Quality Review Report

2012-2013

Academy of Medical Technology: A College Board School

27Q309

8-21 Bay 25th Street
Queens
NY 11691

Principal: Jose Merced

Dates of review: November 29-30, 2012
Lead Reviewer: Tamika Matheson

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Academy of Medical Technology: A College Board School is a secondary school with 398 students from grade 6 through grade 9. The school population comprises 54% Black, 30% Hispanic, 3% White, 11% Asian students and 1% other students. The student body includes 9% English language learners and 15% special education students. Boys account for 39% of the students enrolled and girls account for 61%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 94.2%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Curricular and rigorous academic task embedded across grades and subjects strategically meet the needs of all students, as evidenced by high-level critical thinking habits and student work products. (1.1)

  The school aligns the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) to its curricula and embraces the citywide instructional shifts to close the achievement gap and prepare students for college and career readiness. Teacher teams design and administer benchmark assessments to identify deficit areas to reteach. Additionally, the school partners with Columbia University's Teachers College to make purposeful instructional decisions across grades and subject areas to impact student learning. Teachers receive professional development to develop CCLS-aligned curricula, and to identify and embed Depth of Knowledge (DOK) strategies within units and lesson plans. During class visits teachers were seen employing various strategies to support multiple levels of comprehension. For example, to address relevant subgroups, teachers in a 6th grade English language arts Ramp Up class inclusive of English language learners and students with disabilities used strategies such as modified or leveled writing prompts and guides, choral repetition, "think alouds" and free writing to aid in comprehension. Students receive sustained support in preparing for post secondary readiness via extensive writing and research-based projects across grade levels and content areas. In an Algebra 2/Trigonometry class, students used journaling to cite specific evidence that demonstrates and illustrates conceptual knowledge of how to use graphing calculators and how to solve open-ended problems. Additionally, a class of Advanced Placement Anatomy and Physiology students used rubrics, graphic organizers and teacher-designed web pages to research skin disorders in order to guide their study and support their own learning. All students, inclusive of students with disabilities and English language learners across grade levels and subject areas, generate multiple writing samples, demonstrating cognitive growth and deep reasoning as evidenced in a review of student portfolios and journals.

- Across classrooms teachers use a variety of research-based practices aligned to curricula with strategic scaffolds that provide multiple access points to meet all students' needs. (1.2)

  - The school believes that students learn best when they are actively engaged in their own learning. Teachers engage students in tiered tasks accompanied by rubrics that mirror the school theme to promote medical career pathways. Teachers consistently provide students opportunities to choose various tiered access points based on DOK levels that include "entry," "collegiate" and "professional" levels of thinking and rigor. Furthermore, teachers use varied data strands such as Acuity and Study Island to monitor student progress to inform instructional decisions and to differentiate techniques. As a result of tiered practices, teacher feedback, and the monitoring of student progress, students from all subgroups are given the opportunity and scaffolds, to self-reflect and to produce meaningful work products displayed on class and hallway bulletin boards,

such as book reports, research essays, thematic essays, three dimensional cell projects with written components, and other projects that require high-level thinking.

- The principal strategically aligns school resources to the needs of the school community and partners with institutions, thus enabling improved instruction and the creation of meaningful student work products. (1.3)

    - The school aligns its budget to the needs of the school community and instructional shifts. The primary goal to strengthen and bolster academic programs, with a concentration on medical careers, to diversify learning opportunities for all students, and to broaden college and career readiness programs is at the heart of organizational and budgetary decisions. For example, the school hired an additional guidance counselor to provide student academic and social support services, and also hired a full time college advisor to organize college level programs and activities to promote college preparedness for students and parents. Additionally, the school purchased online academic programs such as Apex Learning, Study Island and Think Through Math to accelerate student learning for all students, including English language learners and students with disabilities. As a result, 77.8% of the senior class graduated in 2012, which is 12% above the citywide average. Last year, the school only offered one Advanced Placement class with and enrollment of 17 students. The school now offers three Advanced Placement courses, two which are science based, with an enrollment of sixty students combined. Additionally, the school offers College Now courses through its partnerships with Mercy College and York College, thereby, exposing a greater number of students to college level work in the core subject areas and courses related to professions in the medical field.

    - Teacher teams meet bi-weekly in grade level teams and department level teams to plan units, look at student work and analyze student data. Teachers also have the opportunity to engage in professional development collaboration with Teachers College and weekly Lunch and Learn workshops facilitated by school leaders focused on effective instructional strategies. Facilitators of these workshops use research-based protocols and book studies to identify and teach effective instructional strategies. Teachers across grades and content areas incorporate strategies presented in *Teach Like A Champion* within their daily lessons. As a result, teachers consistently employ effective instructional strategies that leverage student learning and increase comprehension. For example, in one 7th grade math class observed, the teacher effectively utilized SmartBoard technology to model multiple step problem solving. Students reviewed their notes using reading strategies to identify key academic vocabulary and language prior to engaging in practice problems. Subsequently, students generated their own examples of mark up and mark down scenarios to demonstrate their learning. Thus, subgroups of students are problem solving, reading and writing using textual evidence and engaged in performance tasks aligned to the CCLS.

- Teachers use assessment data to routinely monitor student progress and needs, which ultimately informs instructional adjustments across grades and subject areas. (2.2)

- Teacher teams and individual teachers analyze data from Acuity, formal and informal assessments in order to design, align and adjust curricula, units and assessments to identify and close gaps in student learning. For example, middle school English language arts teachers utilize student assessment logs, in addition to Acuity, to track pre-writing and post-writing performance in order to identify target areas to implement curriculum shifts. Teachers embed curriculum shifts, such as the infusion of non-fictional readings to align with common core expectations and to further advance the school's writing initiative as reflected in curriculum maps, teacher generated writing rubrics and formative assessments. Across classrooms teachers use exit tickets, learning goal worksheets and teacher feedback aligned to rubrics to check for understanding and create opportunities for students to self-reflect and revise their work, as evidenced during class visits and student work. As a result, student work and portfolios depict progressive growth aligned to the CCLS. For example, 8th grade students completing a "Logic Assignment," integrating math and science skills, were provided a rubric based on CCLS requiring students to create diagrams, use "complex and refined mathematical reasoning," demonstrate their "understanding of mathematical concepts," notation and terminology to solve problems. Additionally, students state teachers provide "clear expectations" and "helpful feedback" to assist them with taking their work "to the next level," thereby, moving students toward mastery.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue to embed systems and structures to support and track short- and long-term goals aligned to the school's goals in order to support students' academic progress. (3.1)

  - The school has leveraged practices and systems at the team level to augment instructional practices and positively impact student learning. However, the school has yet to implement a calendar of interim benchmarks to track, assess, monitor and tweak the effectiveness of short- and long-term goals at the school level. Hence, school leaders are unable to regularly and quickly assess, modify and communicate the effectiveness of a practice or program. This limits the timeliness within which stakeholders can react and respond to adjustments to school-wide goals.

  - School leaders have made decisions at the school level that have had a positive impact on student learning. However, the degree of positive impact across grades and departments are inconsistent. For example, student goal setting and portfolios are practices observed throughout grades and departments; however, the level of effectiveness by which teachers utilize these practices varies, which causes the practice to fail to yield maximum student achievement.

- Further develop processes to regularly evaluate the quality and effectiveness of school-level decisions in order to make timely and purposeful adjustments that support the coherence of policies and practices across the school. (5.1)

  - School leaders make decisions at the school level, such as hiring practices, student-teacher programming and collaborative partnerships, that have a positive impact on student learning. However, the school

needs to take full advantage of resources, such as the Datacation online grading system and the Atlas Rubicon online curriculum portal, to further systemize curriculum shifts to make sure the expectations of the CCLS are being met. Additionally, the degree of positive impact across grades and departments is inconsistent. For example, some parents and students utilize the online grading system to make inquiries, to monitor academic progress and to communicate with faculty and staff. However, administrators and teachers are not making the most of Atlas Rubicon features to further strengthen school wide and team level efforts around curriculum shifts, which hinders coherence of school policies and practices that could lead to improved student outcomes.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: Academy of Medical Technology: A College Board School	UD	D	P	WD
Overall QR Score			X	

Instructional Core

To what extent does the school regularly…	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

To what extent does the school …	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

To what extent does the school …	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**