

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

Pan American International High School

High School 296

**45-10 94th STREET
QUEENS,
New York 11373**

Principal: Minerva Zanca

Dates of review: April 22 – 23, 2013

Lead Reviewer: Carolyn Yaffe

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Pan American International High School is a high school with 366 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 100.0% Hispanic students. The student body includes 91% English language learners and 1% special education students. Boys account for 48% of the students enrolled and girls account for 52%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 90.4%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Common assessments are an organizing force for content area teams and the data yielded from those assessments provides feedback loops that are used to adjust planning and pedagogy. (2.2).
 - Assessments in each discipline are driven by a common rubric across grades and grade level teachers plan and administer the same assessments to their students. The rubrics used are those defined by the Internationals' network. This alignment between grades and across grades yields valuable information about points of struggle with the skills on the common rubric and allows for revision of tasks, and instruction, as well as engagement in vertical planning. For example, this year, the Social Studies team analyzed student work from the first common core aligned task and identified areas of need for groups of students connected to the use and analysis of evidence. They addressed the needs they saw by providing three different tiers of scaffolding towards the culminating task; the tier for each student was determined by the initial assessment. Data from the second common core task demonstrates growth for the identified areas of the rubric in the discipline of social studies. In addition, assessment data demonstrates growth from the majority of subject areas and grade levels across the school community.
- The school's approach to culture building and staff and student supports results in an environment that is conducive to learning and where students demonstrate effective academic and social behaviors (1.4).
 - The unique model of a student body comprised of entirely Spanish speaking English language learners provides a strong foundation for culture building in the school community. Parents, teachers, and students cited numerous examples of projects and activities that emphasize both the unique aspects of their own cultures and build a common community of learners. Another key structure of the school community is how grade teams are organized to support a dedicated group of students; this allows a group of teachers to track the academic, social, and emotional growth of a manageable group of students. As a result of the deliberate culture building and tracking done within grade teams and across the school community, parents and students describe a safe, close, supportive environment that is conducive to learning.
- The school has organized time and human resources so that staff is able to dedicate their time together to engage in instructional work and as a result share a deep sense of responsibility for the students they share (1.3).
 - The school has organized time so that there are weekly content area meetings and grade team meetings. Content area meetings, dedicated to the analysis of curricula and student work, provide the foundation in building a coherent and rigorous curriculum across grades and subject areas. Grade team time is dedicated to tracking growth and intervention for a prescribed group of shared students. The

principal has brought in coaches from the International Schools Network and the Children's First Network to drive both sets of work. As a result the quality of curricula and student work is improving, as evidenced by the assessment data shared across the school community.

What the school needs to improve

- Further engage in the work defined by the guiding instructional principles of the school in order to ensure that students are consistently engaged in tasks and conversations that require them to demonstrate higher order thinking skills (1.2).
 - While the design of curricula and the pedagogy at the school are rooted in a shared set of principles about how students learn best, inconsistency in the application of those principles across classrooms yields uneven experiences for students and uneven quality of work products. For example, the use of group discussion to further student understanding is one of the guiding principles of instruction but during classroom visits the quality of discussion in small groups did not push student understanding either because the questions designed were not rigorous enough or because structures were not in place to ensure that all students participated in the conversation. As a result, students were not consistently asked to demonstrate higher order thinking skills.
- Deliver more specific feedback based on formal and informal teacher observations in order to elevate school-wide instructional practices and create targeted professional development plans for teachers (4.1).
 - While there is a structure in place to support frequent cycles of teacher observations and the templates in use for these observations are connected to a research-based framework, the feedback delivered to teachers doesn't consistently illuminate clear next steps, nor does it outline what could have been executed more effectively relative to the lesson observed. As a result, the written observations do not fully support teacher development.
 - Although the school provides professional development from a variety of sources to teachers, the matching of the support to need and areas of focus is not fully aligned. As a result key instructional agenda items are not being fully advanced and, in some cases, teachers are receiving conflicting feedback from different sources.
- Develop a clearer frame for messaging expectations connected to college and career readiness and strengthen systems to support that message so that all members of the school community are able to envision and be prepared for post-secondary opportunities (3.4).
 - Although the school community is developing guidance and advisory structures that more systematically expose students to post-secondary college and career opportunities, the curriculum in places does not fully communicate expectations that will yield college readiness. For example, most students in the twelfth grade had not yet completed extended research papers and several projects in progress did not include writing that included critical thinking. As a result, all elements in place to emphasize a college-going culture are not fully in place and the

current college acceptance and entrance rate is low.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

| School name: Pan American International High School | UD | D | P | WD | | | |
|---|-----------------------|----------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| Overall QR Score | | X | | | | | |
| Instructional Core | | | | | | | |
| <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 | | | | |
| School Culture | | | | | | | |
| <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 | | | | | |
| Systems for Improvement | | | | | | | |
| <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 inquiry approach 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 | | | | | |
| Quality Review Scoring Key | | | | | | | |
| UD | Underdeveloped | D | Developing | P | Proficient | WD | Well Developed |