

**The Eagle Academy For Young Men**

**The Eagle Academy For Young Men  
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NY 10451**

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# **The Eagle Academy For Young Men**

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# **The Eagle Academy For Young Men**

## **Part 1: The School Context**

### **Information about the school**

The Eagle Academy for Young Men is the first all-boys public School established in New York in 30 years. Designed for students in grades 9 to 12, it is in its second year of operation and currently has 179 students enrolled in grades 9 and 10. The stated objective of the academy is to prepare students to be citizens of integrity who will become lifelong leaders through team-building and servicing the community.

The Academy is sponsored by 'One Hundred Black Men', a community-based organization of professionals with a four decade record of mentoring, civic involvement and leadership in public education.

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## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal has created an exciting, inspirational vision for the success of the school. The school's instructional coach contributes effectively, with creativity and innovation to the implementation of the vision.
- Students understand and commit to the vision and key principles of the school.
- Many students are making good progress, as demonstrated by their Regents results.
- A strong and effective emphasis is placed on the development of the whole student. Academic progress is well balanced with opportunities for social, cultural and leadership development.
- Much of the teaching is inspiring, creative and ensures effective learning.
- There is a strong commitment to improvement. The staff are reflective about current practice and invest considerable time and energy in the development of the school.
- Students appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school.
- Parents are actively and effectively involved in the wider life of the school.
- The mentor program is outstanding and contributes a unique richness to the aspirations of many students.

### What the school needs to improve

- Create a comprehensive development plan which identifies priorities for improvement, together with strategies, resources and timelines for implementation.
- Produce a comprehensive curriculum plan to include:
  - coverage of the full 4-year teaching program;
  - objectives for individual lessons which identify what students must know, understand and be able to do at each stage of their learning;
  - strategies for teaching and learning which are varied, imaginative and appropriate to achieve the agreed objectives, taking particular account of the learning styles and activities appropriate for boys.
- Implement staff development strategies to ensure consistent, high standards of teaching and learning across all subjects and grades.
- Agree, implement and evaluate consistent standards for student behavior and response, in all classes.
- Continue to develop systems for assessment of student performance, including evaluations which take account of internal and external comparisons.

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## Part 3: Main Findings

### Overall Evaluation

#### **This is a proficient school with many well developed features.**

The school has achieved a lot in a short time. After less than two years of development, a number of significant features of a successful school have been established. A reflective staff, under inspirational leadership, demonstrates a reflective commitment to improvement, identifying issues for action and working collaboratively towards implementation.

#### **How well the school meets New York City's evaluation criteria.**

**Quality Statement 1: School leaders and faculty consistently gather data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor and facilitate the student's progress over time.**

#### **This area of the school's work is proficient and developing well.**

The school has established effective procedures for the assessment of students' performance and has introduced sophisticated software for continuous recording of results. A review test is set for all students on entry to the school, providing a snapshot of individual performance. In addition, scores are received from feeder middle schools. However, this preliminary information is not used in any significant way to determine the needs of individual students.

Teachers use a variety of approaches to assessment, including quizzes and tests, homework assignments, and an overview of accumulated coursework. The software in use in the school presents an overall percentage mark and a grade for each class studied in each subject. A particular strength of the electronic system is that parents and students have access to their personal information through use of a password. The system is interactive, enabling teachers to identify missed assignments and to email comments to students and parents. The school reports that approximately 60% of parents make use of this electronic means of communication. Not all teachers make consistent use of these opportunities for regular communication with parents and the potential of the system is not currently fully exploited.

Recent grade 10 Regents results have been encouraging with a commendable pass rate amongst students entered for science and mathematics. The analysis of results has stimulated consideration of revisions to teacher schedules, and the possible introduction of an alternative course in mathematics. The school is aware that even these standardized scores do not provide sufficient information about exactly what are the strengths and weaknesses in students' knowledge and understanding. The staff are reflective about these issues and are using the outcomes of their assessments to monitor individual student progress effectively.

The electronic recording of information allows for the comparison of student performance across a range of subjects. Teachers make these comparisons informally, resulting in

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conversations about appropriate strategies to develop consistent performance for individuals. However, there are no structures in place to hold teachers accountable for subject comparisons and the process is not undertaken systematically.

The recording and evaluation of assessment data is at an early stage of development in the school. There is currently insufficient information available to support meaningful analysis of trends over time or comparisons with similar schools. The school is aware of the potential for detailed analysis and committed to the further development of its procedures.

**Quality Statement 2: School leaders and faculty consistently use available data to understand each student's next learning step. Through collaborative planning and student and parent engagement, they set high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating each student's learning.**

**This area of the school's work is proficient and developing well.**

The school is clear in its determination to achieve success for all students in external assessments. Goals have been set and the school recognizes the need to improve performance for many of its students to achieve these. Ambitious targets have been set for pass rates in Regents. While there is evidence of significant gains in some subject areas much remains to be done. However, the school is using test scores and information from internal assessments to drive plans for future development.

Information from a variety of assessments is increasingly being used to support teachers' awareness of next learning steps for individual students. The school has identified the need for a basic skills program, possibly accredited, to enhance students' literacy skills and the ability to access more complex information. Teachers have opportunities to plan together and in some cases this is leading to an awareness of the need for continuity and progression in learning between the different grade levels. As a result of a desire to ensure greater continuity, plans are under consideration for teachers to teach their subjects across grade levels in the next school year. It is recognized that this will support the creation of teaching teams and greater collaboration in planning and assessment.

The school has taken action to respond to the results of the various assessments used. Weaknesses in a recent science course pass rate, for example, have led to the targeting of 'borderline fails' and the production of a remediation package to support future success. Goals have been agreed for student attendance. Strategies are in place to follow up promptly on student absences and as a result attendance goals are currently being met.

There is a keen awareness of aspects of learning which require improvement. Deficiencies in writing are particularly apparent and the school has responded by placing an emphasis on the development of writing in all aspects of the curriculum. It is also recognized that students on entry to the school are deficient in their knowledge and understanding of science. Whilst these issues have been identified, whole-school plans have yet to be developed to tackle them comprehensively.

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**Quality Statement 3: The school aligns its instructional activity and resources around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.**

**This area of the school's work is proficient.**

The school has a strong commitment to accelerating learning for all students. The curriculum is at an early stage of development. The leadership of the school has high expectations of what can be achieved and places an appropriate emphasis on the improvement of test scores. It is recognized that the curriculum needs to develop in a coherent, planned way to meet these expectations.

The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory with a number of good features. However, there are also some unsatisfactory lessons being taught. In the best classroom practice, objectives are shared with students; they know what is expected of them and what they should know and understand by the end of the lesson. The quality of questioning by teachers is good in these lessons, with a variety of open-ended questions which encourage students to develop their answers and justify their assumptions. Appropriate 'scaffolding' is used to help students structure their written work to achieve a comprehensive and detailed account of the task in hand. In the best lessons there is a strong visual component which provides a focus of attention and meets the needs of varied learning styles. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, consistent standards of behavior and attention have not been achieved and students have not adopted a culture of learning.

The school's instructional coach has a good vision for what constitutes effective learning and of the strategies required to develop consistency. Plans are in hand, although not formally documented, to re-structure teachers' schedules and focus on collaborative approaches to the development of the curriculum. There is a need to develop a curriculum plan which sets out the coverage of the full 4-year teaching program. Attention is required to objectives for individual lessons which identify what students must know, understand and be able to do at each stage of their learning.

The school is aware of the need to develop greater consistency in the quality of teaching and learning. Much could be learned by sharing the best practice in the school with a focus on strategies which are varied, imaginative and appropriate to achieve the agreed objectives, taking particular account of the learning styles and activities appropriate for boys. Additional tutoring has been introduced to support special education students with their particular learning needs identified from a variety of assessment data. Budgeting decisions need to be systematically aligned with the school's priorities for the improvement of the curriculum and the quality of teaching.

The principal undertakes a program of formal lesson observation. The instructional coach has had less opportunity to evaluate the work of individual teachers and to provide feedback and coaching. This features strongly in intentions for the next year as the staff numbers increase.

The school's ambitious target for student attendance has been met. However, it is recognized that there is scope for further strategies to follow up absences promptly. This is a target within the arrangements for the recruitment of additional staff.

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Each student is allocated a mentor. The school's strong relationship with 'One Hundred Black Men' ensures that appropriate mentors are available to be matched with the particular needs and interests of individual students. Students report warmly on the positive value of the mentor arrangements. The expectations and aspirations of many students have been raised as a result of the motivation created through the mentor relationship. This is an outstanding feature of the school's practice and one which has the potential to contribute significantly to the academic and social progress of the student community.

**Quality Statement 4: The development of instructional leadership, staff, and capacity are aligned around the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.**

**This area of the school's work is proficient with some features developing well.**

The leadership of the school is building a clear picture of the strengths and areas for development within the curriculum. There are clear plans to appoint new staff to teaching and administrative roles in the light of the school's emerging priorities. One priority for teaching appointments has been identified as a commitment to subject curriculum development, together with an understanding of appropriate strategies for teaching and learning within an all boys school. The instructional coach has a good understanding of how many of these matters should be approached and the capacity to contribute effectively to staff development.

Attention has been given to sharing teachers' views about students' work. Opportunities have been provided for group calibration of expectations. The intention to enable teachers to teach across adjacent grades will strengthen collaboration and the potential for enhanced team work. It is intended that each teacher should have the opportunity to attend a conference annually; the current focus being on 'how boys learn'.

The leadership has responded promptly to systems which are not working well. Mid-year adjustments, for example the reduction of class sizes with the introduction of a split day, have been implemented in response to identified needs. Some teachers share classrooms and benefit from peer observation of teaching and discussion of issues identified. Teachers acknowledge that they have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in performance of individual students. They recognize too, the need to develop a greater range of techniques and strategies to raise students' performance and to create a whole-school culture of learning. There is a culture of collaboration amongst the staff and a determination to build on what has already been achieved.

There are many good ideas within the dialogue between staff. Plans for the future are discussed and shared openly. However, it is an appropriate time to now produce a comprehensive plan for the continued development of the school. Awareness of a wide range of priorities is at times overwhelming. What is required is a development plan which identifies key priorities, strategies to achieve these, measurable success criteria which will identify when objectives have been achieved, together with formal strategies for monitoring and evaluating success. Above all, it is essential to develop realistic timescales for new developments which will support the pacing of initiatives and avoid innovation overload. The school is a dynamic institution which benefits from shared reflection and the identification of good ideas. The existence of a comprehensive plan for

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school improvement need not inhibit flexibility and the opportunity to revise in response to systematic evaluation.

The principal is extremely effective in sharing the vision for the school, developing external networks and harnessing resources for improvement. The leadership has the capacity to drive this new school forward and to fulfill its mission. The school operates smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Procedures are understood by staff and students and generally implemented effectively.

**Quality Statement 5: The school has built-in structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year, recognizing weaknesses in its improvement plans and teaching practices, and flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerated learning.**

**This area of the school's work is proficient.**

The school has put in place, in a short time, a number of features which contribute effectively to informal, collaborative evaluation. Teachers are aware of targets for class and individual performance. There is a continuous open dialogue between the staff, identifying areas for improvement and suggesting strategies for implementation. Effective interventions have been introduced to adjust procedures and practice in the light of agreed needs. Information generated from assessments is used increasingly to identify learning needs for individual students.

The electronic recording system has the potential to permit comparisons of performance between subjects and between classes. Information about the performance of individual students across the full range of subjects studied should be used to identify strengths and weaknesses in performance. This in turn can inform discussion with individual students about their differences in performance and the factors which contribute to these. Similarly, aggregated data comparing the performance of groups of students in different subjects has the potential to identify strengths and areas for development in teaching and learning. The collaborative culture, which has been established within the staff, is an effective forum for the shared evaluation of assessment data in ways which will identify priorities for inclusion in the school's development plan.

Staff development would also benefit from further opportunities for involvement with the local network of schools. The comparison of teaching and learning strategies, shared scrutiny of students' work and evaluation of a variety of teaching resources will all enhance teachers' understanding of what is possible and what constitutes realistic expectations.

### **Other key observations**

Limited use is made of information technology as an aid to research, presentation and quality of finished work. There is huge potential in a structured approach to the use of computers to enhance learning for boys. Alternative learning styles, for example using internet research, recording work through PowerPoint presentations, using interactive whiteboards to enhance learning, providing access to laptop computers to aid literacy, all have the potential to increase motivation and to enhance accuracy of completed work. It is recognized that time is always a constraint to the implementation of a multitude of

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desired initiatives. However, the school must decide where its priorities lie and drive these forward with the energy and commitment, which already exists within the school.

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### Part 4: Evaluation Criteria Grade Summary

<b>Final Evaluation</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>+</b>
<b>Overall Quality of the school</b>		<b>X</b>	

<b>Quality Statement 1: School leaders and faculty consistently gather data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor and facilitate the student's progress over time.</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>+</b>
<p>1.1 The school uses available data (e.g., diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments, students work products, standards-based portfolios, attendance, descriptive review, security data, etc.) and generates its own to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of how well each student, classroom, grade level, and other important categories of students and the school are:</p> <p>(1) currently performing, and (2) progressing over time, on English Language Arts, mathematics, and other important academic subjects.</p> <p>Criteria for measuring student progress are "objective" when they are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• standards-based,</li> <li>• consistent across students,</li> <li>• capable of revealing progress or a lack of it over time and ways to close the gap between current and expected practice,</li> </ul> <p>and when they allow</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the performance of different students to be compared, and</li> <li>• learning activity to be broken down into component parts so strengths and weaknesses on each sub-activity may be identified.</li> </ul>		<b>X</b>	
1.2 The school makes effective use of the data to assess the performance and progress of students by racial and ethnic groups, English Language Learners and special education students, and all other categories of interest to the school.		<b>X</b>	
1.1 Performance and progress are measured based on comparisons with similar schools, with the school's own past performance, and among students, classrooms, grade levels, academic subject areas, racial and ethnic groups, and other groupings of interest within the school.		<b>X</b>	

<b>Quality Statement 2: School leaders and faculty consistently use available data to understand each student's next learning step. Through collaborative planning and student and parent engagement, they set high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating each student's learning.</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>+</b>
2.1 Using data, school leaders and faculty engage in a collaborative process to set demanding, objectively measurable, goals for immediate and long-range improvement, and it develops plans and timeframes for reaching those goals.			<b>X</b>
2.2 Goals and plans focus on the school as a whole and on each student, classroom, grade level, academic subject and group of students whose performance or progress has been identified by the school as warranting attention.		<b>X</b>	
2.3 Particular attention is given to improving the performance and progress of students in greatest need of improvement.			<b>X</b>
2.4 High expectations are conveyed to students and parents. Students and their parents/caregivers are regularly invited to provide information about each student's performance and how to improve. That information is central to setting reasonably challenging goals and developing, evaluating, and revising plans.		<b>X</b>	
2.5 Goals and plans for improving student performance and progress drive the activity of all members of the school community: leaders, staff, students, parents, and other partners		<b>X</b>	

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<b>Quality Statement 3: The school aligns its instructional activity and resources around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.</b>	0	✓	+
3.1 The school selects the curriculum based on how well it aligns with the school's high expectations and improvement plans and on the curriculum's capacity to generate meaningful interim data about progress towards goals.		X	
3.2 Decisions about the use of teacher and student time are based on the organization of the day and week needed to inform teachers about each student's performance and next learning steps, set goals and plans for improved student learning, and implement and continuously improve plans for reaching stated goals.			X
3.3 Staffing decisions are driven by the needs that emerge from examining student data and by the focused plan the school develops to improve student outcomes.			X
3.4 Budgeting decisions are driven by the needs that emerge from examining student data and by the focused plan the school develops to improve student outcomes.		X	
3.5 Teachers are accountable for student outcomes. The principal frequently observes classroom teaching and has a considered strategy for improving the quality of each teacher's instruction. Teachers frequently observe and support each other's classroom instruction with the goal of improving student outcomes.		X	
3.6 Staff know and respect students and respond to their academic needs as well as their personal needs that affect academic performance. Each student knows and trusts an adult on the staff who is concerned about him or her.			X
3.7 Student attendance and engagement are high priorities. High rates and patterns of absences trigger immediate intervention.			X
3.8 Instructional programs actively engage students.		X	
3.9 The school aligns youth development and support services around stated academic goals. Partnerships with outside bodies are routinely used to achieve academic goals.			X
<b>Quality Statement 4: The development of instructional leadership, staff, and capacity are aligned around the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.</b>	0	✓	+
4.1 Leaders, faculty, and staff are selected based on their high expectations for student performance and progress and based on their commitment and capacity to use data, compare outcomes within and across classrooms and schools and develop and revise plans and methods to improve performance and progress.		X	
4.2 Professional development is designed to help leaders, faculty, and staff use data, self- and peer-assessments, and collaboration with peers to achieve goals for improved school and student outcomes. Professional development and self- and peer- evaluation are aligned and overlap.			X
4.3 Leaders, faculty, and staff share the same goals and frequently evaluate themselves, their interventions and each other's plans and interventions, including, when possible, by comparing outcomes across classrooms and schools. The school monitors its performance and tackles weaknesses. Even in areas where the school is successful, leadership is not complacent, but aims to improve further. The goal in all cases is to improve student and school performance and progress.			X
4.4 Planning, evaluation of results and revision of plans takes place in teams.		X	
4.5 The principal is respected and has capacity to effect change.			X
4.6 The school runs smoothly. Procedures are clear and are generally followed.			X
<b>Quality Statement 5: The school has built-in structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year, recognizing weaknesses in its improvement plans and teaching practices, and flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerated learning.</b>	0	✓	+
5.1 All school plans and other interventions include frequent interim goals and diagnostic assessments of progress designed to reveal in objectively measurable ways whether the plan is reaching stated goals.		X	
5.2 Comparisons of student progress within and across classrooms and schools are used in making interim diagnostic assessments and measuring the progress of plans and interventions.	X		
5.3 Information generated by interim assessments and diagnostic measures of progress and comparisons is used to revise plans immediately in order to reach stated goals. Interim and final goals are modified when data objectively demonstrate that revision is required.		X	
5.4 Each plan's interim and final outcomes drive each successive phase of goal setting and improvement planning, and each successive phase is characterized by agile and flexible realignment of practices and resources to improve students' academic outcomes.		X	