



**Department of
Education**

Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report 2013-2014

Health Professions and Human Services

High School 420

West 15th Street

Manhattan

NY 10003

Principal: Robert A. Gentile

Dates of Review: April 7 - 8 2014

Lead Reviewer: Leslie Miller Chislett

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Health Professions and Human Services is a high school with 1706 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 22% Black, 49% Hispanic, 6% White, and 22% Asian students. The student body includes 5% English language learners, and 13% special education students. Boys account for 31% of the students enrolled and girls account for 69%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2012 - 2013 was 91.7%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal makes tactical organizational decisions to leverage resources and staff time to support school improvement goals and create learning opportunities that advance student progress towards graduation and college and career readiness. (1.3)
 - In order to uphold the school's distinctive mission, the principal and leadership team work to provide programs, services, and specialized coursework that develop students' aspirations for college and careers in science, health and other professions. This work involves numerous vital partnerships with community-based organizations such as Comprehensive Development, Inc. (CDI) which directs the school's college and career offices. Four full time staff members from CDI work onsite to provide one-on-one and cohort support through the phases of the college exploration, including SAT-prep, college visits, support with admission, and financial aid and scholarship applications. The partnership also makes it possible for the school to offer college workshops and fairs, beginning in ninth grade, to expose students and families to post-secondary opportunities. Furthermore, work readiness training such as interview and resume preparation and field trips to various workplaces are also provided to juniors and seniors through an internship course and the Ready, Set, Work program. Students participate in internships and summer jobs that are arranged with an array of medical facilities such as Beth Israel Hospital, and businesses. Lehman College, in conjunction with CVS pharmacy, prepared over 30 students through a new program certifying them for employment as pharmacy technicians. Through Liberty Partnerships Programs at Pace University and Hostos Community College, students receive academic tutoring and culture-arts enrichment opportunities that support their academic success and motivation for participating in the life of the school. Other university partnerships with LaGuardia, Baruch, and Hunter College, have been cultivated to result in students gaining college credit through College Now courses. The school's physical space and technology are also optimized. For example, new library and computer lab facilities, classroom Smart boards, iPads, and hundreds of graphing calculators, have been acquired through borough-based Resolution-A grants and other sources to enhance the learning environment. To expand the school's medical assistant and science research programs and advanced course offerings, the principal and assistant principals allocate funding for teachers' participation in outside professional development such as training in forensic science at Syracuse University and case-based learning at the University of Buffalo or through attendance at the national Math for America conference. In addition, network coaches are used within the school to build teacher capacity in implementing rigorous curricula and effective research-based pedagogy. Accordingly, students express confidence that they are prepared for the next level of their education, and the vast majority of graduating seniors are accepted to college or post-secondary training.
 - Effective hiring and teaching assignments, along with intentionally designed student program groupings and interventions ensure student success in rigorous courses of study. For example, two additional special education teachers were hired which made it possible for the school to form an additional Integrated Collaborative Team teaching (ICT) class in geometry and other subject areas to support ninth graders meeting success in this course. Through hiring additional science teachers, students gained the option to take Living Environment and Chemistry over two or four semesters, thus increasing the number of students who continue in an advanced science course of study. Strategic staffing adjustments allow for program groupings to be tailored to students' needs. For example, the leadership created an ICT class to serve the needs

of English language learners who also have individual education plans. Teachers dual-certified in social studies, special education and/or English were assigned to work with ninth grade students in the Ramp Up to Reading program that reinforces literacy skills. A medically trained doctor and teachers with a research background instruct in the medical assistant and science research programs to ensure professionally relevant and rigorous curricula. Furthermore, the principal distributed guidance counselors' caseloads to ensure all students are able to access advisement and counseling services from a counselor assigned to their grade cohort or to assistant principals of guidance and special education for students at risk or who have IEPs. Teachers and counselors initiated the restructuring of the schedule to give teams regular and substantial time to plan, engage in inquiry, work together to identify students in need of interventions as well as to offer tutoring in one core content area each day or on Saturdays or in "PM School". The result of these organizational decisions is students are being engaged in appropriately challenging instruction that leads to their success.

- School leaders and faculty foster a culture that ensures students are well known, and coordinate social-emotional learning experiences, guidance supports, and family outreach, that result in student adoption of successful academic and personal behaviors. (1.4)
 - The keen interest administrators and teachers take in students' strengths and weaknesses allows for a responsive, family-oriented culture that supports student academic and personal growth. The concern and approachableness is demonstrated through an open-door policy that welcomes parents and students to reach out to administration or teachers as needed. Students feel teachers know them and "watch out for them" by creating opportunities for them to experience support and succeed. For example, teachers and guidance counselors collaborated to design a tutoring incentive called "5 for 5" whereby students who attended at least five tutoring sessions in a marking period became eligible for extra credit in class. Teachers promoted the program by giving students "business cards" as proof of attendance, and students who attended for five sessions were placed in a prize raffle. The result has been an increased number of students attending weekly tutoring in all content areas and semester-based credit accrual has improved in keeping with school goals. Students also feel that the school's internship opportunities, extra-curricular activities, and athletic teams, provide something for everybody. They are encouraged to get involved by the Coordinator of Student Activities (COSA) and other faculty who support their exploration of interests. The numerous student-initiated clubs evidence this. Students are also given additional opportunities to express their voice through the School Leadership Team (SLT) and student council and make recommendations for school improvement such as how the school can gain career and technical education (CTE) accreditation for its medical assist program. As a result, learners remain motivated and take ownership of their learning to succeed.
 - The principal describes the belief behind the school's support system "as everyone working together without fear to provide students with what they need". Grade-level teacher teams twice meet monthly with guidance counselors to identify and discuss students and devise "remedies" to deal with academic and behavioral difficulties. A student intervention form documents recommended tutoring, or other interventions that target personal needs such as attendance, lateness, motivation, or distractibility. Parents are contacted to either explain the need and/or inform them when there is significant improvement. To further ensure student support, the Pupil Personnel Team (PPT) comprised of social workers, parent coordinator, Assistant Principal of Security, administrators and guidance counselors meet regularly to discuss needs brought to their attention through conversations with students, parents and teachers or through monitoring Pupil Path, an on-line system that stores grades, attendance, and anecdotal information. After conferring with the student's teachers and parents, the PPT works to

secure counseling from a professional on the School-based Support Team or from a partner organization. Additionally, the school has incorporated services to pro-actively foster student social-emotional well-being. Some examples include transfer high school fairs to present options for overage, under-credited students to explore options, young women's and men's leadership groups facilitated by CDI for youth to discuss personal matters that put them at-risk for failure, and a Fair Shake for Youth that gives ninth graders time with therapeutic dogs to increase their self-esteem and reinforce positive social skills. These support structures have yielded students' adoption of effective personal and academic behaviors leading to a reduction in the number of principal's suspensions and consistently high graduation rates.

- Teacher teams engage in inquiry-based professional collaboration that yields increased instructional capacity, promotes implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards, and plays an integral role in key decisions that affect learning school-wide. (4.2)
 - Subject-area teams systematically analyze elements of their classroom practice, assessment data, and student work, to improve students' performance. For example, during chemistry team meetings teachers regularly examine a colleague's students' work to analyze it in light of the expectations for performance in a particular unit or lesson, such as determining a type of chemical reaction and its pathway. They also map out what students performing below, meeting, and/or exceeding standards need to do to move to the next level of performance. Additionally, patterns and trends inform teachers' next steps and differentiated instruction to move students forward, and by monitoring pre- and post-test results staff document student growth. For example, one unit's post-assessment showed that 75% of students moved into the satisfactory or excellent range of performance related to the targeted goal. As a result teachers are focusing on shared improvements to their instruction and documenting mastery of goals for their students.
 - Team meetings, the union consultative council, and the School Leadership Team enable teachers to contribute to essential decisions related to school improvement. For instance, during monthly chapter meetings teachers and counselors discussed how the school could better meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student body. Teachers expressed to the administration their interest in scheduling additional time for professional collaboration, creating coherent communication to parents, and effective organization of the delivery of intervention services that led the initiative to change the school's schedule via a school-based option vote. Furthermore, this resulted in regular time for counselors to meet with grade-level teams to strategize about ways to ensure personal and academic success for students, outreach to parents, plan CC-aligned curricula, and offer tutoring. As a result, teachers are focusing their time on refining instruction to align to CC instructional shifts, an increased number of students are participating in support services, and 8% of these learners passed a class they previously failed.
- Teachers and teams use common assessments and rubrics that are analyzed to adjust curricula and instruction, advance students towards goals, and to provide meaningful feedback that assists students in reflecting on their own progress. (2.2)
 - Each department administers common assessments such as base-line assessments, pre-and post-unit tests, culminating unit projects, mock Regents exams, and CC-aligned writing tasks, mid-term and final exams to determine progress towards goals leading to revised curricula and instructional strategies. To build coherence in grading policy across classrooms teachers are required to use SKEDULA to document the types of assignments that grades are comprised of relative to formative assignments,

participation, homework, and test scores. In addition, focus on the use of rubrics that articulate expectations for participation in group work and for projects and CC-aligned writing tasks has been extended across grades to elevate rigor and improve communication of expectations to students. The impact of these practices is that students, teachers, and parents, understand where learners are in terms of their performance and how to revise work for continual growth.

- The social studies-special education eleventh grade team reviewed the results of several baseline assessments that were given to students to determine individual and class progress toward CC and content area standards-based goals. Staff noticed that reading comprehension in interpreting the claims and perspectives in historical documents was a barrier for students performing in the lowest third when compared to their peers. The team used the results to adjust their instruction by varying documents presented to students, to introduce complex texts more frequently, and to guide students in annotating texts as they read. Teachers provided a mnemonic device and graphic organizer as scaffolds to assist students in structuring answers to document-based question and organizing essays in alignment to the requirements of Regents. Teachers also used rubrics to clarify expectations for students and involve them in evaluating themselves and their peers on specific goals such as using quotes in essays from a text to support a claim. Consequently, formative assessments reveal students are more consistently making accurate inferences, demonstrating understanding of the content through their written elaboration on issues and events, and citing evidence from text to support their claims.

What the school needs to improve

- Refine curricula to reflect strategic integration of the Common Core (CC) instructional shifts and rigorous tasks to deepen instructional coherence across grades and subjects so that all learners demonstrate thinking. (1.1)
 - The school's work to align its curricula to the CCLS has produced various products depending on the content area, including unit maps, outlines for units of instruction, performance tasks, and rubrics that prioritize both the State content area and CC standards. Science unit maps, for example, layout content for each month and the relevant CC and content area standards addressed, big ideas, and major concepts that students should understand, essential questions, targeted learning skills, resources, and formative, interim, and summative assessments. The English language arts "CC Aligned Edition" content maps designed for certain grades and courses are similar with the inclusion of texts and a few possible adjustments for using the texts with the lowest performing students, students with disabilities, or English language learners. English units for classes of English language learners incorporate the CC standards instructional shifts by emphasizing non-fiction texts and academic vocabulary. The social studies team has developed unit schedules and content outlines that guide teachers in preparing for the Regents document-based questions as well as for CC writing tasks that require students be able to construct arguments from various perspectives using historical evidence. The math department is integrating content from Engage New York's modules for Integrated Algebra and other courses where applicable. Across the units, academic tasks and lesson plans typically emphasize rigorous routines and higher order thinking. However, curricula plans in some subjects and courses currently do not yet reflect strategic integration of the CC instructional shifts. In addition, most curricula plans do not yet extensively provide options to address the needs of both struggling and highest achieving students. As a result, written curricula lacks explicit and sufficient detail to guide all students in demonstrations of thinking and performance aligned with the college and career readiness.

- Expand the use of instructional strategies so the vast majority of classrooms strategically utilize entry points and quality supports and extensions that result in high levels of student thinking, participation, and ownership. (1.2)
 - Across classrooms, pedagogy typically reflects the belief that students learn best when they are engaged through varied questions, use of resources, and group work that challenges them to think critically and apply what they are learning. Classrooms visited predominately utilized partner or teamwork where students were grouped both heterogeneously and/or homogeneously, depending on their readiness and/or what the activity required. Teachers used essential questions to frame the lesson's purpose and supporting questions to move instruction forward, foster discussion, or assist students in reasoning through the content or problems presented. Through the school's focus on increasing comprehension of complex texts, strategies like annotating reading material or responding to texts during gallery walks were threaded throughout the lessons. Some teachers also encouraged students to give text-based answers or provide a reason for their solution, a required instructional shift for literacy and math. Additionally, through the school's flexible scheduling and inclusionary approach, students with disabilities are consistently included in less restrictive settings and provided access to the curriculum. However, targeted discussion and accountable talk techniques aligned with the Danielson Framework are not yet fully actualized nor are the use of high quality scaffolds and extensions. For example, although students had opportunities to discuss materials or work with partners, entry points were limited to open-ended tasks or tasks were the same for all students, regardless of their working in groups. While some students were active in a group doing the task assigned, structured support for challenging tasks or extensions for advanced learners were lacking. In addition, whole class discussions or group tasks did not always result in student ownership of the discussion or responsibility for the work. As a result, all students' needs are not being sufficiently addressed which limits some students in reaching their potential.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2013-2014

School name:	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