

# Quality Review Report 2012-2013

**Automotive High School**

**14K610**

**50 Bedford Avenue  
Brooklyn  
NY 11222**

**Principal: Caterina Lafergola-Stanczuk**

**Dates of review: October 23-24, 2012**

**Lead Reviewer: Aimee Horowitz**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Automotive is a high school with 723 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 66.1% Black, 30.2% Hispanic, 1.7% White, and 1.4% Asian students. The student body includes 4.7% English language learners and 30.3% special education students. Boys account for 95.6% of the students enrolled and girls account for 4.4%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011- 2012 was 76.65%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is developing.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- Students and staff appreciate the school's focused efforts on maintaining a safe and inclusive environment that supports students' academic and social emotional growth. (1.4)
  - Students are involved in school decision making through student government, the principal's "open door policy" and her willingness to listen to their opinions. As a result, a fine arts teacher was hired this year, a peer mediation program with conflict resolution classes for students was created, a school store is being set up, and the Law Enforcement Academy was created. Students state, "Our principal is trustworthy, caring, and interested in our opinions and ideas. Our new teachers are more aware of how we learn and put effort into what they are doing. Students have more respect for teachers and teachers have more respect for us. There is always someone to talk to; we can talk to our deans, the principal, teachers, or our counselor." Thus, principals' suspensions decreased 6%, superintendents' suspensions decreased 5%, and serious incidents were substantially reduced leading to the school being removed from the "watch list".
  - Each student is assigned a guidance counselor that loops with him/her for his/her high school career. Counselors review students' transcripts and progress towards graduation as well as support their social emotional growth. Counselors meet individually with students; push into classes facilitating lessons with a focus on transition to high school, reading a high school transcript, graduation requirements, the college application process; and communicate with parents. Counseling in Schools social workers work directly with students most at risk and the Rites of Passage program helps students to adapt to the culture of school and achieve success. Good Shepherd advocate counselors provide additional social emotional support to overage, under credited students. As a result students in these programs have improved attendance, reduced suspension rates, and can better code shift leading to greater success in school.
- The principal's purposeful hiring, organizational, and scheduling decisions support the school's goals and improved student outcomes. (1.3)
  - The redesigned schedule and curriculum for Career Technical Education (CTE) classes provides additional opportunities for students to earn credit while the curriculum is spiraled to consistently incorporate and build on students' key prior learning. CTE courses, including the newly created engineering and law enforcement programs coupled with the Learning to Work program and industry certifications provide students with opportunities for real world learning and career exploration while supporting career readiness. Implementation of Mock Regents and extended midterm and final examinations has led to increased credit accumulation, Regents passing percentages, and graduation rate. Passing percentages increased 10% on the Global History Regents

exam, 8% on Geometry, 5% on Chemistry and Algebra 2/Trigonometry, and 2% on Integrated Algebra while the graduation rate increased 13%. Freshman credit accumulation and attendance also increased.

- A comprehensive data analysis revealed that students did not perform well in double period English classes. Thus, all freshmen scoring at least a high two have been programmed for a newly created Writing Across the Curriculum course, designed to address the shift to Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and bolster students writing skills. Other freshmen are programmed for a double block literacy course taught by a newly hired Literacy Specialist. Additional guidance staff has been hired to meet students' needs and a counselor has been reassigned as a full time college and career counselor to meet with students individually, in small groups, and push into classes. Student feedback validates the principal's selection of teachers as they stated their satisfaction and how well the new teachers meet student needs. Students report after school tutoring, offered for the first time this year, is helping them be more successful in their classes. As a result student work products are beginning to reflect increased stamina and improved focus.
- The principal defined and communicated high expectations to staff, students, and families in order to increase accountability toward meeting goals. (3.4)
  - The principal created professional development opportunities for all staff regarding her expectations around lesson planning, instruction, classroom rituals and routines, and the use of Danielson as a framework for effective teaching. This was accomplished through whole staff professional development, professional goal setting conferences with teachers, individual coaching, and sharing school goals with the staff. As a result, teachers' lessons plans now include an aim in the form of a question, measureable instructional objectives, and pre-determined scaffolded questions. This has aided teachers to be well planned, improve questioning skills to engage students in critical thinking, and the ability to assess student learning. Teachers bring lesson plans to pre-observation conferences along with data about their students and challenges they are facing. A post-observation protocol requiring analysis of student work generated during the lesson furthers teacher reflection on effectiveness of their practice and student learning. As a result teachers are accountable for planning and the principal systematically monitors teacher progress to assess gaps between written plans and classroom implementation leading to targeted professional development for each teacher's growth.
  - CTE teachers, teachers newer to the school, and the administration are developing expectations such that students will be college and career ready upon graduation and communicating this information to students. CTE teachers have developed a portfolio to be compiled by each student that includes writing samples, a resume, letters of recommendation, shop competencies, and professional certifications that are tangible proof of an industry approved curriculum indicative of students' career readiness. Students participate in the Greater New York Auto Dealers Association Skills Competition where they demonstrate their problem solving and trouble-shooting competencies in the automotive industry and in Skills USA where they compete on interviewing skills, resume writing, and other career readiness skills. In addition to report cards, the school provides

families with three Progress Reports per semester and is developing its use of Pupil Path so that students and families are more informed about students' progress towards meeting expectations.

### **What the school needs to improve**

- Continue to develop curricula to include rigorous Common Core aligned units and tasks that consistently include critical thinking skills, evidence based discourse, and higher order work products to cognitively engage all students. (1.1)
  - The current curricula provides some guidance leading teachers to plan learning activities that include multiple access points for students with disabilities, students in the lowest third, and kinesthetic learners through the use of manipulatives, hands on activities, visuals, student choice, and relevant real world applications. However, the accompanying tasks and questions are not yet designed at a high level, resulting in questions and tasks in core academic classes that generally lack rigor, thus minimizing the school's ability to cognitively engage all students in problem solving and higher order thinking that produces extended responses and work products that integrate CCLS.
- Deepen the level of instruction so that lessons and tasks consistently engage students in critical thinking that extend opportunities for all students to learn and achieve at high levels. (1.2)
  - Professional development has included work around effective questioning, establishing a culture for learning, and engaging students in learning. . All teachers now include a "Do Now" in their lessons which students state they are held accountable for. However, not all teachers engage students challenging tasks or in higher order thinking through questioning and writing tasks, or maximize student learning by providing extensions to support higher achieving students in deepening their thinking to expand their potential, thus limiting student achievement.
  - While teacher questioning facilitates student participation, accountable talk, extended student responses, and student to student discussion are limited. Students do not yet generate their own high level questions and lessons in core academic areas are not guided by student inquiry. Consequently, not all learners are pushed to think and write at high levels, limiting self guided inquiry and reflection. Though student writing and discussion are evident in all classes, tasks are often limited to writing paragraphs, journal entries, and brief reports of information and essays. Writing assignments rarely require students to independently research or engage in analysis of information. As a result students are not consistently engaged or adequately prepared for Regents Examinations.
- Improve the use of varied assessment data to inform instructional adjustments, analyze student performance, target instruction to students' areas of weakness, and apprise students of next learning steps. (2.2)
  - A newly implemented teacher developed school-wide grading policy has been shared with students, although teachers' assessment practices vary

and are not consistently informed by key standards. Though teachers assess student understanding through questioning, limited use of varied types of assessments for understanding during instruction impedes awareness of students' needs and hampers teachers from making effective and targeted "on the spot" adjustments to better meet students' learning needs. Further, limited use of standards based rubrics and student self assessment opportunities during daily instruction curbs student awareness of next steps and limits feedback to teachers regarding student progress and achievement.

- While the school recently put into practice teacher developed interim common assessments in core subjects and results are beginning to be used to drive and adjust instruction, this practice is not yet systemic or consistent across all classrooms. Further, assessments are not yet consistently used to measure student progress towards meeting goals. Consequently, instruction is not systematically adjusted to meet all students' needs, limiting some students' ability to master content and skills.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: Automotive High School	UD	D	P	WD			
<b>Overall QR Score</b>		X					
<b>Instructional Core</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</i>	UD	D	P	WD			
1.1 Design engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula, including the arts, physical and health education, 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 that is informed by a research-based, common teaching framework and is aligned to curricula, engaging and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products?		X					
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?		X					
<b>School Culture</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	UD	D	P	WD			
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?			X				
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve them?		X					
<b>Systems for Improvement</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	UD	D	P	WD			
1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet students' learning needs as evidenced by meaningful student work products?			X				
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?		X					
4.1 Use the observation of classroom teaching with a research-based, common teaching framework 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 <b>inquiry approach</b> that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning?		X					
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 the CCLS?		X					
<b>Quality Review Scoring Key</b>							
<b>UD</b>	<b>Underdeveloped</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>WD</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>