



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

**Quality Review
Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning
2013-2014**

Quality Review Report 2013-2014

Henry Street School for International Studies

Middle-High School M292

**220 Henry St.
Manhattan
NY 10002**

Principal: Christine Loughlin

Dates of review: April 8-9, 2014

Lead Reviewer: Holly Reichert

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Henry Street School for International Studies is a middle-high school with 323 students from grade 6 through grade 12. The school population comprises 26% Black, 53% Hispanic, 3% White, and 14% Asian students. The student body includes 20% English language learners and 32% special education students. Boys account for 60% of the students enrolled and girls account for 40%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2012 - 2013 was 81.1%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Teachers' use of common, structured planning templates to design rigorous instruction for all students ensures curricular coherence and alignment to Common Core Learning Standards and content standards. (1.1)
 - In order to deepen Common Core alignment and instructional coherence across the middle school, the school adopted Code X for literacy and Connected Mathematics Project 3 (CMP 3) for math for grade 6 through grade 8. All teachers use structured planning templates for units and lessons that define specified instructional elements that all faculty include when designing instruction. These elements include aspects of Understanding by Design and incorporate the instruction shifts, for example, all units reviewed listed academic and content specific vocabulary to be covered in the unit. In addition to a focus on academic language, unit and lesson plans reviewed also included the specific standards to be covered, knowledge and skills inventories, essential questions, learning targets/objectives, academic vocabulary, differentiation for special education students and English language learners, anticipatory sets, discussion questions, groupings, assessments and extensions. Teachers also use a lesson plan checklist to ensure instruction contains these elements and to reflect on what will be taught and how it will be taught. Special education students and English language learners engage in the same curricula as their general education peers. Teachers design rigorous tasks such as Socratic seminar, math problems with real world application, and science labs, and then adjust instruction with scaffolds and supports for individual and groups of learners. For example, to support argumentative essays writing, teachers provide scaffolds aligned to student learning styles and writing process needs. Teachers regularly adjust instructional plans using student work and data during collaborative common planning and content area team meetings. During an Integrated Co-Teaching planning meeting observed, teachers discussed a number of strategies, including sentence starters, visual graphic organizers, and explicit writing models appropriate for specific students and groups of students to purposefully address learning gaps that surfaced in student work products. In middle school, teachers specifically adjusted the Code X curricula to include articulated writing instruction throughout each unit, changed the pacing calendar to account for additional reading and writing lessons and tailored materials to better meet the needs of their population. Such curriculum design practices ensure that diverse learners have access to rigorous tasks that provide opportunities for high levels of thinking.
- The school meaningfully aligns resources, time and programming to school goals to improve teacher practice and increase student achievement so that all students are on a path to college and career. (1.3)
 - The school uses budget resources for educational materials and consultants to address student achievement and pedagogical improvement goals. The school purchased the Aventa online credit recovery program to specifically support students not on track with credit accumulation and graduation. Additionally, the school spent \$20,000 on informational and literary books to

establish a new literacy pilot started this year in grade 8. The literacy pilot is part of a long-range goal to meet the reading needs of students in the middle school. To support teacher learning, the school hired consultants to accelerate teacher growth and build common best practices that support diverse learner needs. For example, the school's special education consultant works with seven Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) partnerships providing one-on-one coaching and professional development. Teachers have time built into their programs to plan and revise Common Core curricula and instruction targeting the diverse needs of special education students and English language learners. Teachers meet with colleagues in content area teams, grade teams and receive professional development during their five Circular 6 periods every week. Moreover, ICT teachers meet three days a week to co-plan instruction. To deepen literacy skills, middle school students have ninety-minute humanities block periods, grade 8 students have an independent reading course, and the school offers four high school literacy-focused English electives to support English language learners and students who struggle with literacy. One grade 8 student shared, "the reading class is helping me be a better reader." To better address the academic needs of special education students, the school increased the number ICT classes. The school also changed its English as a Second Language programming from a push-in/pull-out model to a free-standing program to target the English language needs of their students by proficiency level. In order to meet student needs, the school also made strategic hiring and assignments decisions. For example, the school partnered experienced teachers with those new to the profession to create new ICT partnerships. In order to strengthen student support services and youth development, the school hired a part-time guidance counselor and a dean assistant. Also, a number of staff members changed positions highlighting the school's leadership opportunities for its faculty. The school's former dean and Coordinator of Student Affairs (COSA) became an assistant principal, two teachers became COSAs, the physical education teacher became the dean and five teachers became content area teacher leaders. The school attributes increases in high school credit accumulation to its use of resources, time and programming. For example, during 2012-13, 60% of year one students accumulated ten or more credits, while during 2013-14 72% of year one students are on track to earn ten or more credits.

- The school promotes a community where relationships, collaboration and ownership are valued resulting in a safe and inclusive environment where individuals receive personalized supports, guidance and advisement. (1.4)
 - The school's vision focuses on student ownership of learning and achievement. To empower this vision, the school promotes relationships, collective accountability, and collaboration to solve problems and contribute so that adults and children can reach their goals. To this end, the school put in place a number of initiatives to meet students' academic and social-emotional needs. For example, the school's popular student government program is now led by two COSAs. Members of student government spoke about how the previous and life-changing Habitat for Humanity program led their efforts to spearhead this year's Sandy Relief building program commencing this spring. Students play an active role in community outreach efforts and contribute regularly to organizing student programs and activities. Student leaders proposed an inter-school tutoring/mentoring program aimed at developing community among the middle school students and high school students in the building. High school students now tutor students in the

charter school co-located in the building. Students stated they can take their ideas to the COSAs and administration knowing they will be heard and action will be taken. This year, the school's physical education teacher became the dean. Connecting to the importance of relationship, students shared, "Our dean is our previous gym teacher. We have a relationship with him. The dean goes out of his way to make sure everything is in order." The school added a dean assistant role and part-time guidance counselor to further support students social-emotionally. A student added, "New, this year, our dean and guidance counselor are very busy keeping us safe. We respect the deans and teachers." Students emphasized that they have close relationships with staff and that they can seek out adults for support. A student said, "Teachers understand us and try to make us feel comfortable; they engage us." Students reiterated that staff take them seriously, that adults are accountable and follow through, and that their efforts to contribute build community. As a result of the school's Respectful, Responsible, Organized, Safe (RROS) structures, the school has seen a reduction in suspensions from 84 in 2011-12 to 72 in 2012-13. The personal approach applied to building relationships and discipline is also evident in how the school deals with students who are chronically absent. The attendance team addresses issues of chronic absenteeism by reviewing each student's case and a creating plan of action. This personalized approach has led to increases in both attendance and scholarship. For example, one student's scholarship improved from a 55% average for the 2013 fall semester to 69% during the first marking period of the 2014 spring semester as a result of increased attendance in school. Another student improved from a 55% average for the 2012 spring semester to a 75% average for the 2013 fall semester. The school attributes improved attendance and credit accumulation to the on-going support individual students receive from staff. Furthermore, the college counselor individually supports students with the college application process. To date, 60% of the 25 seniors on track to graduate in June 2014, and who applied to college, have received one or more college acceptance letters.

- The school provides teachers with classroom observation feedback and next steps, professional development and leadership opportunities to accelerate pedagogical growth and improve student outcomes. (4.1)
 - The school started the year with a round of not-for-stakes classroom observations and feedback conferences to provide teachers with an introduction to the new Advance teacher evaluation system. To improve the effectiveness of feedback to teachers, the administration works with a consultant from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) to ensure that next steps are meaningful and can be implemented in the classroom. The administration also surveyed teachers regarding high needs areas of the Danielson Framework for Teaching. The administration used these results to inform their weekly Advance training to teachers focused on improving teacher pedagogy. Administrators communicate feedback in person and via email prior to providing teachers with a written report that aligns low inference classroom observation data to levels of performance on the Danielson rubric with added comments addressing next steps for improvement. Written reports reviewed included the teacher's highlighted goal areas, low inference data, ratings and next steps. Administration cited teacher growth in high leverage competencies including classroom management and engagement. For example, one report showed movement from developing to effective in 2c: Managing classroom

procedures from November 2013 to December 2013. In addition to feedback, next steps included information, links to websites, and resources with a scheduled follow-up meeting to review the materials and recommendations. In addition to classroom observations, administrators conduct classroom environment walk-throughs and provide teachers with feedback via a checklist. Administrators also review performance-based assessments and resulting student work to discuss student outcomes with teachers. During a teacher meeting observed, teachers mentioned that professional development and observation feedback provided by consultants and administration support their growth and development. One teacher highlighted that observation feedback helped her improve in differentiating instruction, one of her professional growth areas, and has led to an improvement in student outcomes. The teacher expressed feeling comfortable trying new practices learned during professional development, adding “I get a lot of support when I want to try something new.” Furthermore, administration offers teachers opportunities to lead and facilitate peer collaboration and learning. Content teacher leaders learn from administration, facilitate department meetings and turn-key school-wide initiatives to their peers. Two teacher leaders participate in network instructional rounds and five teachers received training in protocols. The teachers stated that these trainings deepen their understanding of Danielson and provide them with skills such as taking low inference notes during visits to peer’s classrooms and using protocols to look at student and adult work during teacher team meetings.

What the school needs to improve

- Increase pedagogical capacity to engage all learners in academically challenging tasks and collaborative discussions that require students to express ideas, provide evidence and critique the reasoning of others. (1.2)
 - Teachers are expected to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all learners. Lesson plan elements, agreed to by the staff to provide access and engagement, include anticipatory sets, learning activities and differentiation for groups of students as well as questions and discussion starters. Across classrooms visited, implementation of planned access and engagement elements varied. In some classes, what was in the lesson plan was not evident during the observation. For example, differentiation for student groups or the grouping of student was not always clear. In some classrooms, student sat together at tables while in other rooms students sat in rows scattered across the room. While in another class observed, the teacher started the class with an anticipatory set and had each group of four collaboratively discuss a different question prompt. In another class, students sat in a circle for Socratic seminar and responded to questions posed by the teacher. Following student responses, the teacher asked if others agreed, disagreed, or could build upon what had been said. When students did not provide evidence, the teacher said, “Can you use evidence to support your position?” In a humanities class, students sat in groups of twos and threes and individually decided, from a number of choices, what they were going to write about and how. Students spoke organically to each other at the tables about their work. However, one student questioned, was not able to explain the activity or the content being studied. Student work ranged from drawings with simple sentences to fully-written diary entries. During a few Integrated Co-Teaching classrooms visited, teachers circulated and spoke with students individually, and during a number of whole class activities, teachers asked

questions and called on students one at a time. For example, during a science lab observed, the teacher asked the class questions and called on a student to answer. When the answer was received, the teacher asked another question. In another science lab visited, after students copied vocabulary definitions onto their lab sheets, the teachers asked a question to the class and called on a student to answer. The teacher then asked students to turn and talk to each other about the same question. Students interviewed said that they were not sure what they were supposed to do. Moreover, student work from classes visited showed a range of understanding of the content from questions left blank, to partial responses to full explanations showing thinking and knowledge of content. While teachers plan access and engagement activities, supports to develop understanding and opportunities to share thinking and hear the thinking of their peers were not fully actualized in practice. As a result, the school's capacity to meet learning needs and engage student thinking is limited.

- Deepen common assessment practices to adjust instruction, provide feedback and track progress to ensure a clear picture of student strengths and growth areas, leading to the increased achievement of all learners. (2.2)
 - The school informs students and families about progress. Grading policies are posted in classrooms, and in February 2014, the school implemented Jupiter grades, an on-line grading and communication system. Students and parents confirmed they track graded and incomplete assignments online. The school uses data to track student progress. During grade meetings, teachers track student progress in all content areas and plan interventions to address need. Teachers use assessments to evaluate student learning and adjust instruction for diverse learners using daily student work and formative assessments to plan instructional groups and differentiate supports. During a team meeting observed, teachers reviewed samples of student writing, pinpointed the use of transitions and analysis of quotations as learning gaps and identified a revision activity to address a range of needs. Teachers also use rubrics to assess work products and provide feedback. Samples of student work on bulletin boards show numeric scores, teacher comments, and highlighted rubric criteria met, along with praise, strengths and next steps. When interviewed about feedback, one student used rubric language to explain what he needed to do to move to the next level. However, not all feedback reviewed was presented in a meaningful way that could be used on future assignments. For example, a student shared feedback which only stated, 'need to add more documents'. He was not able to articulate why this was important, though he understood that he should add more documents. In addition, the school spoke anecdotally of increased student achievement, yet data was not provided to support this claim. While assessment practices and tracking systems are in place, it is not clear how the school correlates data across subjects and grades to determine and document increases in student mastery. This inability to speak to specific increases in student skill based on standards results in the school not having a clear picture of student progress towards goals across subjects and grades.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2013-2014

| School name: Henry Street School for International Studies | 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 Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards? | | | X | | | | |
| 1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the instructional shifts and Danielson Framework for Teaching, aligned to the 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 supports 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 those expectations? | | | 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 student 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 Observe teachers using the Danielson Framework for Teaching along with the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection? | | | 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 |