



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report 2014-2015

High School for Service & Learning at Erasmus

High School K539

**911 Flatbush Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11226**

Principal: Peter Fabianski

**Date of review: January 20, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Tammy Pate**

School Context

The High School for Service & Learning at Erasmus is a high school with 436 students from grades 9-12. The school population comprises 81% Black, 12% Hispanic, 2% White, 3% Asian, and 2% Amer. Indian or Native Alaskan students. The student body includes 9% English language learners and 13% special education students. Boys account for 68% of the students enrolled and girls account for 32%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 is 86.0%.

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	Celebration	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	Focus	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	Additional Findings	Proficient
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	Additional Findings	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:

1.1 Curriculum

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards, integrate the instructional shifts, and that academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

Impact

The school leader and teachers have made purposeful decisions to build coherence and promote college and career readiness for all students including English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities so that all students have access to the curricula and tasks and are cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence

- Literacy and math curricula include text-based writing activities that teachers differentiate for ELLs by grouping, vocabulary and language studies, and interim checks for understanding during lessons. Science and social studies curricula align with the Common Core and include text-based lesson activities that require students to use specific reading and writing skills as part of their demonstration of understanding.
- Curriculum maps illustrate the school's adaptation of sample tasks from Engage NY and network created curricula as well as the New York State scope and sequence and Common Core Learning Standards across all content areas. New Visions has supported the school over the last six years using Literacy Design Collaborative (LDC), a national instructional initiative to write Common Core aligned literacy units.
- Teachers shared that they look at student work during team meetings in order to identify instructional foci with high leverage for all students. They shared one experience at noticing multiple students performing poorly on an assessment and after analyzing the students' work, they realized the need to focus on vocabulary. One grade decided to dedicate one day each week for vocabulary practice to help prepare students to take the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT).
- Teachers spoke about their use of technology to support instructional practices for ELLs and students with disabilities, including: Empower 3000, Achieve 3000, Up Front Magazine (Scholastic), Google translate, Teachers Curriculum Institute, and Flocabulary (SAT prep).

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Developing

Findings

Across classrooms, teaching strategies, including questioning, scaffolds in English and/or native language, where appropriate, and routines inconsistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula. Student work products and discussions reflect uneven levels of student thinking and participation.

Impact

Since teaching practices have not fully incorporated the instructional shifts concurrent with the roll-out of the Common Core curriculum, rigorous questioning and multiple entry points are not yet embedded in the majority of classrooms. This has led to uneven engagement in appropriately challenging tasks and uneven demonstration of higher-order thinking skills in student work products, including the work of ELLs and students with disabilities.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders use feedback based on the Danielson Framework to support teacher implementation of the Common Core curriculum in daily instructional practice. The school is currently assessing the impact of newly implemented instructional practices, including the provision of multiple entry points for all learners.
- School leaders shared that New Visions is supporting their efforts to align curricula and instructional practices. A review of aggregated observation reports reflects a need for calibration among school administrators around assuring that teaching reflects the school's beliefs around how students learn best. Teachers spoke about surfacing questioning as an area of focus. They further stated that they are working across departments, including special education and ELL teachers, to focus on making questioning more rigorous and accessible for all learners.
- Questioning practices observed during class visits revealed uneven demonstration of higher order thinking demands. Questions ranged from levels 1 to 2 using Depth of Knowledge (DOK) question stems. A similar lack of rigorous questioning was evident in student work products. Portfolio content, including writing tasks and numerous worksheets, included recall of facts and details from text more than descriptions and explanations of character actions and conflict.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Teachers use common rubrics and assessments aligned to the curriculum that set standards for student achievement, and enable tracking of student performance to determine progress toward goals across grades and subject areas.

Impact

The use of common assessments enables teacher to have deeper conversations about student achievement and work products that are leading to improved pedagogy.

Supporting Evidence

- Administration and teachers have met to review NYC Measures of Student Learning (MOSL) and English language arts (ELA) Performance Series assessments and have identified areas of greatest strength and greatest need in order to prioritize targeted support for individual students and groups of students.
- Teachers demonstrated how the school uses assessments to inform curriculum development. Teachers shared that they use their weekly scheduled meetings to look at student work to determine the degree of student understanding and to inform adjustments to their shared lesson plans when student work reveals a problem.
- Literacy and math coaches facilitate looking at student work protocols on a weekly basis. During the observed meeting, the coach led teachers through a reading of selected student work and asked for plus and minus feedback and noticings. The meeting ended with next steps that asked teachers to identify, "...the highest, most impactful skill to leverage across all subjects and grades."
- Students and parents receive progress reports and students can attend after school tutoring where they are also offered enrichment based on their in-class assessments and their individual self-assessments
- Teachers chose Danielson Framework 3d (Using Assessment in Instruction) as their school-wide focus. Department teams request and share observation feedback and use the feedback to create mini inquiry teams that review and revise interim assessments based on student performance.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders and teacher teams and staff establish a culture for learning and consistently communicate high expectations that are connected to a path to college and career readiness for all students.

Impact

School wide systems offer ongoing feedback and guidance/advisement supports that prepare all students for the next level and help families to understand their child's progress toward expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff during staff and department meetings and professional development and utilize the Danielson Framework to support teacher understanding and compliance.
- Teachers meet on a regular basis. School leaders and teacher leaders have created a system of accountability for maintaining meeting notes and implementing next steps.
- School leaders and teachers shared that students can retake regents and are supported through afterschool and Saturday tutoring services. Saturday school also functions as a credit recovery structure. Students attend up to two terms of Saturday school per school year. 100% attendance is mandatory and sessions are four hours each Saturday.
- Parents remark that regardless of when students enter the school, guidance counselors, teachers and administrators work to support students in making progress and preparing for college and careers and parents are supported and encouraged to partner with the school through frequent communication, progress reporting and leadership opportunities.
- The school currently attracts a majority of male students because of its sports programs. There are fewer after school programs, clubs, and sports activities for female students. The principal has added a paid internship program that currently employs a majority of female participants.

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

Structures enable teacher teams to analyze assessment data on a consistent basis, and teacher leaders are formally and informally cultivated to shape and influence improvements in instruction among their peers.

Impact

The continual evaluation of pedagogical practices by teachers is improving the quality of instruction and student progress toward goals. Teachers utilize leadership roles to engage in peer-to-peer collaboration that is improving pedagogy and student achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher team meetings are fully teacher led, and teachers shared that when they need help in a certain pedagogical area they go and observe a colleague that they know does that specific skill well.
- Every grade and each content area has a teacher leader. Teacher leaders meet regularly with administration to discuss curriculum, student performance trends and the needs of the grade or department.
- Following an in-depth analysis of incoming ninth-grade data, teachers elected to use Glencoe McGraw Hill, a Common Core aligned curriculum, to support the learning needs of lower performing students because it offers online resources such as tiered activities that include assessments, virtual manipulatives, lesson animations, and personalized instruction modules.
- The school uses Skedula, a program to track student performance and run progress reports for parents and students. Teacher team analyses of student performance using Skedula revealed a drop in overall credit accumulation and led to a school-wide student study whereby each teacher selected ten students to track and support. Administration shared that 80% of teachers are participating in this initiative. Administration anticipates having 100% participation before the end of the school year.