Quality Review Report

2017-2018

The Bronxwood Preparatory Academy
High school 11X514
921 East 228Th Street
Bronx
NY 10466

Principal: Janet Gallardo

Dates of Review:
October 31, 2017 - November 1, 2017

Lead Reviewer: Jacqueline King-Robinson
The Quality Review Report

The Quality Review is a two-day school visit by an experienced educator. During the review, the reviewer visits classrooms, talks with parents, students, teachers, and school leaders and uses a rubric to evaluate how well the school is organized to support student achievement.

The Quality Review Report provides a rating for all ten indicators of the Quality Review Rubric in three categories: Instructional Core, School Culture, and Systems for Improvement. One indicator is identified as the **Area of Celebration** to highlight an area in which the school does well to support student learning and achievement. One indicator is identified as the **Area of Focus** to highlight an area the school should work on to support student learning and achievement. The remaining indicators are identified as **Additional Finding**. This report presents written findings, impact, and site-specific supporting evidence for six indicators.

Information about the School

The Bronxwood Preparatory Academy 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>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></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>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>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>
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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>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

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

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<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>
</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

School leaders and staff ensure the alignment of the curriculum to the Common Core Learning Standards and strategically embed the use of annotation and text evidence from nonfiction texts throughout the curricular documents for each content area. Curriculum and academic tasks are routinely refined using student work and data.

Impact

The curriculum is coherent across grade levels and content areas. All students have access to the curricula tasks and are cognitively engaged, thus promoting college and career readiness for all students.

Supporting Evidence

- The instructional shifts are present throughout the curricular documents. Across the content areas, units ask students to read and annotate nonfiction texts, make claims, and cite textual evidence to support their claims. For example, a United States history lesson included a graphic organizer that prompted students to make a claim and give reasons that support their claim from primary source documents. Another history lesson plan included an exit slip that contained a rubric in which one of the categories was assessing the use of textual evidence to support claims. A living environment lesson plan asked for students to visit six stations. While at each station, they were to make a claim and provide evidence to support it. An English lesson plan’s aim addressed how to deepen understanding of the text by asking and answering questions. Students are developing strategies to make understanding of nonfiction texts, promoting college and career readiness for all students.

- Written curricular documents allow access for all students including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities. Plans have been revised to include specific strategies for individual students across content areas. An English lesson plan called for students to select a text and to use sentence starters for their book club discussions. Additionally, students were provided a word bank of verbs to include in their sentences. Included in an algebra unit plan was a graphic organizer to assist students with outlining a process for factoring. Included in a global history lesson plan were tiered primary source documents, charts, pictures, and documents in their native language on child labor, thus promoting access for all learners.

- A review of curricular planning documents reveals that teachers are using student data to refine and adjust the curriculum, providing access for ELLs, highest-achieving students, and students with disabilities. Curricular documents plan for academic intervention and academic enrichment. For example, the enrichment task included in a global history lesson plan asked for students to develop a solution to problems associated with child labor and the intervention provided students with adapted text and images. Tasks are customized for specific groups of students as outlined in the lesson plans. After review of June Regents exam results - teachers noticed that students struggled with questions that included academic vocabulary. Teachers adjusted the curriculum to include daily opportunities for students to develop and utilize academic content vocabulary utilizing the Frayer Model, providing translation glossaries, and texts in students’ native languages. An earth science lesson plan included the Mercalli scale sheet in English and Spanish and scenario cards in both languages. Students were expected to establish a Mercalli rating for each scenario and cite evidence for the rating. One task asked students to complete a double-entry journal after reading ten pages in their literature book and then to select three to four quotes to analyze using content specific vocabulary that was provided to them in a word bank.
# Area of Focus

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

Teaching practices aligned to the curricula do not yet reflect implementation of a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best through effective communication, peer collaborations, and engagement in rigorous learning experiences. Teachers use scaffolds, questioning, and opportunities for choice to address the needs of diverse learners.

## Impact

There were high levels of student engagement for all students, including ELLs and students with disabilities. Project-based collaborative learning activities enabled students to engage in challenging tasks.

### Supporting Evidence

- Based on the philosophy that students learn best through discussion and rigor there has been a major focus on questioning and discussion in alignment with the Danielson Framework. In seven of the nine classes visited, students were working in cooperative groups during which discussions enabled them to talk to one another without ongoing mediation by the teacher. In one lesson, five students were participating in station learning. At each station students were reviewing information from act one of The Crucible by Arthur Miller. Students were using accountable talk stems, such as I agree with, I still have questions about, and I gained a deeper understanding of to build on one another’s ideas. In two out of the three history classes students were using Cornell note-taking strategy to analyze primary source documents. Students were asked to make claims and provide textual evidence to support their claims when discussing in their groups. Student work products in most, but not all, classrooms now include textual evidence from more than one source when supporting a claim.

- All learners had access to challenging tasks that demonstrated higher-order thinking skills. In an English Language Arts (ELA) class, students chose a text for their literature circles and used sentence starters for their discussions. Students created questions about their book using Costa’s Levels of Questioning and used them to participate in the literature circle discussions. In a math class, groups of students sorted linear algebraic equations by the way they could be solved. After the sorting activity, students selected two equations to solve promoting access for a variety of learners.

- In a living environment class, 16 of the students were working in groups to categorize different objects as living, nonliving, or dormant and justify their placement of the object. The teacher directed the students to provide at least six supporting statements to defend their claims. The students rotated through five stations, discussed the categorization of each item, and supported their decision with evidence. The other half of the class was working on a web-based lesson on cell organelles and their functions. Students completed a Cornell note-taking handout to make sense of their new learning. When asked how the Cornell note-taking helped, one student stated, “It makes the work more interesting and helps my writing to be more organized.”

- Multiple entry points were provided for students in five of the nine classrooms observed. For the do now in a history class, students were asked to look at a cartoon from the 1850s and make a claim, support it with evidence, and create one question. Students were then asked, “What is your typical day like? Make sure you include hours spent sleeping, working, and free time.” Students shared their answers to their do now. Students were then provided with eight different documents that had information about child labor during the Industrial Revolution. The primary source documents varied in level and type. There were charts, graphs, cartoons, posters, and students had a choice in which primary source document they would use to develop a claim and support it with evidence. Students were provided with texts in their native language, as needed. The implementation of these scaffolds consistently provided access to the content, however not all tasks included extensions for high-achieving students.
Additional Finding

<table>
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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 policies that align with the school’s curriculum. Teachers use common assessments and analyze results using a data reflection and action goals template to determine student progress towards goals across grades and subject areas.

Impact

Analysis of assessment results are consistently used to adjust curriculum and instruction, thus promoting student learning and performance. Teachers provide students with feedback that supports them with improving their work.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses a data reflections and action goals template to analyze data from the previous years’ Regents exams. The template asks teachers to identify the Common Core standards that groups of students, including ELLs and students with disabilities struggled with, the changes that they will make to the curriculum units to address the learning gaps, the new pedagogical strategies they will employ, and how progress will be monitored. The science team identified that groups of students struggled with academic content vocabulary, reading stamina, and analyzing diagrams and charts. As a result, they incorporated vocabulary specific exit slips and the use of accountable talk stems to encourage academic discourse. In addition, the teachers increased the number of visuals, including Regents exam-based diagrams and charts to a minimum of two per class period as evidenced in lesson plans and classroom instruction.

- Rubrics are provided with all formal and informal assessments. In all classes the use of rubrics was observed on posted student work as well as on classroom tasks. In the history department, teachers incorporate abridged rubrics on their exit slips, which has resulted in students responding in a more detailed manner that addresses the concept or content from the lesson’s learning experience. Several students stated that the rubrics help them to make improvements on their work products. Teachers also agreed that the students use the rubrics to measure their progress as they complete tasks.

- Teachers provide students with actionable feedback verbally and in writing, but it is not always meaningful in helping students improve their work. Feedback on a math homework assignment stated, “great job, completed.” One teacher recommended that a student proofread the work noting that punctuation was missing at the end of some sentences. While another directed the student to focus on developing the conflict a bit more and to explain what motivated characters to do something.

- Teachers create standards-based assessments that are aligned to State Regents standards and test format, using Castle Learning. These mock Regents exams are administered two to four times per year based on students’ progress towards mastery of the standards resulting in increased stamina and use of academic content vocabulary in their work products and discussions.
Additional Finding

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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations as determined by the Danielson Framework for teaching to the entire staff through teacher leaders and teams. Staff members establish a culture for learning that systematically communicates a unified set of high expectations on college and career readiness for students.

Impact

School leaders use an effective system to hold staff accountable for schoolwide instructional expectations. Families are aware and understand their children’s progress towards meeting high expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders provided staff with a lesson plan template with guiding questions that are aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. All lesson plans were written using this template, which resulted in the development of lessons that promote college and career readiness. Teachers receive professional development to support them in meeting the high expectations of college and career readiness and access to rigorous tasks for all students established by the school leader. Teachers hold one another accountable for making progress towards meeting these expectations during team meetings, intervisitations, and inquiry work. During a team meeting, teachers were responsible for bringing student work products, in order to meet this deadline teachers described having to ensure that they stayed on pace with their lessons.

- Teachers use Skedula and PupilPath to communicate progress to families and students. Parents and students stated that they can ascertain the progress they are making toward college and career readiness by logging into Pupil Path. Progress reports are generated and sent home to students and their families in the middle of the marking period. The guidance department conducts college awareness workshops during the Parent Association meetings. Parents receive an explanation of their child’s transcript, graduation worksheets to track and monitor student progress, and an overview of the college application process. Counselors also support students with communicating with their families regarding their progress in the application process. Students receive a t-shirt with the slogan “One step closer” when they submit their applications. There are templates of letters that inform parents of their student's progress toward college and career readiness.

- The principal issues a memo at the beginning of the year to the entire staff that “Every student is college bound.” Student progress towards college and career readiness is displayed publicly by student OSIS number. Students self-identify whether they are meeting the requirements towards graduation and if they are college and career ready. Bulletin boards listing student’s green status are posted by a related office, such as guidance. The operation graduation display is color coded so that students can identify if they are in need of additional Regents exams, course credits or additional attendance support. Students who are considered at-risk of not meeting these requirements are listed as yellow or red and are required to meet with their college counselor. In addition, at-risk seniors meet with the school counselor to follow up on assignments and other school-related matters. School-based support structures have led to an increase of students passing the Regents exams and an increase in the graduation rate.
Additional Finding

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

School leaders and teacher peers support teacher development through strategic supervisory and peer observation of instruction. There is a transparent system for managing professional development.

Impact

School wide observations and professional learning structures foster improved instructional practices, resulting in improved quality of student work products.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders conduct frequent cycles of observations that have been strategically planned to support the schoolwide goal of increased student engagement. In conjunction with school leaders, teachers develop a professional growth plan aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching that is aligned to the end-of-year measure of teaching practice self-reflection tool. School leaders review teacher performance data from the previous year to develop an action plan for creating the observation cycles. School leaders used Advance data, observation patterns and trends, and student work products to determine schoolwide instructional foci of improved reading comprehension and students demonstrating their understanding through discussion. The formal observation schedule is posted in the main office. Teachers are provided with effective feedback that identifies an area of celebration, provides detailed next steps that lead to improved teacher practice. A mathematics teacher was observed implementing the suggestion from a prior observation that the lesson would be improved by explaining the rules of a game to students prior to the start of the lesson. Observation reports included the identification of accessible resources that individual teachers should utilize to improve instructional practices. Feedback to one teacher identified the video *Adapting Challenges for Disabled Children* and noted a date for a follow up visit. Informal follow up observations by peers, teacher leaders, and school leaders are used to monitor progress of the implementation of identified next steps.

- Teachers support the development of one another through frequent intervisitations to assess the impact that instructional foci are having on student engagement. During a meeting with teachers, they discussed how the use accountable talk stems increased the quality of student-to-student discussions. Teachers provide one another with effective feedback and next steps. At a meeting of a teacher team, team members reflected on how the suggestion to use exit slip rubrics had improved the quality of student work. School leaders and teacher leaders analyze student work and performance data and support teachers in creating action plans to promote improved student performance for groups of students. Special education and English as a New Language (ENL) teachers support teachers in making adjustments to their lesson plans to meet the needs of all learners. Modifications for students with disabilities and ELL students were included in all unit and lesson plans submitted.

- Teachers receive strategic, differentiated professional development based on data from the most recent observation cycle, school goals, and student work. Advance data is also monitored to identify trends that need to be addressed schoolwide. There are individual teacher professional growth plans for each teacher that include areas they need to strengthen, the evidence that will be used to measure progress, and what supports they will need. Teachers attend external professional development that is aligned to their professional growth plans. Before new learnings are turn-keyed for the staff leadership meets with the staff member to review the plan and provide feedback. Teachers complete an exit slip after each session. Teachers agreed that their professional development has helped them to try new practices in their classrooms and has led to improved student work products.
**Additional Finding**

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

**Findings**

Teacher teams consistently analyze data and student work for students they share. Teachers have leadership responsibilities for content areas and grade levels.

**Impact**

Teachers pedagogical practices are improved through the use of assessments to identify how individuals and groups of students are working towards meeting goals. Teachers make instructional decisions that affect student learning schoolwide.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teacher teams look at research, identify goals, and track progress for groups of students. Data about the proficiency levels for ELLS and specific strategies to support them was provided to all teachers. Teachers include these strategies in their lesson plans. In a teacher team meeting, teachers reviewed student work to determine if the use of double entry journals improved student participation in their literature circles. Teachers noticed that the students were using the sentence starters that were provided to them when completing their journal entries. They agreed that the sentence starters made an impact on the quality of student work products. A review of teacher team minutes reflects similar practices in the other teams across the school.

- Teachers are on the School Leadership Team. Teachers play an integral role in contributing to the establishment of the school’s Comprehensive Education Plan goals each year. They have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning. Teacher teams decided that vocabulary was a weakness for their students. Teachers now include key vocabulary words and strategies in all lesson plans. The work of the college access team has resulted in increased student credit accumulation and increased college applications.

- As a result of teacher team work, student engagement and discussions have improved. The principal provided teachers with questioning stems to help them frame discussions during lessons. Teachers made the decision to provide the students with accountable talk stems to utilize when engaging in discussions. During the ELA teacher team meeting, teachers discussed the improvements they were noticing in their classroom discussion due to the use of these stems and agreed they would continue utilizing them.