Quality Review Report

2019-2020

Manhattan International High School
High School 02M459
317 East 67 Street
Manhattan
NY 10065

Principal: Gladys Rodriguez

Dates of Review:
November 21, 2019 - November 22, 2019

Lead Reviewer: Buffie Whitfield
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

Manhattan International 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>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to State standards and/or content standards</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by State standards and the 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>
<td></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>Well Developed</td>
<td></td>
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</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>Area of Celebration</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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<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 schoolwide 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 State standards</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

### 1.4 Positive Learning Environment

**Rating:** Well Developed

#### Findings

The faculty developed a theory of action that aligns to high expectations, and supports staff in creating an environment of mutual respect, discipline, safety, and emotional support. There are embedded structures, such as the cluster team, which ensures that each student is known well by a staff member and receives personalized support.

#### Impact

The inclusive and safe school culture enables students to make decisions that have a positive impact on the school community and supports their academic and personal growth. Guidance, advisory, and targeted intervention programs positively impact students’ academic and personal behaviors.

#### Supporting Evidence

- The mission of school leaders and staff is to develop new learners of English the linguistic, cognitive and cultural skills necessary for informed and creative participation in a diverse society. As such, school leaders and faculty have refined those structures that promote an inclusive and positive learning environment. Teachers and parents affirmed the positive impact of these actions via the School Survey, in which 96 percent of parents agreed or strongly agreed that they feel respected by their child's principal. All students shared that coming to school is a pleasure. A myriad of celebrations take place to highlight academic achievement and student behavior. This positive school climate is further validated in that the school sustains a low level of incidents and suspensions evidenced in the Online Occurrence Reporting System.

- Multicultural celebrations integrate the heritage of the diverse population of the school with instructional activities such as dance, poetry, art, and sports. Students read books where diversity is addressed and watch movies addressing racial struggles and success. The student government actively engages with the principal and staff members during their weekly meetings. They organized the holiday celebration, prom, trips, and other schoolwide events. Students proudly shared how staff honors all students’ cultures. For example, during Ramadan, school leaders strategically coordinate schedules to ensure that students are able to honor their cultural practices without feeling encumbered. The school culture meaningfully involves student’s voice resulting in a productive learning environment.

- Students participate in advisory sessions where teachers and students address socio-emotional issues and share ideas and concerns with their teachers. Students explained that they could go to more than one adult if they have an issue. Guidance counselors have regular meetings with leaders, teachers, and parents to consistently monitor student’s academic goals and behaviors to ensure that the social-emotional and learning needs of students are met. The cluster team discusses students at-risk and develops academic intervention supports or referrals for evaluations. Parents believe their children have benefited from these interventions and from the recommendations from the cluster team.
### Findings

Across classrooms, teacher practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect a set of coherent beliefs that students will achieve their best through fostering linguistic diversity and engaging in discussions.

### Impact

Most students engage in discussions and produce meaningful work products. An abundance of strategic scaffolds is not yet in evidence preventing students from demonstrating high levels of thinking to their fullest.

### Supporting Evidence

- The availability of dictionaries, computers, translation functions, microphones, scaffolds, content and language aims, speaking protocols, table talk, native language and transitional support are embedded in all lessons providing access for all learners. School leaders report that these supports are resulting in positive effects due to the increased engagement of students in accountable talk, which promotes all learners to use academic vocabulary.

- In a history class, the teacher prompted students to read and then discuss documents related to the question of the change in the world’s climate. Students shared their thoughts on how the U.S became more of a “city upon a hill” with respect to climate change. A government class was student led and facilitated. Students taught the lesson and built upon one another’s responses. In most of the classes students were engaged in meaningful conversation. In an English class, they were required to justify their thinking by providing an explanation of their position and making connections from personal and real world applications to the content. However, in a few classes this was not evident.

- Across the classrooms, there is a common belief that working in groups fosters support. Within all classes visited, students sat in groups and had distinctive roles, such as planner, facilitator, scribe, and timekeeper. In a Living Environment class students demonstrated their understanding of how the water flea responds to environmental stress and toxicants. In a few classes, although students participated in group roles not all within the group, except the scribe, had the opportunity to memorialize their thinking which limited each student from demonstrating their thinking.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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</table>

Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to the Consortium and International Standards as well as content and language objectives. The State standards focusing on rigorous habits and Culturally Responsive Sustaining Education is strategically integrated and are embedded coherently across grades and subjects.

Impact

Planned tasks result in coherence across grades and subject areas providing students opportunities to demonstrate their thinking and promote college and career readiness for all learners.

Supporting Evidence

- The school staff utilizes multiple resources to develop the curricula across subject areas. Learning targets are consistently written in a manner that is easily understood by students. For example, a learning target addressing the Common Core Learning Standards for literacy reads, “I can use relevant evidence and compelling reasoning to develop a complex claim.” Another reads, “I can write and solve equations that represent real life situations.” State standards in English Language Arts, specifically language complexity, academic vocabulary, text-based answers and literacy instruction are incorporated in all content areas. Additionally, tasks ask students to incorporate their cultures within the tasks in order to apply a personal context. In one history plan, students are to write an essay arguing their claim for a government policy that will make the United States an exemplar for the world. Students are to share their values and identify cultural priorities to make this model realized.

- A review of units in the various content areas reflects an emphasis on language acquisition. A Living Environment task asks students to conduct a bioassay to investigate the effects of a toxicant on an organism. In an ELA unit, a vocabulary review is to be conducted along with reading and annotation of a book. Throughout the unit, targeted vocabulary is reviewed. In math, an algebra task requires students to explain in writing why a graph of a quadratic function is not a straight line including terms such as patterns, exponents, and variable. In Global History, students must write a PBAT argumentative essay on whether or not Americans should celebrate Columbus Day based on primary and secondary source readings. For an extension task, students focus on readings of injustices and solutions to these injustices. Differentiation is addressed through station learning. Students have a range of choice in what they read and analyze. Students have the opportunity to present through spark video, clips, iMovie, Google Slides, and posters. The strategic focus on vocabulary acquisition promotes all students to demonstrate they’re learning and thinking through various methods allowing all students to have access to the learning.

- In a math lesson, students were asked multiple levels of questions including, “What are the different ways to generate research questions from the given math task? In a Living Environment unit, students are to create various lab experiments through analysis of data to determine the relationship between different organisms. A research project requires students to elaborate on natural phenomena and personal experience to represent their thinking through reasoning and discussion. Planned learning experiences promote readiness for college and beyond.
Findings
Across the vast majority of classrooms, teacher-created rubrics, grading policies, and assessments align to the curricula and provide a clear profile of student mastery of learning targets. All teachers implement multiple forms of ongoing assessments.

Impact
Teachers provide students with actionable and meaningful feedback that supports student achievement. Performance based assessments provide teachers with feedback on students’ increased mastery across subject areas.

Supporting Evidence
- Classroom visits, conversations with students, and the review of student work products revealed that rubrics and checklists are used across all classrooms and subject areas. All students interviewed, articulated the purpose and use of rubrics, and explained that these assessment tools are used to inform their learning and guide them to their next steps. For example, one student mentioned that based on her teacher’s feedback she was able to write a good thesis statement but needed to work on transitions. Another shared “In my math assignment, I got the correct answers, but I need to elaborate more on how I solve the problem. Work products revealed that teachers provide effective feedback such as “Great job choosing evidence to support your ideas. Next time include more background information to help your reader understand your ideas.” International Network and Consortium performance standards are employed. The Internationals principle, heterogeneity, and collaboration standard looks for evidence of multiple points of entry so that students with varying language knowledge and educational backgrounds can access the information being presented and be reflective in self-assessment. Coupled with targeted feedback to make meaning of their learning students show increased achievement.

- The school uses multiple assessments, including but not limited to, performance based assessments (PBATs), a mastery grading system, portfolio presentation, English Regents, pre- and post- unit tests, and tasks that are aligned to the standards across all content areas. All stakeholders are informed of the administration of assessments via a yearlong calendar. Additionally, there is an online tracker to monitor student achievement of the standards so that teachers receive continual feedback relative to student achievement. Teachers use the information culled from the assessments to inform students of their progress and to schedule them for extra support via tutoring. Teachers share they use PBATs by analyzing results to adjust daily design and delivery of instruction. Periodic assessments are analyzed to determine where students currently are in terms of content mastery and cognitive process acquisition in relation to where they need to be. Teachers then create next steps to bridge the gap. As a result of this clinical process, there is a six-year graduation rate of 70 percent which is extremely high for an International school with students new to this country.

- Common assessments are administered and analyzed across each department. Item analysis of the results in Algebra II revealed common student struggles related the concept of rate of change. The related skills were addressed in the next unit. End-of-unit benchmark assessment data, evidence student improvement in those skills. Additionally, multi-step problems and exponents required additional focus in the subsequent unit. The math teacher team made instructional adjustments to incorporate the topic within lessons, once again as a result of a detailed item analysis.
**Additional Finding**

<table>
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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 to the entire staff through a web-based portal, the school’s teacher leaders and weekly teacher team meetings. School leaders effectively partner with families to establish a culture of high expectations.

### Impact

The structures that are in place offer support and effective feedback, which result in a culture of mutual accountability for both staff and students to meet the schoolwide expectations.

### Supporting Evidence

- School leaders together with teachers conduct weekly team meetings which focus on instructional patterns, trends, and student achievement as revealed by data based performance assessments. Effective ongoing professional development has resulted in improved instruction and increased student achievement across all grades and content areas. Inquiry based learning experiences take place in student-centered classrooms ensuring that engaging students in their learning, which is the instructional focus is achieved. School leaders and teachers synchronize their articulation of mutually agreed-upon, non-negotiable expectations. Support is offered to help teachers design and teach students how to become better learners while thinking about the world around them. Teachers and administrators work cooperatively to design curricula and hold each other accountable for meeting requirements as a part of the Internationals network and Consortium criteria. During interviews, both teachers and administrators referred to the weekly professional development collaborations, which help, establish a culture of reflection and professionalism. On the NYC School Survey, 100 percent of teachers say that teachers at the school work closely with families to meet students’ needs.

- Staff members provide clear lines of verbal and written communication to families regarding graduation and college and career expectations. Parents shared that ongoing communication allows them to know the expectations for quality student work, the demands of the Common Core Learning Standards, and student performance on standardized assessments. Parents are partners with the school. They participate and host workshops, spearheading many activities that support each other in understanding what is required of their children in a post-secondary environment. On the NYC School Survey, 96% of families say that school staff works hard to build trusting relationships with all families.

- Expectations are communicated verbally, in written form, and through a web-based portal. There is a well-maintained school website and online collaboration tools where expectations are consistently communicated including a system of supports. All staff members are part of creating the instructional expectations comprehensive document. There is a culture of mutual accountability where stakeholders hold each other accountable but support each other to achieve expectations. There are regular intervisitations, professional learning sessions, teamwork, and learning walkthroughs. As a result, there are well-coordinated efforts to ensure teachers are held accountable, but are also provided support through professional learning and additional resources to help them meet those expectations.
**Findings**

The vast majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based department and grade level, professional collaborations that promote the Common Core Learning Standards. Teachers have key leadership roles that focus on improved student learning and pedagogy through systematic analysis of the syllabi, instruction, assessment data, and student work.

**Impact**

Inquiry work has strengthened teacher collaborations resulting in school-wide instructional coherence, effective teacher leadership, and improvement in teacher pedagogy.

**Supporting Evidence**

- All department, instructional, advisory and co-planning teams are involved in inquiry-based collaborations. Teachers meet in their respective teams to work on their practice, analyze student work, and discuss specific instructional strategies to ensure collaborations improve their practice and progress toward student goals. Teachers stated that because of regular meetings they have seen growth in aligning curricula and instruction with the State and Common Core Learning Standards as well as in the CRSE. Teachers share strategies they use to encourage language development, which supports student engagement.

- During both teacher team meetings teachers referred to the strong voice they have in making school-wide decisions. Teachers explained that they meet weekly to discuss school-wide and/or team goals to ensure coherence and consistency. The department teams collaborate to write syllabi and unit plans that ensure literacy activities are consistently embedded in content courses across classes. The cluster teams examine student work to identify characteristics or trends of an individual or group to determine where support is needed. As well as reviewing behavior, teams meet to engage in analyzing lesson plans, student work, and debrief inter-visitations of their colleagues’ classes. They discuss findings and prepare feedback for the teachers they visited. Teachers agreed these visits are helpful in improving their own practice. Teachers shared that they are trying to infuse increased experiential learning to ensure students have access and authentic learning opportunities. On the NYC School Survey, 95 percent of teachers indicated they design instructional programs, lessons and units together.

- The administration supports initiatives led by teachers. Department chairs and grade level leaders collaborate across grades to make key decisions regarding curriculum, instructional strategies, and professional development of their colleagues. Teachers participate in all aspects of leadership including the Coordinating Council, Discipline, Portfolios, Student Activities, and International Network for Public School. Teachers state that the principal trusts and empowers them to make decisions. For example as an International school, teachers emphasize honoring all students’ cultures. On annual culture day student engage in a banquet, artifact display and student native talent show. Teachers feel supported by the leadership to be creative. They appreciate the opportunities to be able to explore topics within their subject and grade level assignments. The distributive leadership has engendered a culture of trust and mutual accountability for the entire school community. On the NYC School Survey, 95 percent of teachers responded positively to questions about Collaborative Teachers and 100 percent of teachers say that they had opportunities to work productively with colleagues at their school on professional development.