

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

Emma Lazarus HS for English Language Scholars

High School 394

**100 Hester Street
Manhattan
NY 10002**

Principal: Melody Kellogg

Review Dates: February 13 - 14, 2012

Lead Reviewer: Jill Herman

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Emma Lazarus English Language Scholars is a high school with 252 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 6% Black, 31% Hispanic, 3% White, and 60% Asian students. The student body includes 87% English language learners and 0% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 93.7%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school culture and strong sense of community provides an environment that is safe, respectful of different cultures, and supports students academically and emotionally, impacting their desire to be successful. (1.4)
 - Students, families, and teachers, all report a safe learning environment as evidenced in the Learning Environment Survey that reflects a high score on safety. Attendance for students who are over-aged is close to 94% and teacher absence is very low. Students report that teachers are supportive and accessible. The New York State assessment for English language learners shows significant gains in English competency skills from year to year. The ways in which students and adults relate in classrooms provides evidence of a trusting, respectful relationship that promotes student risk-taking in their learning and therefore greatly impacts their achievement.
 - Students who are engaged in their learning as evidenced during classroom visits, talk about their own expectations of attending college, how the school has supported them as newly arrived students from a foreign country, and the help they receive to meet academic requirements and acculturate so that they can achieve academically and socially.
- The school integrates a variety of support services with school-wide goals that strengthen and accelerate students' academic and personal growth. (4.4)
 - A strong external partner, involved guidance counselors, professional development and on-going support from English language learner coaches, provide strong support by focusing on both academic and social emotional success of individuals and groups of students, meeting the academic and social needs of recently arrived immigrant students. This wraparound service strengthens the school's ability to address the needs of its community.
 - An external partner provides advisors and an advisory system for students during which time they focus on acclimatizing, using time well, and college readiness skills. In addition, advisors attend classes with newly arrived students and provide internships for the entire student body. They serve as college counselors and students report they have visited around fifteen colleges, public, private, and community. Students also state that classes on American culture as well as culture of other ethnic groups in their school community have greatly facilitated their understanding and comfort in a new environment. In addition, advisors provide parent outreach and meet individually with students, families, and teachers, providing services informed by academic and social needs, targeted to support adjustment and accelerate students' achievement.
- Curriculum is aligned to State standards and incorporates Common Core standards to promote college readiness for all students. (1.1)

- All content courses integrate and strengthen English as second language goals, both orally and in written form. Additionally, school developed benchmarks for English language are paired and aligned to English language arts classes, emphasizing key cognitive standards that enable students to achieve literacy proficiency as well as meet graduation requirements.
- Guided by English language benchmarks and other student data, academic tasks, such as writing assignments, are adjusted in order to meet the varying needs of students so that they achieve at high levels as evidenced by 100% pass rate on the English language arts Regents exam this January.
- Across classrooms, teachers demonstrate a set of beliefs about teaching and learning that is aligned to curriculum and focused on student engagement. (1.2)
 - Teachers articulate and demonstrate in classrooms that scaffolding English language skills, coupled with content, through modeling and opportunity to practice, is instrumental to students' success. Classrooms are student-centered, with students working in small groups or individually, providing activities that varied, ranging from different level texts, use of Google-docs, to performing skits about proteins regardless of entry point, often culminating in an essay of varying lengths or a poster in which all students demonstrate their learning.
 - Clear routines that focus on language acquisition provide students with a variety of ways to engage with materials through oral responses, sort and sequence written events, or written responses to photographs. Group work and support of each other's learning through intentional conversations and sharing language and content skills further promotes students being actively involved in learning and is evidenced by high participation rates.
- Organizational decisions are purposeful and intentional in ways that support the school's goals of improving achievement for all students. (1.3)
 - Use of technology such as smart boards, computer assisted literacy programs, Google-docs, and an on-line dictionary for English as second language students, are used daily, providing students with multiple entry points. Each student has his/her own personal laptop. Internal and external coaches, and targeted reading programs for students are in place to support the needs of students, resulting in high levels of student achievement as evidenced in their rapid gains in English proficiency.
 - Staff meet on a regular basis to strategize how to improve student achievement. In some cases, English as a second language teachers push into classrooms to support both students and teacher. Students are scheduled by teachers for tutoring in their areas of need during the day and at lunch. Using students' work, such as math tests and essays, additional classes are created. This year a double math class was added to the schedule to provide support for students who had demonstrated gaps in content knowledge. Tutoring, which rotates every six weeks, is

geared to both struggling and higher achieving students ensuring students are engaged in challenging and appropriate tasks.

- Professional development provides and supports a clear set of expectations designed to improve instructional practices in ways that will raise levels of student achievement. (4.1)
 - Teachers are observed frequently by administration and coaches, who provide feedback and next steps. In addition, peer intervisitations, twice a month, and their subsequent meetings, allow teachers to provide each other with feedback, both written and oral, and valued suggestions. New teachers have mentors who are present in their classes and acclimatize them to the school culture, which strongly supports their development. All content teachers are paired with English as second language teachers for planning and/or co-teaching in order to elevate school-wide practices.
 - Observations are guided by a research-based common framework, aligned to school expectations. Teacher's set personal goals promoting self- reflection and clear expectations around needs for individual growth.

What the school needs to improve

- Strengthen development of student evaluations so that they are clearly linked to school's standards in both content and skills, and inform curricular and instructional decisions. (2.2)
 - Individual teachers have created various ways to evaluate student work. The English as a second language classes all use the same rubric and have clear benchmarks. All teachers use the same presentation rubric. Content area teachers develop and use a variety of rubrics, but they are not clearly aligned to school's adaptation of Common Core Standards, such as development of thesis statement, making connections, and other indicators of using the inquiry approach, so that teachers do not have feedback on effectiveness of their practice towards achieving goals. Some curriculum maps indicate how students will demonstrate understanding but not what and to what level, making students' attainment of mastery difficult to assess.
 - Currently students use personal competency rubrics related to self-management, planning, responsibility, and cooperation. Interviewed students stated that they use rubrics to evaluate their work. However, none of their presented written work had an attached rubric, leaving students with a gap in being able to articulate their strengths, weaknesses, and the specific areas in which they need to improve.
- Further strengthen school's goals by linking them to measurable student outcomes in order to better assess instructional practices. (3.1)
 - Inherent in the goals, such as developing curriculum maps aligned to Core Standards and deepening project based work to foster higher order thinking, are inputs intended to improve student outcomes. However, they are not attached to student outcomes that can be observed and measured, therefore limiting school's ability to assess and adjust their

changes and decide whether they have had an appreciable impact and accelerated student learning.

- Although the school examines a wide range of data, the school community is not sufficiently advised about specific expectations, to clearly surface relationships between what students can do, and what teachers are doing, and tie student outcomes to practices, thus limiting strengthening of existing practices.
- Enhance inquiry work by deepening questioning and analysis that will drive improved teacher practices and student performance. (4.2)
 - Teacher teams examine data and share strategies with each other. They identify what students need extra help and tutoring. However, analyzing teacher work in a more focused, systemic way is not yet an embedded practice, thus missing out on surfacing opportunities for improving classroom practice.
 - All teachers are engaged in structured collaboration on teams. The data team's goal is to improve Regents' scores. However, it did not demonstrate a systemic and iterative process to identify student needs, develop, and implement strategies related to specific classroom practices, and then analyze the impact of those strategies on student performance. Consequently, limiting opportunities to strengthen and refine delivery of instruction furthering the coherence across classrooms.
- Improve systems for measuring progress towards interim- and long-term goals using student outcomes to assess impact and make adjustments. (5.3)
 - While there is monitoring of progress towards goals, it is focused on what teachers are writing or doing, and not based on student outcomes. Thus, it is difficult to identify areas to revise to improve delivery of instruction.
 - The school does not yet have a transparent system to measure student outcome goals therefore making it difficult to identify where improvements in plans are needed. This year a reading room was put in place to improve Scholastic Aptitude Test scores, but there are no clear indicators/benchmarks such as vocabulary or fluency development checks to serve as a measurement to determine if this allocation of resources is a worthwhile strategy towards improving student work. This lack of interim measurement of progress towards goals prevents suitable identification of areas of need, or revising or implementing new strategies.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: Emma Lazarus HS for English Language Scholars	UD	D	P	WD
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>	UD	D	P	WD
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 as evidenced by meaningful student work products?			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
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>	UD	D	P	WD
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 Align assessments to curriculum, use on-going assessment practices and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom level?			X	
2.3 Use grading policies and tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize, aggregate, and analyze student performance trends to inform instruction and curriculum?			X	
2.4 Engage families in school decision-making, activities and an open exchange of information regarding students progress toward school and class expectations?			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>	UD	D	P	WD
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 staff, students and families, and support students and families to achieve them?			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>	UD	D	P	WD			
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, guidance/advisement support services and partnerships with families and outside organizations with the school-wide goals to accelerate the academic and personal growth of students?				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>	UD	D	P	WD			
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, with particular attention to the CCLS?			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				
Quality Review Scoring Key							
UD	Underdeveloped	D	Developing	P	Proficient	WD	Well Developed