Quality Review Report

2017-2018

Long Island City High School
High school 30Q450
14-30 Broadway
Queens
NY 11106

Principal: Vivian Selenikas

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

Lead Reviewer: Carlos Perez
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

Long Island City 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>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>Well Developed</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>Area of Focus</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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<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>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

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

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

| Quality Indicator: | 4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development | Rating: | Well Developed |

Findings

Within specific small learning communities (SLCs) all teachers are engaged in structured professional inquiry cycles where they analyze student work products, common assessments and teacher pedagogical practice. There is a transparent and strategic system for distributive leadership (PD).

Impact

Schoolwide instructional practices are continuously elevated resulting in instructional coherence and professional growth.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers engage in structured inquiry meetings through the school’s SLC structure during which they have an equal voice and input while analyzing data, student work products, and teacher pedagogical practices. Teachers shared how every meeting includes an agenda, evidence to be reviewed and a role for each teacher, such as facilitator, timekeeper, or note taker. All teachers shared that because of the teamwork, there is much “more collaboration than ever,” and that collaborating on teams through SLCs has made them better teachers, which has also impacted students. This past January, the school has seen a 72 percent passing rate on the English Language Arts (ELA) Regents exam for those taking the test for the first time compared to 64 percent the prior year.

- There are numerous opportunities for teachers to take part in distributed leadership roles throughout the school. The school has four teachers who serve as behavioral support teachers. Colleagues can come to these teachers when experiencing some sort of a behavioral issue with a student in their classrooms. Teachers receive support in the form of modeling, resources, and lesson development in order to better engage students that may need refocusing. Teachers are also leaders through the school leadership team (SLT) as they work collaboratively with leaders and parents to make decisions for the school. Furthermore, there are teachers who are designated as leaders for each grade who act as support for teachers and liaise with school leaders, as well as teachers who take on the role of college and career counselors. By taking on the numerous leadership roles available in the school, teachers are now taking ownership of “just about everything that goes on in the school.” School leaders and teachers shared that as result of the teachers’ input the school has met its college readiness index score even without including student results from any Advance Placement (AP) exams. In addition, the school has seen an increase in Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and American College Testing scores compared to last year.

- Teachers meet regularly horizontally within each of the SLCs and vertically across each community. This gives teachers many opportunities to present and analyze student data in order to better prepare students for assessments. For example, teachers noticed that English Language Learners (ELLs) did not do well on the Spanish language version of the Regents High School Examination in Global History and Geography but did better on those same mock assessments throughout the year. During vertical inquiry sessions, teachers analyzed the questions on the exam and determined that many students had difficulty understanding the translated version. English as a New Language (ENL) teachers then pushed into global history classes and designed lessons in order to address the translation issues that students faced on the State assessment.
Area of Focus

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

Findings

Common assessments and rubrics that are aligned to the school curricula are used and developed across all SLCs. Teachers are consistently checking for understanding throughout lessons and students are self-assessing their work regularly.

Impact

Across most classrooms teacher feedback to students is actionable and specific with clear next steps, but varied checks for understanding are not consistently used to make effective adjustments to instruction and not all students are aware of their next learning steps.

Supporting Evidence

- During most, but not all classrooms visited, teachers regularly conferenced with students and documented these meetings using a checklist or by taking anecdotal notes. During a ninth-grade ELA lesson, students self-selected writing stations to construct paragraphs focusing on tier two transitional words. The teacher walked to every group more than once, asking questions, evaluated and memorialized student responses. Students had many opportunities to self-assess as well as provide feedback to their peers. During a twelfth-grade AP Government lesson, the teacher checked in with students throughout the lesson and students were able to make adjustments to their work based on the conversations they had with the teacher. However, during a tenth-grade math lesson, the teacher circulated around the classroom and conferred with students but no adjustments to the lesson were witnessed nor were there opportunities for students to self- or peer-assess their work.

- Teachers create assessments, rubrics, and grading policies aligned to the Common Core but not all teachers offer students actionable feedback. During the student meeting, students shared that they receive feedback regularly from most of their teachers. One student noted that the teacher in her anatomy and physiology class customizes the feedback and reflects on prior feedback in order to ensure that the same mistakes are not repeated. Several of the feedback examples in various subject areas that were reviewed offered students a glow, a grow, and actionable next steps. However, feedback to a student's global history assignment offered limited glows, and next steps read, "Double check your work."

- A tenth-grade math lesson allowed students to work in groups while the teacher circulated to each group and to individual students. During the conferencing with students, the teacher used a checklist in order to document student responses and based on data collected helped the students adjust their work during the lesson. Additionally, students had opportunities throughout the lesson to self- and peer-reflect. During a mixed grade ENL lesson, the teacher spent a great deal of time questioning students in order to gauge understanding. The teacher asked questions such as, "Is this coupon for a teenager or an adult?", and "What are the benefits of banning teenagers?" Student responses to the teacher's questions and during student discussions were in both English and Spanish. In addition, the teacher used an exit ticket to further assess students' comprehension. However, during the lesson, the teacher did not memorialize student responses or adjust instruction during the lesson.
Findings
All SLCs have specific curricula that are not only aligned to the Common Core but also integrate instructional shifts that emphasize rigor for all students.

Impact
There is coherence across all grades and subject areas that promotes college and career readiness and all students must demonstrate their thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- All lesson plans reviewed evidenced numerous ways that teachers are planning to support all students, including students with disabilities and ELLs. A twelfth-grade ELA lesson listed all of the ways that the teacher planned to differentiate each section of the lesson. For example, during the do now section of the lesson the teacher will support students with sentence starters. During the mini lesson, scaffolds offered included modeling, read alouds, a text-analysis rubric, and checklist. The aim of a math lesson was for students to be able to identify the vertex formula from the parabola. Planning detailed the ways that specific ELLs and students with disabilities would be offered scaffolds and other additional supports including having all students explain their process verbally to both the teacher and their classmates. A ninth-grade social studies lesson plan offered a variety of supports for students in order for them to describe, verbally and in writing, examples of human rights violations in South Africa under Apartheid. Rigorous curriculum is preparing and supporting students and as a result, there has been an increase in the number of students successfully completing college level courses. In 2015-16, 128 students earned college credit. Through the fall of 2017, 219 students have earned college credit with an additional 270 currently enrolled in advanced courses.

- Across all curriculum documents reviewed there was alignment to the Common Core as well as strategic integration of instructional shifts. This was evident through the embedding of academic vocabulary and vocabulary acquisition. For example, a math lesson that focused on solving word problems using the quadratic formula, planned for students to understand and use vocabulary such as parabola, coefficient, vertex and omit. An earth science lesson plan on energy transfer posed questions to students using key vocabulary such as radiation, electromagnetic spectrum, conduction, and convection. An ELA lesson on Romeo and Juliet used key vocabulary such as counterclaim, conventions, and evidence as a way to guide students through the writing of a detailed summary of the most significant scene. Detailed and coherent planning for the implementation and acquisition of academic vocabulary such as this was seen throughout all of the planning documents reviewed.

- An AP environmental science lesson, planned for students to be in specific heterogeneous groups with stronger students to support those that needed additional help, and for students to actively discuss and document how air pollution affects communities. All students in each group would then take opportunities to present their discussion and findings to their peers as either the group’s chemist, environmentalist, doctor, or industrialist. Planning for a math lesson included detailed worksheets requiring all students to answer questions such as, “Without graphing a quadratic equation, how can you predict what the graph will look like?” The worksheet also requires all students to jot down their noticing using steps and academic vocabulary. Therefore, the lessons emphasized students being cognitively engaged in rigorous tasks.
Additional Finding

Quality Indicator: 1.2 Pedagogy

Rating: Proficient

Findings

Teaching strategies across classrooms reflect the school’s belief in how students learn best, most notably through student discussions and connections to real-world situations.

Impact

Students demonstrate higher order thinking and engage in challenging rigorous tasks.

Supporting Evidence

- During an algebra lesson, students were actively engaged in group discussions as they worked on solving math problems using academic vocabulary connected to the lesson. In addition, all students could be seen annotating their work. When asked why they annotate, student responses included, “It helps me understand the problem,” and “It helps us break down the word problem.”
  During an ELA Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) class, students had opportunities to discuss several questions posed by the teacher such as “What does tone even mean?” Students could be heard articulating responses that referenced their previous learning of tone as well as using accountable talk stems to help them navigate their group discussions. Students were also seen jotting down vocabulary words during lessons. When asked why this was being done, students explained that it was a way to “familiarize themselves with the key vocabulary in the unit.”
  - Throughout classrooms visited, teachers used a variety of multiple entry points into the curriculum for students with disabilities and ELLs. During an AP environmental science class, the teacher offered visual supports in the form of pictures and graphs connected to air pollution and the effect it has on communities. In other classes, students used graphic organizers to help them plan their responses. During a math lesson, students with disabilities were offered scaffolds specific to their individual needs. For example, students identified as visual learners received exemplars to use as a reference when completing graphs. During an ELA lesson, students self-selected independent reading books in order to evaluate the text with the teacher. Throughout many classes, students used a checklist to assure they completed their work fully and did not miss anything prior to handing it in. In addition, teachers were often seen regularly conferencing with students and offering support.
  - Throughout many classes, students were engaged in lessons that made real world connections. During a science lab class, the teachers used questioning that connected the topic of the lesson to everyday activities in which students are engaged. When trying to make connections to how color and texture affect the rate of heat absorption the teacher asked students questions such as, “Why do we tend to wear light colors in the summer?” and “What causes people to get sunburned?”
    During a social studies lesson, the teacher used the current popular song Havana in order to engage the class in a discussion about Fidel Castro. The Meaningful Math curriculum used by the school is embedded with real-life scenarios and connections to students’ lives. For example, one teacher surveyed the entire class about the television viewing preferences for males and females based on comedy, drama, and reality series in order for students to interpret the data and calculate the probability of various events. Students were seen actively involved in groups interpreting data and answering the questions in the assignment.
## Additional Finding

### Quality Indicator:

| 3.4 High Expectations | Rating: | Well Developed |

## Findings

Teachers and school leaders communicate high expectations throughout the school and partner with parents to help them support their children towards a path of college and career readiness.

## Impact

There is mutual accountability for achieving all expectations for teachers, administrators, and family members as well as supports for families towards those expectations.

## Supporting Evidence

- There is a partnership between families and the school with respect to their children’s academic progress and path towards college and career readiness. All parents interviewed reported having complete knowledge and support through the college application process. Parents shared that the staff provide numerous workshops in selecting and applying to the right college and completing financial aid applications. Parents were also very knowledgeable and well informed about the large number of programs for students, such as the Advancement via Individual Determination program. Parents spoke of this program and that it targets students who may be the first in their family to attend college. Parents also shared their knowledge of the free SAT preparation classes offered to all eleventh graders in the school. One parent stated, and others agreed, “There is nothing about the college process that we don’t know about, it’s like they are preparing us to go to college too.” This partnership is leading to an increase in the number of college credits students are earning. For example, in 2015-2016, 128 students earned credit for at least one college-level course which increased to 238 students in 2016-2017. In the fall of 2017-2018, 219 students earned college credit for at least one course. In addition, as a result of the schools’ SAT preparation program, the average score on the SAT exam increased 80 points in 2017 from the average score in the previous year.

- There is a mutual accountability associated with the instructional expectations set forth by school leaders. This begins with the dissemination of the staff handbook two times per year. All expectations are shared at the start of the school year during the school’s first faculty meeting. Accountability for expectations continues regularly throughout the school year most notably through the teacher observation process. School leaders hold pre- and post-observations with all teachers. During these conversations, school leaders identify the need for individualized PD, such as how to develop academic vocabulary and infuse that in all lessons.

- Parents were all aware and could fully speak about what it means to be Bulldog Blue in the school. Parents explained that when they receive a progress report stating that their children are Bulldog Blue, it means that they are on track to graduate. Parents also explained that Bulldog Red means students are not on track to graduate on time, and Bulldog Purple means that students are almost on track to graduate. Parents are aware of and use the school’s online grade reporting system. Some of them have an application on their phone that allows them to track their children’s progress whenever they want. During the parent meeting, parents overwhelmingly stated that if they had to select one thing they most enjoyed about this school, it would have to be how effective the communication is and how they are “very well informed about everything” that takes place in the school.
Additional Finding

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

Findings
Teacher peers and school leaders support the development of all teachers through a strategic cycle of observations and classroom intervisitations that offers feedback that captures strengths and provides actionable next steps.

Impact
Schoolwide instructional practices are elevated and professional growth and reflection is a common theme throughout the school.

Supporting Evidence

- All observation reports reviewed evidenced feedback that identifies teacher strengths and offers next steps that are actionable and timely. In addition, all school leaders remind teachers of when they will return and what is expected upon their return. For example, feedback in an observation report commended the teacher for having word walls that reflect the current unit of study, how the teacher tracked student progress, and the questions used throughout the lesson. As next steps the teacher was directed to implement sentence starters in order to improve small group discussion, setting aside five minutes for the lesson's closure, and improving the feedback that he offers students. The school leader informed the teacher that there would be a return visit within two weeks to assure that next steps were implemented; follow up reports referenced the work implemented. Every observation report reviewed was structured in a similar fashion.

- The vast majority of PD sessions are created based on observation data, teacher feedback, and teacher inquiry cycles. Teacher PD is specific and based solely on the needs of individual teachers. In addition to off-campus PD, school leaders have asked numerous teachers in the school to facilitate sessions for their colleagues based on strengths they have identified during observations. For example, school leaders identified teachers that exhibited fortes in the development of academic vocabulary and allowed them to facilitate PD sessions on how to successfully implement strategies to improve academic vocabulary across all grades and subject areas. As a result, all teachers have now implemented vocabulary logs for all students to use during lessons. The PD team assures that all PD is useful and aligned to the instructional needs of all students. Much of the PD work has been on the improvement of student discussions in lessons and, as a result, student-to-student conversations are occurring more often and with high levels of rigor.

- Teachers receive feedback from school leaders and from peers through the intervisitation cycles in which they participate throughout the school year. In addition to the formal observation process, school leaders and teachers engage in walk throughs during which they visit classrooms and offer feedback. After the intervisitations, the instructional cabinet discusses the findings and provides information to the PD team to develop PD sessions. In addition, all new teachers receive targeted support, such as visiting model teachers, engaging in intervisitation cycles, and opening their classrooms to their peers in order to receive feedback on instruction and lesson planning.