Quality Review Report

2017-2018

Humanities & Arts Magnet High School
High school 29Q498
207- 01 116Th Avenue
Queens
NY 11411

Principal: Kayode Ayetiwa

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

Lead Reviewer: Lenneen Gibson
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

Humanities & Arts Magnet 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><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the instructional shifts and Danielson Framework for Teaching, aligned to the curricula, engaging, and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products</td>
<td>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessment and grading practices, and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### School Culture

*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>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>Area of Celebration</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>
Findings
The hiring of a math instructional coach, an AP for All coach and a college advisor, as well as procuring technology, and extending the instructional day to support teacher teams are aligned to support the school’s instructional goals around mathematics and English Language Arts.

Impact
The use of resources is aligned to the school's instructional goals and permits teachers to engage in weekly and bi-weekly vertical and horizontal teams. The effect is evident in student work products and in challenging academic tasks.

Supporting Evidence

- Coaches are strategically assigned to professionally develop and assist staff members in areas aligned to school goals. One of the school goals cites that implementing targeted instructional strategies will result in a three percent increase in the number of students passing Regents exams in mathematics. A math coach has been hired to support the mathematics department and conducts observations, team meetings, and provides feedback. Additional math teachers were hired to support the mathematics program. In addition, the school day has been extended by an hour. As a result of the school day extension, math classes are programmed for a double-period to provide additional instructional time in the classroom and students have the opportunity to earn additional credits towards graduation. The school is part of the AP for All initiative to provide Advanced Placement courses for students which includes an AP for All coach. The level of rigor was evidenced in the student work products.

- Resource decisions reflect the school's instructional goals, such as greater parental involvement would result in positive feedback from parents by two percent on the School Quality Snapshot. Tools to communicate with parents and support classroom instruction are budgeted such as Kinvolved, clickers for formative assessments, online supports for instructional interventions in English Language Arts, math, tablets to support English as a New Language students, and online instruction to support credit recovery. Additional funds obtained through grants support students on college trips and additional technology used across the classrooms. A college advisor was hired to support students in the college admissions process. As a result of these initiatives, the percentage of students identified as promotion in doubt has decreased from fifty to sixteen percent.

- The school day was extended to an additional hour of instructional time. Teachers have additional time embedded in their schedule to conduct teacher team work. Teachers meet weekly in vertical teams and bi-weekly in horizontal teams looking at student work and using the Climbing Concepts chart to build coherence in the curricula. Teachers stated that vertical teams in mathematics have added consistency and coherence in the mathematics curricula as a result of the teachers meeting vertically on a weekly basis.
Area of Focus

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

Findings

Across classrooms, student work products and discussion reflected an articulated belief about how students learn best through the workshop model, collaboration, and rigorous tasks.

Impact

Student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking and participation as evidenced student work products; however, this was not evidenced in the vast majority of classrooms.

Supporting Evidence

- Students were provided opportunities to engage in student-to-student discourse that was grounded in evidence-based accountable talk. In a US History class, Students were engaged in a station activity that required them to analyze photographs that depicted living, working, and the political climate during the Progressive era. Using guiding questions, students analyzed the primary source documents for evidence of “progress.” Students analyzed a photograph of the Triangle Shirt Waist factory and discussed their observations, such as the workspace being cluttered, disorganized, and a fire hazard. Similarly, in another US History class, students were engaged in a fishbowl activity that sought to answer the question, “To what extent is the structure of the federal court system beneficial to American democracy?” A student questioned another student on the fact that if federal judges did not receive lifelong tenure, how would cases be affected if regular elections were held to select judges? A student responded that it would depend on the presiding President and the judge that is appointed. A student then cited a study to substantiate the statement. Students were heard using accountable talk stems, either agreeing or disagreeing with their classmates, thus making student thinking visible.

- Students engaged in one-to-one conversations that demonstrated problem solving. In an Algebra I class, students were determining the equation of a line given two points. In the student groups, students were overheard asking each other questions such as, “Can you show me how you got the slope again?” The first student explained how to find the slope by stating “the rise over the run.” Another student further probed, by stating, “Did you get six for your y-intercept?” Students also engaged in a think-pair-share to identify the parameters for an equation of a line and a share-out followed. In another math class, students were given opportunities to turn-and-talk, and to share their thinking on strategies used while problem solving; however, students could not clearly articulate their ideas during the turn-and-talk, nor during the share-out because of demonstrated gaps in their understanding of the content. Additionally, a high level of student participation was not evident in the vast majority of classrooms.

- School leaders articulated that students learn best through the workshop model of instruction, and through collaborative, rigorous tasks, although not evident in the vast majority of classrooms. In an English as New Language class, students read a poem entitled, Escaping from Slavery. Students were tasked with using scaffolds to find imagery in the poem. In their groups, students worked together to locate line-by-line examples of text that related to one of the five senses. The teacher also modeled for the students how to look in the text for evidence that supports imagery. Similarly, in an English Language Arts (ELA) class, students were tasked with discerning the relationship between characters in the theme of fate versus free will in Macbeth. The teacher modeled for the students, the cause and effect relationships in life, using a t-chart on the board and paralleled the situation to characters in Macbeth.
### Findings

The school uses a customized color-coding system to demonstrate revisions in curricula and uses State item analysis data and student work to refine curricula and academic tasks. Curricula and academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits for diverse learners.

### Impact

Curricula and academic tasks are refined using data so that all students are cognitively engaged in rigorous tasks.

### Supporting Evidence

- Academic tasks require students including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities to develop rigorous habits and higher-order thinking skills. Tasks are modified to ensure that all learners are cognitively engaged. Student data from state item analysis and ancillary programs are used as interventions to modify curricula and tasks. A tenth-grade ELA task required students to analyze the relationships between characters in *Macbeth* while citing textual evidence to support the analysis. A modified scaffold was used for students with disabilities that included visuals of the characters and guiding questions to support the analysis of characters. For ELLs, in addition to visuals, the guiding questions were further deconstructed, using vocabulary to capture imagery and emotions. A Living Environment task required students to transcribe DNA strands. Modifications for ELLs and students with disabilities included visuals to capture the base-pairing in the DNA strands to ensure all students have access to the curricula.

- Curricula and academic tasks across grades and subjects challenge all students including ELLs and students with disabilities to think critically, and this is exemplified in student work products. An English as a New Language (ENL) task required students to cite evidence from the text that showed imagery. A modified scaffold was used with visuals depicting the five senses and connecting those senses to evidence in the text. A United States Government task in financial literacy required students to create a budget by analyzing a pay stub, credit card statement, and bank statements. The task included modifications such as front-loaded vocabulary words, and guided questions.

- Curricular documents such as lesson plans and unit plans cited revisions and modifications in order for all students to be cognitively engaged. The school uses a color coding system that is aligned to the components of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. A ninth-grade ELA unit plan based on the text *Romeo and Juliet* showed revisions to the assessment portion of the unit plan. A mathematics lesson plan cited a specific student to receive 1:1 support in the class by having the problem read and explained step-by-step to the student with the addition of a scaffold. A tenth-grade ELA unit plan on the Industrial Revolution included extensions for higher-achieving students and analysis, character, and theme analysis protocols during instruction. A chemistry unit plan showed revision by incorporating research articles that connect the topics studied.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

Teachers used State rubrics that are aligned to the school’s curricula. Teachers consistently check for understanding by using plickers (formative assessment tool), conferencing with students, and providing opportunities to peer- and self-assess.

Impact

Teachers provide actionable feedback to students regarding student achievement. Teachers make on-the-spot adjustments to the lesson based on formative assessment practices so that learning needs are met for all students.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers monitor student understanding during the lesson by checking for understanding and making some in-the-moment adjustments to meet the needs of all learners. In an Advanced Placement English Language Arts and Composition class, students were engaged in a task that required them to peer-review their partner’s essay on rhetorical devices using a peer-editing checklist. Feedback cited included the need for incorporating transitional phrases in body paragraphs and the need for a debatable claim in the introductory paragraph. The teacher observed that students were having issues with a debatable claim and adjusted the lesson by demonstrating this skill set. In a US History class, students were analyzing primary source documents in preparation for a document-based essay. The teacher conferenced with student groups and checked for understanding by asking specific questions that required students to discern the difference between killing and murdering and by questioning the author’s use of specific words. Students were observed giving each other feedback.

- Teachers check for understanding and make on-the-spot adjustments to the lesson to meet the needs of all learners. In an Algebra I Integrated Co-teaching class, students were writing the equation of a line. During small-group instruction, the teacher noticed that students were not simplifying answers to the lowest terms. The teacher announced the need to simplify answers when calculating the slope. Similarly, in another Algebra I class on the same topic, the teacher checked for understanding using plickers. Students who answered incorrectly were told to attend after school tutoring. The teacher modeled the process for writing the equation of a line and asked the students to show one to four fingers to indicate if they understood. In an English as a New Language class, as students were citing imagery in their poems, the teacher circulated around the classroom and adjusted the lesson by announcing the need to include the line number in their paragraphs. Students provided feedback to one another using a peer evaluation rubric.

- Teachers use State rubrics as well as customized rubrics for specific tasks. A review of student work across content areas showed actionable feedback from the teacher as well as from peers with next learning steps. The teacher’s feedback on a persuasive letter rubric commended the student for including the proper facts to support the point of view but needed to expand their closing statement by adding more details. A Socratic seminar scoring guide cited student reflections and peer feedback. The student’s goal stated to challenge the ideas presented during the seminar. The peer feedback called for the student to make more effort in speaking during the seminar. Feedback to a student on a social studies short response recommended that the student use evidence from the text to answer the question on the Cuban Revolution; however, the sample of a student’s science lab was still in process of being completed, and thus did not have any feedback. During the student meetings, all students stated that the feedback from their teachers and peers helps them to improve their work.
Additional Finding

Quality Indicator: 3.4 High Expectations  
Rating: Proficient

Findings
School leaders consistently communicate student academic achievement via online portals and written communication. Staff members establish a culture for learning through ongoing college and career events, college-level classes, and online college application portals.

Impact
School leaders and staff help families understand student progress through regular progress reports and students tracking their progress towards graduation.

Supporting Evidence

- Staff members provide ongoing, clear lines of communication to parents regarding their child’s academic performance and the expectations that promote college and career readiness. In addition to quarterly report cards, parents receive three progress reports within a term to apprise them of their child’s performance. Parents can access portals such as PupilPath and Kinvolved to keep abreast with student performance in their classes, as well as a parent calendar of school events. Parents mentioned academic supports such as the Saturday Regents academy, afterschool tutoring, and online study guides for the Regents exams, that ensure that families understand student progress towards expectations.

- The school organizes workshops for parents to inform them about the college admissions process. Workshops such as College Night, informational sessions on applying for financial aid, tutorials for the parents on the portal Naviance as well as newsletters and emails from the college advisor allow parents to support their child through the college application process. The school hosts English as a New Language welcome meetings for families, thus ensuring that families understand student progress towards the college admissions process. A citizenship program has also been implemented for families who are striving to attain United States citizenship.

- Staff members have established a culture for learning that provides students with feedback that prepares them for the next level. Students are afforded opportunities to take college level classes through College Now and through the school’s Advanced Placement course offerings. Representatives from college admissions offices conduct presentations to the students and students have opportunities to attend college fairs and conduct college visits. During career day, students speak with professionals of various industries discussing career options. Free Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) preparation through a partnership is available to students. Students on all grades can track their progress to graduation through a chart entitled, “Are you green?”
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

Teachers in vertical and horizontal teams engage in inquiry-based collaborations. Distributed leadership practices such as the Peer Collaborative Teacher and the Student with Disabilities Liaison have been implemented by school leaders.

Impact

Teacher professional collaborations promote the building of instructional coherence and provide teachers a voice in decisions that affect student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- A social studies vertical team was observed engaging in inquiry work. Using a Regents Data Analysis protocol, team members analyzed the January 2018 US History Regents noting the trends and patterns in the data and correlating that information to specific areas of the US History curriculum. Teachers tiered the questions and began to devise an action plan that included maintaining the strategies used for analyzing political cartoons and incorporating time management strategies for test taking. Teacher also talked about establishing more coherence on the outlining of essays as a pre-writing strategy. Teachers stated that the impact of teacher teamwork is being informed on the common issues that students are struggling with such as drawing inferences from political cartoons and drawing conclusions. Only three percent of the students are leaving questions blank, whereas thirteen percent of the students were leaving questions blank on previous exams because students are more comfortable with the material. In addition, there has been an 8.7 percent increase in the final score for a group targeted based on June 2017 scores students on the January 2018 Regents exam as compared to the June 2017 exam.

- Teachers meet weekly in vertical and bi-weekly in horizontal teacher teams, utilizing protocols to look at curricular documents to ensure implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards, thus strengthening the instructional capacity of teachers. Teams across content areas employ a process to explore the parallels between the Advanced Placement and the Regents curricula and memorialize this information on a Regents Advanced Placement Exam Parallels (RAP) sheet. Based on the information gleaned from the RAP sheets, teachers develop a concept progression chart known as the Climbing Concepts charts to modify curricula and ensure rigor. Teachers on vertical teams also use the Unit Plan Critique protocol. A review of notes revealed a tenth-grade team that looked at a unit on the Russian Revolution mentioned ways to support the curriculum by providing students with supplementary texts to build student background knowledge. A science team noted the implementation of a mini research paper into the curriculum and including close reading into the curriculum.

- School leaders offered examples of distributed leadership practices that ensure teachers have a voice in affecting student learning around the school. The Peer Collaborative Teacher (PCT) currently supports new teachers in their pedagogy. The teacher’s class serves as a model and lab class for teachers to observe best practices and facilitates professional development sessions known as Tech Talks. In addition, the PCT works with teachers on the teacher teams to ensure curricular alignment through the use of protocols to analyze data and curricular documents to make adjustments. The Students with Disabilities Liaison created a newsletter to support teachers in timely preparation of Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). Teacher also sit in on the administrative cabinet meetings and on the monthly Principal’s Roundtable to lend their voice on concerns such as instruction, safety, and social emotional support.