Tool shows data from January 2015 through August 2017 that is disaggregated by Domain or Cluster Code, type of question, link to that question and resources to support learning about that question. This is used to provide examples for teachers to support students who need more practice in the specific cluster. Any deeper analysis of trends over the years or year to year was not available. Using classroom-based assessments vary greatly and so results are inconsistently used to adjust curricula and instruction.

- There is some evidence of student improvement in results that school administration presented. One way school leadership monitors student progress is through analyzing what percentage of students earn two ELA credits in grade nine and two math credits by cohort groups. Cohort 2018 had 65.2 percent of students earn two ELA credits in grade nine compared to 89.3 percent in Cohort 2020. That is an increase of 24.1 percent. In math, the difference between Cohort 2018 and Cohort 2020 is 20.5 percent more students in Cohort 2020 had earned two math credits. The restructuring plan developed in 2015-16 and implemented in September 2016 meant that both ELA and Algebra could impact their college readiness by increasing class time to 90 minutes. While the number of students earning ten plus credits in their first year held steady at 74 percent, the overall college readiness score increased from 11 percent to 28 percent in 2017.
**Additional Finding**

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

**Findings**

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff through ongoing communication including Staff Handbook, newsletters and teacher feedback. School leaders and staff consistently communicate expectations connected to college and career readiness to families through Parent Workshops.

**Impact**

School leaders provide training and have a system of accountability for those expectations along with helping families understand student progress toward reaching those expectations.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teachers use the Maxine Green High School (MGHS) *Instructional Handbook 2017-2018* when planning instructional units and lessons. These expectations refer to *The Capacities* that were written to create academic language that allowed for full participation of all students in the school’s academic program while honoring the educational tradition of arts integration with the Lincoln Center Education, a partner with MGHS. The 10 Capacities range from Noticing Deeply, through Questioning, Making Connections to Taking Action and Reflecting/Assessing. These expectations guide the system of accountability that informs progress for teachers as reported by school leadership.

- Expectations that are explicit to all staff include the belief that students learn best in an inclusive environment where writing and reading are tools used to maximize the engagement of students so that they are best able to think and learn. In addition, teachers supporting each other and sharing their expertise creates a school culture that informs and builds a collaborative environment for learning that includes everyone. There are also informal and formal walkthroughs to help teachers develop lenses to see each other’s work and classrooms. As a result, teachers have a shared responsibility for meeting expectations and supporting each other in meeting them.

- With the goal of restructuring the school, the intentional focus on improving parent knowledge of college and career opportunities was made to connect with families to guide the way forward for students. Parents reported that they are kept informed with planning for college and career possibilities for their sons and daughters through Parent/Teacher Conferences several times per year. In addition, they also have access to an interactive online program that informs parents of students’ progress and provides a way for parents to communicate with teachers directly. Parents report that teachers are highly responsive and respond to communication quickly. There have also been workshops specifically focused on Reading Transcripts and College awareness sessions.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured inquiry-based professional collaborations as department teams, grade level teams or in *Teacher Rounds*. Teacher teams analyze assessment data and student work for students they share or on whom they are focused.

Impact

As a result, collaborations strengthen the instructional capacity of teachers in Teachers Advance Status from last year to this while improving progress toward goals for groups of students as noted in the increase of students who are successfully attaining more course credits toward graduation.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders reorganized the school schedule to create more time and opportunity for teams of teachers in either content-based teams or grade level teams to meet in order to undertake inquiry work. An example is department level common planning time used to establish routines, protocols, differentiation, assessments, and curricula that is aligned to Common Core Learning Standards (scope and sequence/curriculum map) and to begin to plan vertically across grade levels during various periods throughout the day, depending on the needs of each individual department. In addition, grade level teams meet weekly on Tuesdays with Team Leaders Meetings at the end of the school day.

- A school-wide intervisitation system called *Teacher Rounds* was established where teachers, in this example grade ten, meet every other week to view the Host Teacher’s filmed instruction in a self-selected ten minutes that has a focus on the “problem of practice.” After viewing the video and recoding noticings, the team, as individuals, shares their wonderings and asks questions about what was viewed, not to offer advice, but to stimulate thinking. The process continues until at the closing of the meeting, each teacher makes a commitment based on what each had learned to try out in classrooms and report at the next meeting. Teachers reported that this form of Professional Development as shared team work was very valuable and greatly influenced their teaching practices and their pedagogical knowledge base.

- Teacher Teams consistently analyze assessment data and student work for students they share by examining Regents exams in class, mock exams, item analysis, and pre and post tests. Teams that examine student data include grade level teams in grade nine, ten, eleven, and twelve and all department teams. An observed Math Vertical Team used the ATLAS protocol to examine student work and feedback. The presenting teacher shared homework examples from three different students from the previous week. There were three questions that all were expected to answer. There were open-ended problems and multiple-choice questions. Teachers noted their observations of the work. “All students were able to solve for y in Question three.” Another shared, “Highest scored work did the most in the margins. Every student had the same answer.” They then interpreted the work through the student’s perspective and made comments, “Students two and three solved it in their heads.” Student two drew a third line may have guessed or used a pen you can’t erase.” Another teacher observed, “I’m intrigued they all got it right but showed very different ways to solve it.” The resulting implications on teaching were to have students use the CUBES *(Circle the key numbers; Underline the question; Box any math actions; Evaluate what steps I will take; and Solve and check my answer)* method to solve problems, use highlighters, or use close reading strategies in math.