



**Department of  
Education**  
*Carmen Fariña, Chancellor*

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

# **Quality Review Report 2013-2014**

**Herbert H. Lehman High School**

**08X405**

**3000 EAST TREMONT AVENUE  
BRONX, NY 10461**

**Principal: ROSE LOBIANCO**

**Dates of Review: Feb 11-14, 2014  
Lead Reviewer: Carron Staple**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Herbert H. Lehman High School is a high school with 2059 students from 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 23% Black, 58% Hispanic, 11% White, and 8% Asian students. The student body includes 9.5% English language learners and 24% special education students. Boys account for 62.7% of the students enrolled and girls account for 37.3%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2012 - 2013 was 77.4%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is developing.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal organizes resources and time in order to support instructional goals and increase student outcomes from a social-emotional and academic perspective. (1.3)
  - The principal has restructured the school from the departmental structure of the past to an academy structure where four academies are each supported by an academy director, a guidance counselor, a dean, a college counselor and support staff that places emphasis on the academic and social-emotional needs of the students. As the school is in the process of downsizing, it is the principal's vision that in creating these small learning communities known as SLC's, students will experience: a more personalized experience; increased credit accumulation and graduation rate; and stronger instruction. Additionally, time has been embedded within the school week for teachers to meet with academy directors, analyze data by cohort and academy, and discuss students' work products. The result of this restructure has shown an increase in scholarship from 63.1% to 69.5% when compared to last year February 2013, 83.3% scholarship for emergent students in the bilingual program, and the decrease of long term absences (LTA's). Partnerships have been established with the College Match Program, the College Now program at Lehman High School and Upward Bound at Fordham University as well as The Center for Supportive Schools, which trains teachers on peer mentoring. In addition, a partnership was established with City University of New York (CUNY) New York State Initiative on Emergent Bilinguals (NYSIEB) where English as a Second Language and social studies teachers jointly collaborate on lesson planning and curricular design for English Language Learners. These established partnerships have resulted in greater college awareness and access to information, improved student outcomes for English Language Learners in the bilingual program, the de-escalation of situations where students may fight, and decreased student suspensions school-wide.
- The school uses various assessment practices to analyze student performance, target instruction, and provide students with feedback in order to increase student achievement and academic progress over time. (2.2)
  - The principal expects that all teachers will utilize the school-wide grading policy, more frequent formative assessment strategies, including exit slips, written reflection, and the use of rubrics. Teacher teams meet weekly in each small learning community (SLC) to analyze and discuss student data, construct item analysis and determine where students have gaps in instruction. One of the gaps teachers noticed was that their students had difficulty with writing claims and counter claims. This collaborative focus on supporting students with writing arguments helped the teachers to refine their writing rubrics, create strategies that strengthen students' skills, and where necessary, modify their instructional plans for re-teaching. One very unique condition of the school's assessment practice is called the Administrative Inquiry Study, where each assistant principal/director selects a student to follow throughout the term. This assessment process involves analyzing a student's data and profile and the trends and patterns that occur as a result of assessment. Each assistant principal shadows a student over

the course of a semester and captures low inference observations about how the student learns, is assessed, and the interventions that are needed to make this particular student successful. As a result of this study, administrators are able to delve further into the assessment practices teachers utilize to gauge student understanding and plan professional development accordingly to ensure that the needs of a variety of students are being met.

- The principal and most of the academy directors conduct frequent cycles of observation with feedback that is aligned to the Danielson framework to support improved teacher practice. (4.1)
  - The school's observation process is grounded in the Danielson framework and is conducted by most academy directors who are growing in their capacity to provide timely content specific feedback. For example, while written feedback from an observation on October 2013 provided areas of strength and for improvement, the teacher had not received the feedback from his director until February 2014. In another class, the teacher designed a lesson using the lesson plan template the school devised, yet none of what was written in the plan was executed preventing students from interacting at high levels and from multiple entry points, which eventually caused the lesson to fall apart. A review of this teacher's observations demonstrates that feedback from the director was timely, actionable and with next steps for improvement that ultimately led to a log of assistance, yet there was little evidence that the director provided subsequent feedback focused on the same pedagogical skill set that would push that teacher's practice. Such commitment to reoccurring, targeted feedback is an evolving practice among all academy directors, as they work to improve school-wide pedagogical practices.

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

- Increase the alignment of curricula across grades and content areas to Common Core Learning Standards, and refine units of study in order to increase rigor in tasks to advance the post-secondary readiness of all learners. (1.1)
  - With the support of a curriculum director/assistant principal, the school continues to work with teacher teams on aligning curricula to Common Core Learning Standards and to further develop unit plans and lesson plan templates to effectively support students, yet this process of curricula refinement is inconsistently documented and only beginning to emerge in the math and social studies curricula. Additionally, the progress made in curriculum development is not being accurately communicated to the principal in a timely manner, which hinders the revision of the professional development plan, which with proper notification, could be modified to provide teachers with support in designing curricular units and aligning them to key standards, with a variety of learners in mind. While blended online learning is being used to support curricular cohesion, there is a disconnect between these online approaches and key standards emphasized in the classroom. Some of the school's curricular maps revealed differentiated approaches to drive instruction, yet higher-order questions and student work was inconsistent. This approach results in misalignment of curriculum, and absence of targeted curricular adjustments across grades and subject areas, resulting in inconsistent access to rigorous learning experiences for all students.

- Deepen academic rigor by consistently designing challenging tasks and utilizing effective questioning that elicits higher-order thinking and extends learning for students on all levels. (1.2)
  - The principal believes that students learn best when they are given the opportunity to delve deeper into rigorous content, engage in student-centered instruction, collaborate and discuss evidence and viewpoints with their peers, and reflect on the process and learning. However, these practices as evidenced in classroom observations, are not being consistently implemented, as the majority of instruction observed was teacher-directed with many tasks not appropriately challenging, with an absence of text-based discussion and lack of conceptual understanding. For example, in an English class, the students' response to the teacher when asked to analyze the influence of the jury in *Twelve Angry Men*, was met with disengagement from most. One student stated, "We have been reading this same story over and over again and we need a new story", while other students ignored the teacher and began talking about things unrelated to class. In addition to the breakdown of classroom management, the lesson lacked rigor, directions for students to follow, and an ultimate objective, leaving the teacher scrambling to gain control and students not engaged in any meaningful learning. In a self-contained history class, teachers asked students to annotate, but did not hold them accountable for what they annotated. Students were asked leading and lower-level questions which resulted in the teacher answering the questions rather than allowing students to engage in productive struggle. Out of 12 classes observed, there were only three where students were frequently asked to explain their answers. Furthermore, differentiation and multiple entry points for a variety of learners were not observed, with the majority of lessons requiring all of the students to do the same work. The result is that across classrooms, not all students are consistently provided with the opportunity to engage in higher-level thinking or reflection, which is evident from low-level discussions and quality of student work products.
  
- Enhance the monitoring of curriculum development and teacher team practices to ensure that teachers are effectively meeting the learning needs of all students as they work to meet the expectations of the Common Core. (5.1)
  - The principal monitors student progress and assesses teacher instructional practices across grades and content areas to ensure coherence and to ensure teachers participate in ongoing inter-visitations to learn best practices from each other. However, while there is student work posted with tasks and rubrics that align to Common Core expectations, there is insufficient evidence that academies regularly revise and modify curriculum plans to ensure that the learning needs of all students are being planned for, resulting in only some students being prepared to meet the expectations of the Common Core.
  - While there is a system in place for teacher teams to meet weekly, there is no evidence that the school has an accountability structure in place to regularly evaluate and adjust the SLC's inquiry team practices and monitor the connection between the work they engage in during team meetings and the alignment to school goals. In addition, there is no data being tracked to show how targeted professional development, coaching, or supervisory post-observation feedback directly impacts teaching and learning. This lack of monitoring and tracking from the administrative leads, limits the school's ability to support instruction as well as student mastery of Common Core Learning Standards.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2013-2014

School name: <b>Herbert H. Lehman High School</b>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
<b>Overall QR Score</b>		<b>X</b>		
<b>Instructional Core</b>				
<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
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?		<b>X</b>		
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?		<b>X</b>		
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?			<b>X</b>	
<b>School Culture</b>				
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults?		<b>X</b>		
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations?		<b>X</b>		
<b>Systems for Improvement</b>				
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
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?			<b>X</b>	
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?		<b>X</b>		
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?		<b>X</b>		
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning?		<b>X</b>		
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?		<b>X</b>		
<b>Quality Review Scoring Key</b>				
<b>UD</b>   Underdeveloped	<b>D</b>   Developing	<b>P</b>   Proficient	<b>WD</b>   Well Developed	