

Quality Review Report 2009-2010

Pan American International High School

**High School X388
1300 Boynton Ave
Bronx
NY 10472**

Principal: Bridgit Bye

Dates of review: November 16-17, 2009

Lead Reviewer: Myrta Rivera

Part 1: The school context

Pan American International High School at Monroe is a high school with 214 students from grade 9 through grade 10. The school population comprises 100% Hispanic students. The student body includes 98% English language learners and no special education students. Boys account for 54% of the students enrolled and girls account for 46%. The average attendance rate for the 2008-2009 school year was 90.7%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is well developed.

Pan American International High School is a new school with grades 9 and 10 and is a member of the Citywide international high school network. School leaders have taken advantage of the experience of the other schools in creating a rigorous challenging curriculum for recently arrived Latino immigrants who are English language learners. The school shares space in the Monroe complex with four other small high schools. The school leaders provide a clear vision and direction for the school supported by data with a theory of action that supports the focus of the school. The time and effort afforded to professional conversations has contributed to the unique inclusive culture of the school that reinforces the use of first names by students, teachers and administrators.

The school offers a strong projects-based academic program that meets the needs of the students. The curriculum focuses on language and literacy development and the teaching of concepts in students' native language, resulting in all students accumulating 10 credits toward graduation during its first year of operation. Organizational decisions support the implementation of the curriculum and time for teacher teams to meet and plan for interdisciplinary lessons and share differentiated instructional strategies that support student learning. All classes utilize various methods to differentiate instruction including flexible grouping, a variety of materials and use of students' learning styles. However, differentiated practice is not sufficiently embedded in classroom instruction to provide students with language support and vocabulary development. Interdisciplinary teams plan for a cohesive and coherent instructional program to help students make learning connections. All teachers effectively use assessment tools to monitor student progress daily. Portfolio presentations provide students the opportunity to present their work orally and in writing in English so they can share their collaborative knowledge from all classes. However, they do not yet fully reflect on their work to provide them with clear next steps for learning. Effective organizational decisions provide students with academic interventions that support their goal of graduation.

Administrators have united the staff in the use of teams who use the inquiry approach to focus on a set group of students by looking at their data regularly and adjusting instructional practice. Teacher teams meet regularly to examine student work and the performance of students at various levels of language and literacy proficiency. Teachers conduct student conferences on a regular basis to set student goals and monitor progress and are accountable to this group of students. However, the school's system for monitoring school-wide progress toward interim goals and making adjustments during the year is not yet strategically aligned and transparent. Since school leaders do not have a formal system for monitoring students' progress towards clear benchmarks and overseeing teachers' development of interim goals, adjustments do not always maximize impact on student achievement. Teacher teams are actively involved in aligning the curriculum to meet the needs of the students and the school uses the coordinating council structure to monitor the quality of instruction and curriculum so adjustments are made during the year. Professional development is highly valued and teachers collaborate with colleagues in the school and outside in the network. Teachers offer

non-threatening support to their colleagues through peer observations and time is designated during the week for professional development and curriculum development activities to support quality instructional practices. Teachers share a common instructional focus and vocabulary, especially as they explain their following of “bellwether” students in their inquiry work.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- School leaders make strategic organizational decisions that support the learning needs of students and align curriculum and instruction so that students can accelerate their learning.
 - Well thought-out organizational decisions support the long-range goal that all students will graduate with a diploma and learn English. The school supports the needs of English language learners by extending the school day, offering yearlong courses, and using interdisciplinary teams to prepare students for academic success.
 - The school’s schedule efficiently provides four hours weekly for common planning time by department and interdisciplinary teams and two hours for professional development. This allows teachers to have ample time to develop curriculum, share feedback on differentiated strategies that improve teaching practice, and focus on students’ language and literacy work in the classroom so that all students succeed.
- School leaders and teacher teams use data effectively to track student progress, adjust instruction, and design classroom-level assessments to maximize student learning.
 - Teacher teams select targeted students at three different academic levels, called “bellwether” students, to focus their inquiry work and adjust their instructional strategies. During inquiry work, teachers use a common rubric to guide a focused discussion around 16 selected students, highlighting student work and achievement data, and then develop goals to ensure that students make good academic progress.
 - Teachers create well-varied classroom assessments that they use immediately after each lesson to successfully gauge student learning and monitor progress. This practice, which provides teachers with immediate feedback on the effectiveness of their lessons, allows them to effectively differentiate instruction to meet students’ needs.
- School leaders articulate a clear vision supported by a data-driven needs assessment that supports accelerated student outcomes.
 - The vision for the school supports a clearly defined theory of action that, by capitalizing on the students’ native language skills, they will be able to transfer the ability into learning English. Therefore, the school implements a State aligned Spanish course that supports students in learning language skills that they can use to seamlessly transfer to learning English.

- The school's Comprehensive Educational plan reflects the good use of students' scores on the New York State English as a second language exam to set suitable goals for students to learn English. Based on students' high marks in reading and writing, the school made the sound decision to set rigorous goals for students regarding English reading and writing skills.
- Teachers engage in effective collaborative teams using the inquiry approach to improve learning outcomes for all students.
 - All teachers are members of interdisciplinary teams and are involved in collaborative inquiry where they discuss targeted students. Each team's goal is to learn from the review of the work of these selected students and apply the findings to all students. Teachers focus on the strengths and areas of need of each student and develop strategies to incorporate language development in all areas.
 - Interdisciplinary teams share student work samples from every subject in order to analyze the level of English proficiency and knowledge of the content. Teachers then develop strategies to support students writing in English. This enables students to make rapid progress towards mastering English.
- Administrators and faculty align professional development with the school goals and needs of the students so that it supports a cohesive and coherent instructional program that supports high academic achievement.
 - Weekly professional meetings enable staff to collaboratively a common instructional focus that has resulted in a commitment to the unique school culture. The use of first names by all faculty, students, parents and school leaders supports the collaborative structure that maximizes student learning.
 - School leaders and faculty use the observation of classroom teaching as a tool to improve instruction. Time built into the school day allows teachers to offer colleagues non-threatening support through peer observations and written feedback which is then shared with their colleagues. Teachers report that they welcome this feedback and have implemented suggestions made by their peers. New teachers receive support from their colleagues, two coaches within the international network, and visits to other international schools.
- School leaders have structures in place to evaluate regularly the quality of curriculum and instruction to build alignment and coherence to optimize student learning.
 - The coordinating council meets weekly to evaluate the curriculum and instructional program. A change in the grading rubric for portfolio presentation was made after students received highly proficient scores while presenting in Spanish. Presentations now need to be in English for a high proficiency score.
 - The use of resources is monitored carefully to ensure that the needs of students are met. After-school classes provide basic skill development for students who are not literate in their native language. Due to the success of this program and the growing number of new students,

additional classes have been added to ensure all students have access to this support.

- The school designs an engaging, rigorous, and coherent curriculum including the arts for English language learners and aligns it to State standards so students can reach high academic performance.
 - The school has replicated a strong instructional model drawing on support from the international network to which they belong. As all students are English language learners, with Spanish as their first language, the curriculum is modified to accelerate English proficiency while teaching content towards accumulation of Regents credits. The instructional program aligns State standards across grades and subjects and provides many language supports with a focus on literacy and language development, with all content teachers also teaching language.
 - School leaders provide classes to ensure all students, including the highest- and lowest-performing students, are challenged. Academic interventions and enrichment classes called electives engage all students in courses that will lead to graduation.

What the school needs to improve

- Deepen differentiated instruction to include additional language supports to accelerate vocabulary development for all learners.
 - All classes use differentiated instructional strategies, including various groupings and activities, in order to modify instruction that helps students with diverse needs and learning styles. However, not all classes provide students with sufficient language supports to understand assignments and activities so that they can make the transition to English while understanding the concepts in their own language to accelerate student achievement.
 - Some students use dictionaries to assist them with understanding group assignments in English language classes. However, there is not sufficient support for learning new vocabulary to allow for higher levels of student work products.
- Ensure that teachers develop reflective practice where students assess their own progress so that they take ownership of their learning.
 - A diverse panel engages students in portfolio presentations to explain what they have learned and make connections across content areas. Students are able to use a rubric to explain their best work, but are not able to explain next learning steps so that they have ownership of their learning.
- Develop a system for administrators to monitor progress towards interim goals that includes clear benchmarks and make adjustments during the year to improve the delivery of instruction.
 - The school sets interim goals for their students and teachers monitor student progress weekly. However, school leaders do not have a clear

system for monitoring student progress and teachers' development of interim goals. As a result, adjustments do not always maximize long-range impact.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2009-2010

School name: Pan American International High School	Δ	▶	✓	+
Overall QR Score				X
Quality Statement 1 – Instructional and Organizational Coherence: The school has a coherent strategy to support student learning that aligns curriculum, instruction and organizational decisions.				
<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</i>	Δ	▶	✓	+
1.1 Design engaging, rigorous and coherent curricula, including the Arts, for a variety of learners and aligned to key State standards?				X
1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best, and ensure that it is: aligned to the curriculum, engaging, and differentiated to enable all students to produce meaningful work products?			X	
1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet student learning needs?				X
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?				X
Overall score for Quality Statement 1				X
Quality Statement 2 – Gather and Analyze Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, analyze and share information on student learning outcomes to understand school and student progress over time.				
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	Δ	▶	✓	+
2.1 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the school level?				X
2.2 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the team and classroom level?				X
2.3 Use or develop tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize and analyze student performance trends?				X
2.4 Engage in an open exchange of information with students and families regarding students' learning needs and outcomes?			X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 2				X

Quality Statement 3 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently engage the school community and use data to set and track suitably high goals for accelerating student learning.							
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	△	➤	✓	+			
3.1 Establish a coherent vision of future development that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are understood and supported by the entire school community?				X			
3.2 Use collaborative and data informed processes to set measurable and differentiated learning goals for student subgroups, and students in need of additional support?				X			
3.3 Ensure the achievement of learning goals by tracking progress at the school, teacher team and classroom level?				X			
3.4 Communicate high expectations to students and families, engage them in decision-making, and promote active involvement in the school community?			X				
Overall score for Quality Statement 3				X			
Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school’s goals and student learning and emotional needs.							
<i>To what extent does the school..</i>	△	➤	✓	+			
4.1 Use the observation of classroom teaching and the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection, with a special focus on new teachers?				X			
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning?				X			
4.3 Provide professional development that promotes independent and shared reflection, opportunities for leadership growth, and enables teachers to continuously evaluate and revise their classroom practices to improve learning outcomes?				X			
4.4 Integrate child/youth development, support services and partnerships with families and outside organizations with the school-wide goals to accelerate the academic and personal growth of students?				X			
Overall score for Quality Statement 4				X			
Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for monitoring and evaluating progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.							
<i>To what extent does the school..</i>	△	➤	✓	+			
5.1 Evaluate the quality of curricular, instructional and organizational decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school?				X			
5.2 Evaluate systems for assessing students, organizing data, and sharing information with student and families, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school?			X				
5.3 Establish and sustain a transparent, collaborative system for measuring progress towards interim and long term goals and making adjustments during the year and over time?			X				
5.4 Use data to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of structured professional collaboration, capacity building and leadership development strategies?			X				
Overall score for Quality Statement 5				X			
Quality Review Scoring Key							
△	Underdeveloped	➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features	✓	Proficient	+	Well Developed