

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

**Pan American International High School
High School Q296**

**45-10 94TH STREET
QUEENS
NY 11373**

Principal: MARCELLA BARROS

**Dates of review: May 1-2, 2012
Lead Reviewer: Beverly Ffolkes-Bryant, Ed.D.**

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Pan American International High School is a High school with 346 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 96% Hispanic and 4% other students. The student body includes 80% English language learners and 1% special education students. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 91.6%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal makes informed and effective organizational decisions across all aspects of the school to support improvements in learning. (1.3)
 - After analyzing the 2011 Learning Environment Survey, where teachers did not feel that the school offered a wide enough variety of courses to keep students engaged, the school created an elective course process through a School Based Option (SBO) vote which is embedded during the school day. Teachers pick courses they want to teach with a small group of students and then students choose from a menu. These courses range from enrichment courses (such as Biology through the Arts) to college readiness courses (such as Creative Writing and Web programming). School leaders therefore created optimum conditions in which teachers can provide students with a range of course options that challenge them at different levels.
 - As a result of the 2011 Progress Report, which showed that none of the students in the lowest third cohort graduated, the principal assigned each instructional teacher team with a list of their lowest third cohort students in order to focus teacher work on providing ongoing remediation and intervention strategies. Teacher Teams monitored student progress by analyzing Regents questions, formative assessment performance, portfolio based assessments, scholarship reports and grades. Teacher teams then developed and implemented instructional and curricular interventions and continued to assess student performance to refine those interventions allowing for teams of teachers to recognize trends in student performance and understand the areas of need in the school.
- Relationships across the school are warm, and inclusive of students, teachers and parents who feel valued and take pride in the school community. (1.4)
 - In response to teacher concern that order and discipline are not maintained at the school, the principal and a behavioral intervention team created a digital behavioral intervention log. The log allows teachers to enter descriptions of disruptive student behavior as well as the intervention strategies implemented using the Response to Intervention (RTI) levels. The digital log was created in order to keep an ongoing documentation and communication of incidents, interventions and follow-ups throughout the school community. This log allows teacher teams to use the reports to discuss individual students and plan further interventions such as parent conferences, conflict resolution assignment, and guidance referrals resulting in a 73% decline in principal and superintendent suspensions as compared to last year.
 - Students remarked on how much they love the school. They mentioned how comfortable they are in going to a teacher anytime during the day to help them with a personal problem or if they do not understand something in class. Students value the opportunities to express themselves and develop their English language speaking skills. Students feel that the teachers in the school really try to get to know them better and are consistently encouraging habits that support their efforts to stay on track for academic success.

- The administration and teachers use a wide range of assessment data to monitor school level needs and student progress, informing instruction and the creation of intervention strategies when needed. (2.1)
 - The administrative team uses their bi-weekly meetings to analyze key data for the school based on a uniform meeting calendar. For example, during the fall semester, the team analyzed attendance data, progress report preparation, targeted failing students as well as a range of other information. Consequently, this organized system advances precise academic and social-emotional provisions that address whole-school and individual challenges.
 - The principal has created her own teacher data report which contains the professional record, classroom environment, extracurricular contribution and student performance of each teacher's particular subject area and class. It is analyzed by the administration and used for teacher conferences where it serves as a basis for teacher self-reflection and a foundation for action/professional development plan development. This tool helps identify staff strengths and deficiencies which help administrators make decisions regarding professional development and individual areas of growth teachers need in order to better meet the needs of students.
- The school has established effective systems for monitoring teaching practice with a clear focus on improving instructional practices in order to enhance professional growth. (4.1)
 - The administration does informal and formal observations based on the International Network Classroom Rubrics and individual teacher's instructional goals for the year, which are written in September. Through these observations and feedback from administration and coaches, teachers are asked to reflect on their progress towards their goal, conduct peer intervisitations and connect their professional development activities to this work. This process of assessment allows for a differentiated approach in supporting teachers at various levels, thereby creating targeted pedagogical support for better student performance.
- Teachers benefit from participating in professional collaborations that foster reflection and lead to the exploration of effective instructional techniques. (4.2)
 - All of the teachers at the Pan American International High School are involved in two teams, the content area team, which is based on subject areas throughout the four grades, and the interdisciplinary team, which is made up of teachers from various subject areas that share a cohort of students in a particular grade level. Each team meets bi-weekly, following an agenda created in conjunction with the administrative team. Having these two teams is building coherence across the grades throughout the school and supports a reflective and collaborative community that focuses on improved student learning.
 - The administrative team is the main data team of the school, made up of the principal, assistant principal, and the teacher leaders of both the interdisciplinary and content area teams. School leaders provide team leaders with analyses from scholarship reports, credit accumulation, attendance data, Regents line item results, formative assessments, lowest third assessment results, NYSESLAT scores, progress towards graduation and the correlation among several of these data points. The administration then coaches the team leaders to interpret the data and make inferences and also provide them with a data-based intervention protocol developed by the leadership team to use when sharing the data. Team leaders share the action plans with the administration and other team leaders who then provide feedback and recommendations. This process builds

distributive leadership among teachers and create optimum opportunities conducive to both teacher and student success.

What the school needs to improve

- Align the schools curriculum to key standards in order to produce tasks that support student's cognitive development. (1.1)
 - The school is part of the Common Core Learning Site pilot and is currently producing a literacy bundle through the lens of English language learner students. The faculty is starting to see how they can align test complexity and align it to the tasks. While curricula is worked on throughout the school, units are not yet fully aligned vertically and horizontally with engaging tasks that challenge students' thinking thereby hindering academic growth.
 - Even though the school portfolio assessment is tiered in three layers according to student ability, this differentiation of assignments is not evident in other types of work given to students. As a result, the individual learning needs of students are not consistently targeted and higher achievers are not sufficiently challenged.
- Deepen differentiation of instruction so that all lessons engage students and offer suitable challenge at their level, including effective questioning that illicit higher order thinking and extends learning. (1.2)
 - According to the principal's School Self Evaluation Form (SSEF), classroom practices should include scaffolded handouts that provide students with text, instructions and guide students through the steps of an activity or project. The principal expects differentiated lessons, accessible content, interdisciplinary connections and infusion of language development teaching techniques throughout all classes. However, most classroom instruction observed provided one activity for all students regardless of their performance level or learning style. While students often work in groups, strategic supports for the individual learning needs of students are not consistently provided limiting cognitive engagement.
 - One of the principal's instructional goals for this school year was for teachers to incorporate various level 3 and 4 questions into lessons by utilizing the Depth of Knowledge rubric developed by Norman Webb. However, teachers primarily asked students lower level recall questions in the science and math classrooms observed limiting mastery of skills and content across the school.
- Strengthen assessment systems and checks for understanding to allow individual teachers and teacher teams to effectively adjust instruction to meet the identified learning needs of students across the school. (2.2)
 - Rubrics are used for the New York Performance Standards Consortium Performance Assessment for students' portfolio presentations in each of the core curriculum areas which assess student's mastery in key performance indicators. However, classroom teacher assessment rubrics vary from teacher-to-teacher and are not aligned by department. This lack of coherence in assessment practices inhibits teacher teams and individual teachers from identifying more granular strengths and needs of student and student subgroups in order to differentiate instructional straggles and improve student outcomes.
 - There was evidence of student reflection in the school's exit projects using the "formative assessment goal setting sheet". However, a student reflection section was not found in other examples of student work in other curriculum areas. This

limits students' ability to identify skills and strategies in order to promote student independence and success.

- Ensure feedback to students allows them to monitor their learning progress effectively and reinforces ownership and accountability throughout the school community. (3.3)
 - The principal conducted a school-wide self evaluation in September, 2011, examining the areas of strength and need through the lens of the Five Levers of Instructional Coherence .These levers are the highlighted areas of focus on the Principal's Guide to the Quality Review. The administration shared the results with the school leadership team, who in turn used the results to set school-wide goals. However, these goals were not communicated to the parents. This lack of information for parents does not enable them to support the on-going work of the school community.
 - In addition to the student goal reflection sheet from the formative assessments, some teachers use their own class assessments to measure interim progress as well as for flexible grouping and goal setting. However, implementation of this reflection sheet is not consistent in all grades and in all classes resulting in inconsistencies in how student progress is measured and how assessment data supports improving student performance.
- Refine action planning by developing interim goals and benchmarks for all plans to enable the administration and faculty to modify these goals in order to optimize the impact of actions. (5.3)
 - Using the Five Levers of Instructional Coherence, the administration and faculty analyzed and brought consensus to the school's strengths, needs and areas of concern and then created school wide goals for the year. However, the methods of articulating the long-term plans for these goals and communicating interim benchmarks are not yet fully transparent and integrated into teacher teams resulting in some faculty and community members to be disconnected from making adjustments to these goals, thus, limiting their effectiveness.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: Pan American International High School	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	
1..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
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