Quality Review Report

2017-2018

Eagle Academy for Young Men III
Secondary School 29Q327
171-10 Linden Boulevard
Queens
NY 11434

Principal: Cedric Hall

Dates of Review:
May 24, 2018 - May 25, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Kimberly Bradley
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

Eagle Academy for Young Men III serves students in grade 6 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

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<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<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>Additional Finding</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>
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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>
<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>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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### Systems for Improvement

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<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
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<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</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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
<td>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Developing</td>
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<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>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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</table>

Findings
School leaders consistently convey high expectations to staff through ongoing feedback and professional learning aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. School leaders and staff convey high expectations to families associated with college and career readiness.

Impact
Ongoing communication and support from school leaders have increased teachers’ understanding of and accountability for school leaders’ expectations regarding teaching and learning. Families are provided with ongoing information and feedback about student progress toward goals.

Supporting Evidence

- Frequent classroom observations by school leaders provide feedback to teachers utilizing the Danielson Framework for Teaching as the standard for professionalism and quality instruction. Observation reports include specific language from the rubric and evidence from the classroom that supports the rating, along with actionable next steps so that teachers clearly understand expectations. The Advance observations also include evidence of the impact of the school’s work in the various domains of the Danielson Framework for Teaching during professional development on teacher practice. An example of actionable next steps states, “To make this lesson more rigorous, instead of providing students with a PowerPoint presentation in which you and your co-teacher defined the terms that make a counterclaim, model a counterclaim using scholar input as part of the modeling. This will provide opportunities for scholars to apply the counterclaim, evidence and rebuttal.” Teachers report they are growing in practices such as including more student-centered instruction based on their observations and feedback and are held accountable by school leaders for developing professionally and meeting personal goals for instruction.

- School leaders convey high expectations to staff through the school’s staff handbook, emails, and staff development. The staff handbook outlines expectations around grading and attendance, lesson and unit planning, classroom and behavior management, and the school values of Confidence, Leadership, Effort, Academic Excellence, and Resilience (CLEAR), which is referred to by staff and students and is posted in classrooms, hallways, and offices throughout the school. Teachers are given the opportunity to attend off-site professional learning in data analysis, content specific training, and positive behavior supports. Each morning students and staff engage in a town hall meeting to set the agenda for the day and to remind students of the school’s expectations. Through training and professional learning, school leaders are building a culture of high expectations.

- Partnerships with families support students in their progress towards college and career readiness. Parents reported out that they worked with the school in determining the school’s goals, and there is strong parent involvement in the school’s School Leadership Team and Parent Teacher Association. Parents commended the staff’s communication via letter, email, phone calls, a family handbook, and the online grading system. In addition, parents are pleased that the school provides students with access to Advanced Placement and other college courses, offers workshops and meetings to inform families about high school graduation, and has the college advisor help prepare their children for the college entrance process. One parent stated, “Our young men have voices and are learning to advocate for themselves.” Another parent noted that parents know what is going on in the community, and the school leadership listens to parents when concerns are raised. School leaders support families in understanding expectations for college and career readiness and in understanding student progress.
Area of Focus

| Quality Indicator: | 4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development | Rating: | Developing |

Findings
The majority of teachers are engaged in structured professional collaborations that are loosely connected to school goals and implementation of Common Core Learning Standards. Teacher teams analyze assessment data for students they share.

Impact
The work of teacher teams is not yet typically resulting in improved teacher practice or progress toward goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- Some teachers are engaged in professional collaboration on teams, and the inquiry approach is developing across teams, but this is not currently occurring across all grades and content areas. School leaders described that while the majority of teachers meet for professional learning, not all teachers are participating in an inquiry process. School leaders are currently working with the English Language Arts (ELA) team and training them in the inquiry process. Leaders are working on expanding this process and providing more time in the schedule for teams to meet more frequently in the coming school year. Because the majority of teachers are not currently engaged in structured professional collaborations on a frequent basis and school leaders acknowledge this is a goal the school is working towards, the instructional capacity of teachers is not being fully strengthened at this point.

- A review of the sixth, seventh, and eighth grade team agendas and minutes shows that while teams meet weekly, these meetings focus on students’ emotional and academic progress, planning for the upcoming administration and scoring of student assessments, and school events and activities. While there is some evidence of identifying standards students struggled with on previous assessments, there is limited evidence of team members identifying next steps or interventions to address achievement gaps or selecting specific students to follow and monitor their progress. There is also no evidence that teacher team discussions are connected to the larger school goals or implementing the Common Core. Consequently, the impact of these professional collaborations is loosely connected to either building instructional capacity or improved student progress.

- During an observation of the ELA inquiry team, members analyzed student work presented by one member utilizing the consultancy protocol. As part of the protocol, one member presents student work and a dilemma to the team. Then the rest of the team reviews the work and has a group discussion minus the presenter. The conversation progresses to a whole group discussion including the presenter, resulting in a reflection of the process by the group. The team has a written agenda and norms that are reviewed at the beginning of the meeting. While the team reviewed student work at this meeting and discussed concerns about still seeing formulaic writing from students and not hearing student voice, the student writing presented came from various assignments. It was not evident how their discussion connected to previous discussions about student writing or data collected from previous writing or assessments. As a result, the analysis of student data and work is not currently resulting in progress for groups of students.
School leaders ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

The school is building coherence in curricula that advances college and career readiness. Curricula and academic tasks are planned so that a diversity of learners, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, have access to the curricula and are cognitively engaged.

- A review of curricula documents shows alignment to the Common Core and New York State content standards, where applicable, as well as integration of the instructional shifts across grades and content areas. English unit plans and lesson plans are aligned to Common Core New York City (NYC) English Language Arts curriculum and EngageNY and math unit and lesson plans are aligned to the EngageNY and GO Math! curricula. The school also ensured curricula coherence with the NYC Social Studies Scope and Sequence and the science New York State (NYS) Standards and Next Generation Science Standards. As a result of building curricular alignment, students are prepared for college and career readiness.

- Lesson plans across grades and content areas show evidence that academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and data so that students have access to the curricula. The lesson plan for an eighth grade English Language Arts lesson on Fahrenheit 451 includes scaffolding instructions differentiated for students with disabilities who will be working with the teacher and for ELLs working on modified classwork with support by the other classroom teacher. Students with differentiated instructions are identified by name in the lesson plan. In a Living Environment lesson plan on mitosis and meiosis, guiding questions for students are included in the lesson plan, such as, “What happens if just one cell dies in my hand, arm or foot? Do all the cells in my hand or foot die?” and “How do I get new cells when I grow and if I get injured?” The lesson plan also details the grouping of specific students based on need and analysis of previous student work and data. Thus, using analysis of student work and data across grades and content areas, a diversity of learners, including ELLs and students with disabilities, have access to the curricula.

- Curricular documents across grades and content areas demonstrate evidence of alignment with the Common Core and the integration of the instructional shifts. For example, in an eighth-grade math lesson plan, students demonstrate the shift of application by solving and graphing inequalities using mathematical properties with a focus on mathematical precision. In a sixth-grade humanities unit plan on early Greek democracy and how it compares to the structure of the current government in the United States, students are expected to demonstrate the shifts by identifying relevant details in the text and engaging in rich conversations about the text. These practices reveal that students are cognitively engaged across grades and content areas as a result of the integration of the instructional shifts.
Additional Finding

Quality Indicator: 1.2 Pedagogy

Rating: Proficient

Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect an articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best. Across classrooms, teaching strategies provide multiple entry points into the curricula.

Impact

Teaching practices reflect the articulated set of beliefs that students learn best through making connections between course content and their daily lives, with a focus on critical thinking. All learners, including ELLs and students with disabilities, are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and demonstrate higher-order thinking skills in student work products.

Supporting Evidence

- During a tenth-grade English Language Arts lesson, students individually worked on a do now that focused on using the Frayer model for their assigned vocabulary word “anonymity,” writing a possible definition of the word in context, citing the context of the word in the text they are reading, providing the student's rationale for the possible definition, and then revealing the actual definition. Students used a graphic organizer and then shared responses with a partner using the “say something” protocol before transitioning to a whole class Socratic seminar facilitated by students in the class and observed by the teacher. After sharing their definitions, students moved to a discussion about A Room of One's Own and the theme of gender roles in the text and in their own lives. Students were expected to pose higher level questions to other students and reference what other students contributed to the discussion. Students had sample questions they could refer to and also had copies of accountable talk sentence stems in the areas of agreement, disagreement, clarification, and confirmation. Examples of stems included, “I agree with_____ because…” and “In paragraph_____ it said….“ Across most classrooms, teaching practices demonstrate alignment and reflect the belief students learn best when they are critically thinking and can connect their learning to their daily lives.

- In a sixth-grade math class, students were working in groups, solving equations, determining the difference between an equation and an expression, and analyzing the solution of an equation. After the teacher modeled the steps and completed several examples with the class, students worked in groups to solve the next set of problems in their workbooks, using copies of math talk stems to facilitate their conversations about each problem. Samples of stems included, “I got different results because…” and “What evidence supports your answer?” Students then shared with the whole class the steps they used to solve the problem and the strategies that helped them the most in solving each equation. Students with disabilities worked one-on-one with the classroom teacher and received copies of guided notes to use, while students who finished their equations early were given extension problems to solve and walked around the classroom assisting peers. The use of group work, teacher modeling, discussion stems, and student share-outs provided students with multiple entry points to the assignment.

- Students in an eight-grade US history class chose one of three do now prompts to write to: “1. How is justice viewed after a horrible event like the Holocaust? 2. Who is responsible for the crimes committed during the Holocaust? 3. Are individuals responsible for their crimes if they have obeyed the laws of their nation?” Students shared responses with a partner and together analyzed a primary source document about the Nuremburg trials before transitioning to watching a brief video and taking notes about trial presented in the video. By offering choice in writing prompts and giving students opportunities to discuss and reflect on new information with one another, teachers provided multiple entry points into the curriculum.
Additional Finding

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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

Across classrooms, teachers use or create assessments, rubrics, and grading polices aligned with the school's curricula. Teachers' assessment practices reflect the use of checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact

Teachers provide students with actionable feedback regarding their achievement and as a result of assessment practices, make adjustments to meet the learning needs of students.

Supporting Evidence

- The school has a standard grading policy used across grades and content areas that is aligned with the school's curricula. The policy includes criteria about demonstrating different levels of mastery and the weighted categories of exams, quizzes, projects/papers, classwork, homework, and participation. Grades are entered into the school's online gradebook, and students receive progress reports about their academic progress every six weeks, per the written grading policy. The student's final grade for the semester is the average of the grades from the three marking periods. The written school policy also outlines requirements about late homework and the procedure for contacting home if a teacher foresees a student’s grade dropping more than ten points during a marking period. The grading policy is posted across classrooms throughout the school. The alignment of the school's grading policy with the curricula across grades and content areas provides clear expectations for student achievement.

- Teachers use a variety of assessments to identify student strengths and areas for growth. Some of these include mock Regents and Advanced Placement (AP) exams. The school also uses interim assessments administered each quarter that are developed and administered by the school's network. Rubrics are anchored in the Common Core Learning Standards and students reports that rubrics are used in most of their classes across grades and content areas. Rubrics are used to measure student participation in Socratic seminars, class discussions, and student self-reflections, in addition to evaluating student development of arguments, counterclaims, critical analysis, and the use to evidence to support their claims. Through the use of assessments and rubrics, students are provided with actionable feedback about their academic progress.

- Student work samples show feedback from teachers. For instance, in an on-demand argumentative essay for an ELA class on the topic of whether self-driving cars could replace human drivers, the feedback states, "Good use of evidence, logical organization of ideas, next time try text-to-world connection." In an eighth-grade literary essay, the teacher feedback states, “Glow: The thesis statement sets up criteria for the analysis. Grows: Moving forward try making inferences to help develop your thoughts.” During an Algebra I lesson, the two teachers in the classroom walked around the classroom and provided feedback to student groups working on practice Regents problems focused on solving inequalities in one variable. They reminded students to think about the steps they went through to solve each equation and would redirect and clarify misunderstandings with the entire class. During student meetings, students reported that they provided peer feedback and completed self-reflections in some of their classes, but this did not happen consistently across all grades and content areas. A student self-reflection stated, “Unfortunately the short comings of my essay consisted of a few grammatical errors. Not to mention not being able to finish the writing in the restricted time.” As a result of ongoing checks for understanding and some student peer and self-assessment, teachers are making adjustments to meet the learning need of most students.
Additional Finding

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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Findings

School leaders support teacher development with effective feedback and next steps from frequent observations. Feedback based on the Danielson Framework for Teaching captures teachers’ strengths, challenges, and next steps.

Impact

Feedback articulates clear expectations and supports teachers in their reflection on instructional practices, resulting in pedagogical growth.

Supporting Evidence

- Frequent classroom observations provide feedback utilizing the Danielson Framework for Teaching as the standard for professionalism, quality instruction, and high expectations. These classroom visits are followed by a written assessment of the activity, complete with feedback in the form of strengths and areas of improvement. For example, one observation report reviewed an eighth-grade lesson on *Night* and the similarities and differences between the text and a documentary: “Strengths: You clearly stated the criteria for assessment for scholars. Areas for Improvement: The mini lesson does not clearly connect to either the standards or learning activity you cited in the lesson plan. Consider instead of having scholars list similarities and differences, having them engage in a discussion in which they examine one aspect of the documentary that differs from the memoir and determine how that aspect may have affected the tone of the memoir.” Teachers were also given guiding questions on their feedback to reflect on their practice such as, “What does it mean for your learners to gain deeper understanding?” and “How will you measure or assess the learning?” Through frequent classroom observations and specific, reflective feedback, school leaders support the growth of teachers.

- Observation reports include specific language from the Danielson Framework for Teaching to support the rating, along with actionable next steps designed to help teachers improve student outcomes, such as this example: “Strengths: You had a scholar work out the do now on the board and explain the missing steps. The impact of this is that scholars were able to peer assess and you were able to assess for learning and multiple scholars had the opportunity to make their thinking visible. Areas for improvement: You stated, ‘We are going to look at factoring trinomials. Turn and talk how you would factor this (x²-7x+12) polynomial?’ One scholar responded, ‘substitution,’ and you said, ‘I probably wouldn’t substitute. Good try,’ instead of probing the scholar to explain his thinking. Next steps: When a scholar provides an incorrect response, it is a best practice to probe the scholar to explain his thinking. This practice will allow you to assess his misstep and inform instructional next steps.” Specific feedback such as that provided here articulates clear expectations and supports the development of instructional practices, in this case with a focus on questioning (Danielson 3b) and engagement (3c).

- Teachers meet with school leaders to reflect on their own teaching practices, identifying goals for professional growth and exploring how school leaders can best support their progress. An example from the teacher self-reflection tool includes, “Questioning and Discussion. Moving into the upper levels of the DOK (higher order questioning). Trying to synthesize understanding the content and going in depth. Next steps are to front load units with vocabulary acquisition to understand the terms and concepts.” When describing feedback and professional learning experiences that would best support the teacher, a teacher wrote, “Various ways to implement question and discussion techniques within the lesson regularly so they become part of the classes’ regular routine.” As a result of reflection and feedback from school leaders, teachers are demonstrating growth in professional practice.