



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

World Academy for Total Community Health

High School K510

**400 Pennsylvania Avenue
Brooklyn NY 11207**

Principal: Claudette Christie

**Dates of review: December 10, 2014
Lead Reviewer: Miatheresa Pate**

The School Context

World Academy for Total Community Health is a high school with 283 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 76% Black, 18% Hispanic, 1% White, and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 10% English language learners and 15% special education students. Boys account for 40% of the students enrolled and girls account for 60%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 80.0%.

School Quality Criteria

Instructional Core		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	Area of:	Rating:
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	Additional Findings	Proficient
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	Additional Findings	Developing
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	Focus	Developing
School Culture		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	Area of:	Rating:
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations	Celebration	Proficient
Systems for Improvement		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	Area of:	Rating:
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning	Additional Findings	Proficient

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders embed high expectations in all aspects of school culture, in alignment with the citywide expectations and Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and ensure structures are in place for communicating student progress to families.

Impact

Staff, students, and families are aware of the expectations of the school and the structures that support achieving these high expectations ensuring a clear outlet leading to increased student progress and college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- A review of the staff professional development calendars and the Monday Message from the principal as well as the interviews with administration and teachers, revealed active communication around high expectations for professionalism, instruction, and the accountability systems for those expectations.
- The parents revealed that the principal routinely conducts one to one sessions with them which to include the expectations for students. For instance, one parent noted, "Communication is open and there is an open door policy at World Academy for Total Community Health (WATCH)." Another stated, "Parents receive text messages and frequent calls home from the principal all the time." Additionally, parents are provided with a handbook which outlines the expectations of the school and what it means to be successful in the WATCH community.
- The parents revealed that the teachers offer guidance, support, and regularly provide updates via the PupilPath system which parents have their own passwords for daily access and receive updates on their child's data across classrooms. Additionally, the parent coordinator works hand and hand with the administration and teachers to share expectations around all aspects of school culture via meetings and phone calls home.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

2.2 Assessment

Rating:

Developing

Findings

The school is developing in their use of common assessments across classrooms. Teachers' use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment is inconsistent.

Impact

Results of teacher practice are inconsistent in its use to adjust instruction. The inconsistent use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment limits teacher's ability to meet student learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use baseline assessments and mock Regents data to identify students' strengths and challenges across content and grade. For instance, during the team meeting, teachers identified students who struggled in math and isolated the struggling students by grade. The team meeting discussed the adoption of a new math course that would support the skill gaps of students. However, the discussion did not lead to a review of strategies for struggling students in order to evaluate their progress over time.
- When observing an ELA classroom the teacher during a mini lesson asked students to review the use of allegory in, "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment", the teacher asked, "What abstract quality does each character represent?" When students were unable to answer the question, the teacher did not take advantage of the teachable moment nor did the teacher make instructional adjustments. The teacher answered the question for students and moved on with the lesson.
- The review of lesson plans provided as documentation revealed that teachers incorporate exit slips, self-assessment questions, and some mentioned rubrics as a structure to ensure ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment. For example, during the observation of an United States History class, teachers and students used a "Stop and Jot" method using post-its to self-assess their individual development of a claim and counter claim to a question "Does President Andrew Jackson deserve to be on the twenty dollar bill?". During the observation of a math class, one student engaged in "Stop and Jot" to respond to a math equation in the front of the room via the Smart board. However, the use of ongoing checks for understanding and adjustment of instruction such as those mentioned was observed in only three out of eight classrooms.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders and faculty made purposeful decisions in aligning curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). The school has planned and refined curricula academic tasks across content areas.

Impact

Academic tasks provide consistent opportunities to engage diverse subgroups and promote college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders have partnered with an external vendor, Curricula21, to ensure the alignment of curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards. For instance, the faculty has engaged in professional development with Dr. Heidi Hays Jacobs specifically around connecting unit plans to the Common Core. Additionally, the school has partnered with Pearson and New Vision for Public Schools who provide instructional coach support for teachers in implementing the new curricula.
- In reviewing the school wide professional development calendar for the 2014-15 school year, it was observed that school leaders scheduled whole and small group sessions with content supervisor and coach to plan and refine curricula and academic tasks. For instance, the professional development calendar notes that the first, second and third Tuesday of each month will be dedicated to developing pedagogical skills focused on improving academic task.
- Planning of tiered tasks was integrated into unit and lesson plans. For instance, in an English language arts lesson plan, the teacher planned on using different texts and graphic organizers for specific groups of students including English language learners and students with disabilities. In a global history lesson plan, the teacher's plans reflected different academic tasks to be completed via group work.

Quality Indicator:	4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured inquiry-based professional collaborations aligned to school goals. Distributive leadership structures are in place to support the inclusion of teachers in key decisions.

Impact

The work of teacher teams has strengthened the instructional capacity of teachers resulting in teachers having built leadership capacity and a voice in key decisions.

Supporting Evidence

- The administration and teachers revealed that the adoption of the book, “Power of Protocols”, serves as an inquiry based structure aimed at strengthening teacher capacity to gather data and analyze gaps in the implementation of the Common Core. Additionally, teachers are able to self-select which protocol to use during team meetings around procedures in looking at inquiry work.
- The administration and teachers revealed that in October, the math team conducted an analysis of the baseline and Regents data. The information revealed that the students lacked basic mathematical skill sets that were causing barriers to enhance performance on exams. The team recommended that if the school offered students a program option which delivered instruction in small groups and could target individual student needs, the program would effectively address the mathematical needs of their targeted population and, at the same time, offer our student a credit value. The team presented minutes to administration, who in turn, shared the remediation with the accreditation team.
- WATCH has a school goal of increasing its graduation rate by 5% and to increase student attendance on the 9th and 12 grades by 5% for the school year. The accreditation team, consisting of teachers, content coaches and administrators, reviews content and academic policies using student transcripts and work. For instance, while observing a team meeting, teachers were focused on assessing and determining the accreditation status of a math course and the advantages and disadvantages of the program. The team reviewed course material and its alignment to the Common Core Standards. The administration and teachers during the meeting discussed that the course would benefit their targeted population and was aligned to the Common Core Standards. The team further shared that the program would offer students a credit value which they thought would serve as an incentive to boost attendance.

Findings

Across classrooms, teaching strategies inconsistently provide entry points and discussions reflect uneven levels of student thinking and participation.

Impact

Students demonstrate uneven rigor in work products, participation and discussion resulting from limited opportunities and emphasis of teaching practice to engage them at high levels of critical thinking

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers are in the process of developing key instructional strategies across classrooms. For instance, “Accountable Talk Stems” were placed on the corner of each student’s desk in classrooms observed. However, teachers’ use of the stems as an instructional strategy was inconsistent across classrooms. For instance, in a Career and Technical Education (CTE) class, the teacher instructed the students to refer to an accountable talk stem before sharing their response with the class. In a United States history class, a student looked down at the accountable talk stems and incorporated the one of them into their rebuttal statement to another student but struggled to do so in their response. The integration of these teaching strategies was inconsistent across classrooms.
- Across classrooms, teacher practices reflected some use of academic vocabulary to support student discussions. For instance, in an ELA class, students self-selected five out of eight work stations to engage and collect evidence to answer the question “What gives language its power?” The evidence was collected via text, posters, pictures, and video which led to a culminating peer to peer conversation. This level of peer to peer dialogue was inconsistent across classrooms as in many classrooms questioning appeared teacher directed.
- While administration and teachers indicated a willingness to ensure student thinking and participation, across classrooms teachers utilized low level Depth of Knowledge (DOK) questions. In addition, student generated questions were limited across classrooms. Furthermore, across classrooms, students were seated in pairs and/or groups but student to student group work or peer to peer discussion was limited or not observed.