Quality Review Report

2017-2018

Chelsea Career and Technical Education High School

High school 02M615

131 Avenue Of The Americas
Manhattan
NY 10013

Principal: Jaivelle Reed

Dates of Review:
March 27, 2018 - March 28, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Rod Bowen
**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><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></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>Area of Celebration</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>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>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## School Culture

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</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>
</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>Area of Focus</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>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings
Alignment of curricula to Common Core Learning Standards and the instructional shifts is reflected in the school’s instructional focus and evident in planning documents. Across grades and subject areas, learning activities consistently emphasize rigor and higher-order skills.

Impact
Curricular design practices build coherence and promote college and career readiness for a variety of students, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities.

Supporting Evidence

- A math lesson plan is grounded in the Common Core Learning Standard that requires students to derive the formula for the sum of a finite geometric series and use the formula to solve problems. The arc of the lesson includes numerous opportunities for students to discuss sample problems with each other as well as to justify and explain responses by answering “What, Why, and How” questions from the teacher.

- A lesson plan for a Living Environment class outlines how students would continue the work from the previous day’s lesson, exploring how vaccines and organ transplants stimulate the immune response. The task is divided into four parts: a video about the topic, a discussion question response, a reading task, and an assessment. Within these tasks are skills such as interpreting process oriented illustrations and analyzing non-fiction text. They also include questions such as “How do vaccines work?”, and “What are the advantages and disadvantages to immune-suppression?”

- The essential question of “How do political states and empires expand and maintain control?” is explored through the history of the Mongols in a Global History lesson plan. Students would have to cite text evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, develop claims, and examine the location and relative sizes of empires at their heights of power. The specific activities include a self-assessment, an analysis of information from sets of documents about Mongols, and writing a summary. The exit ticket would have students explain a piece of evidence that supports the claim that Mongols were barbaric, and another piece of evidence that supports the claim that they established an advanced civilization.

- As a warm up activity, an English Language Arts (ELA) lesson plan would have students independently write a paragraph responding to why they thought people did bad things. They would need to cite evidence from their own life experiences, literature, history, and any other supporting sources. They would then participate in an independent close reading activity where they would annotate through the lens of what the author assumes they already know. The reading would be followed by a class discussion about the central idea of the text.
Findings

Although there is an instructional action plan that outlines expectations for teaching and how they will be supported, there is no shortlist of unifying schoolwide goals as the Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP) is outdated and not reflective of priorities of the school’s current leadership. In addition, there are no measurable schoolwide goals informed by data and therefore no goals to be tracked for progress.

Impact

There is no short list of focused, data-based goals that are understood and supported by the school community and used to improve teacher practice or drive efforts to accelerate learning.

Supporting Evidence

- The school’s 2017-2018 CEP was submitted by the previous principal. In it, goals reflected the plans from the previous school years. For example: “Each ninth and tenth grade student will meet with a college and career advisor on a one-one basis during the 2016-2017 school year, and by June 2016 “teacher teams will create and implement four horizontally aligned tasks.” The current principal showed no ownership of these goals, and the school community had not formally or informally replaced them with similar comprehensive goals for the 2017-2018 school year.

- The School Self Evaluation Form (SSEF) includes six different sets of departmental goals, but lacks any unifying, measurable schoolwide goals.

- The school has a strategic instructional action plan, which is to continue to create daily lessons designed to engage all students in rigorous academic content aligned to Common Core Learning Standards (Next Generation) and Social Studies Framework standards. However, there is no evidence that this plan is tracked for progress, adjusted, or informed by a comprehensive needs assessment process.

- When asked about school goals, teachers responded with the instructional foci, which were not a product of data gathered in a manner that is tracked.
Findings

Teaching across classrooms is becoming aligned to the curricula and the instructional belief that students learn best in student-centered classrooms, utilizing questioning and discussion practices to increase cognitive engagement, and generate meaningful student work products.

Impact

Across classrooms, teacher implementation of the aforementioned beliefs varies. Student work and discussions reflect uneven levels of thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- Instruction during an ELA lesson was teacher-centered as students were given few opportunities to own and engage with the task. The teacher provided a number of concise directives such as “Rewrite it” and “Break it down,” as well as closed ended, process related questions that only emphasized recall and recitation such as, “What will those three words do for you?” and “What is your objective?” Students were given little time to work independent of the teacher’s prompting.

- A task within a collaboratively taught algebra class was for students to work in groups to determine solutions of quadratic equations by completing the square. Although they were trying to use the concept of square, a number of students did not know what it meant. A few did not understand the phrase “solve for.” There was no collaboration in a group where three students watched a fourth student work on a problem on a white board. When asked, a student was unable to explain the idea of solving for x. The lack of conceptual understanding of relevant math concepts, and the low levels of authentic group work, evidenced low levels of cognitive engagement.

- Students in a graphic design class were asked to journal about different types of graphic projects they had done, subjects and interests they wished to know more about, and their passion. They were then asked to share what they had written with a peer. Students took turns reading what they wrote and there was no observed discussion or cognitive engagement regarding why they wrote what they did.

- During one science class, four out of the seven groups were actively filling out assessment sheets. In another science lesson, students were not clear on what was guiding their annotation efforts on text related to acids and bases. Students grouped in an ELA class did not engage in discussion as designed. Typically, one or two of the students were vocal while the others were quiet.
Additional Finding

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

Teachers engage in assessment practices that are aligned to the school’s curricula. Such practices include using questions to check for understanding.

Impact

Actionable feedback provided by teachers enables students to have a clear sense of their academic progress and achievement. Teachers make effective adjustments to meet all students’ learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Students were able to interpret and articulate next steps for improvement based on feedback they had received. A student explained that her scored rubric from a theater assignment stating that “the use of space and actors is consistent” meant that she used the whole room when she did her blocking. In referencing an ELA assignment, a student shared that her need to properly cite the poems in a compare and contrast essay meant that she should use quotation marks and cite the lines from the poem that she was referring to. Such responses were consistent among the students who were asked.

- Examples of actionable feedback found on student work included a comment that commended the student for her use of documents to support her thesis, but encouraged her to add examples, explanations, and other pertinent information from outside the text. In addition to a scored rubric for a math task, written feedback from the teacher cautioned the student’s use of mixed notation, and to go back and check his work to make sure that the signs were correct. Another assignment acknowledged that a student used evidence that was relevant to the topic, but the amount of evidence was insufficient.

- The teacher of a US History class paused instruction to assess students’ understanding of the historical documents they had read by asking them to share one thing they were clear on and one thing that they were unclear on. A number of students responded with text-based examples. In one instance, a student shared that he was not clear on what a document was saying about a family of Italian immigrants. A peer stated, “I would like to help him,” and clarified the article’s point regarding the urbanization of the family through public education.

- Questions were used throughout an ELA lesson to ensure that students were using annotation to understand text. The teacher asked students what they had noticed from their annotation, the meaning of a key term, and what the central idea of the text was. In response to the central idea question, a student noted that the author was conveying that when a person seeks revenge, they are not allowing themselves to heal. Although some continued to struggle with the skill, the teacher circulated to support as needed.
**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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</table>

**Findings**

School leaders consistently communicate the expectation that teachers create student centered learning environments that engage all students including those with learning challenges, in rigorous standards-aligned tasks. Staff consistently communicates a culture of high expectations to all students.

**Impact**

Teachers experience training, guidance, and accountability measures that are in support of the school’s instructional focus. Students are provided with information regarding their academic status and post-graduation collegiate options that prepares them for the next level.

**Supporting Evidence**

- A document distributed to all staff states, “our instructional focus is the purposeful design of lessons designed to actively engage all students in cognitively engaging tasks.” It goes on to define rigor, relevance, and cognitively engaging tasks. Curricular and instructional look-fors, such as having an end of class assessment, differentiation of high level tasks, and ongoing checks for understanding, are prioritized in the document. Teachers articulated the school's emphasis on planning with the end in mind, the need to use data to inform instructional next steps, and being purposeful with leveled questions.

- The professional development calendar for the 2017-2018 school year contains sessions intended to support teachers with the skills needed to implement the instructional plans. Sessions include utilizing baseline assessment data, curricular planning with the Understanding by Design framework, and the use of an online instructional system.

- Classroom observation reports are used to reiterate expectations aligned to the instructional plan. Next steps direct teachers to ensure that there is an organized progression of differentiated tasks for groups of students, a system for assessing individual student learning, and an end of class formative assessment that can inform lesson planning for the next class session. Such feedback is aligned to other modes of messaging the school's instructional priorities.

- Each guidance counselor is assigned to two grades and meets with students to give presentations at strategic times throughout the year during Career and Technical Education (CTE) classes. Students said that these talks are helpful in supporting their understanding of what credits they need to graduate as well as what classes they need to be competitive college applicants. They also mentioned a career and finance class where there are conversations about the types of colleges. Although the staff is in the process of still developing a thoughtful college visitation program, students feel informed about their post-secondary college options.

- Students have access to current information about assignment completion, assessment scores, transcript information, and attendance via an online grading platform.
Findings

Although the majority of teachers are engaged in professional collaborations, not all are structured and teachers are not regularly participating in inquiry-based practices. Distributed leadership structures are in development.

Impact

Teacher team work does not typically result in improved pedagogy. School leadership is developing the means to cultivate teacher voice and support leadership capacity building.

Supporting Evidence

- The goal of the math team is to work collaboratively to make Advanced Placement (AP) Calculus more accessible to students by embedding the necessary foundational skills in curricula and instruction starting in grade nine. Teachers had a tuning protocol during an observed meeting. It outlined how a presenting teacher would provide context for the student work samples being shared, how the other participants would then silently analyze the student work by making low inference observations and interpretations that they would support with examples during the discussion. They would ask clarifying questions based on their analysis, and then provide warm and cool actionable feedback. The protocol ended with the presenting teacher reflecting on the comments and questions focusing on those of most interest. However, during the meeting, at the point when warm and cool feedback was being shared and the presenting teacher was to be silent, the group did not follow the protocol. This hindered the effectiveness of collaborative inquiry that was designed for colleagues who were not presenting to assess pedagogical choices that they were not directly responsible for and to discover the implications for their own work.

- Additional samples of minutes from math meetings were submitted, but nothing was provided that evidenced professional collaboration in social studies. Evidence from a science meeting focused on a review of mid-term assessment data, with findings that showed that students were “not knowledgeable about content” and “not using test strategies to construct answers.” The next step was to develop strategies to help students take standardized assessments. The intended outcome did not support the implementation of rigorous standards or strengthen the instructional capacity of teachers in a discernible way.

- Although the science team led a schoolwide professional development session on formative assessment and school leaders have been responsive when some teachers took initiative and made requests, teachers in general do not feel empowered. Specifically, they would like more opportunities for teacher-driven professional development opportunities. School leaders stated that they are in the process of identifying key teacher leaders to take on meaningful roles in improving teaching and learning across the school.