



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

International Arts Business School

High School K544

**600 Kingston Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11203**

Principal: Angelo Marra

Date of review: December 1, 2014

Lead Reviewer: Michael Prayor

The School Context

International Arts Business High School is a high school with 12 students in grade 12. The school population comprises 75% Black, 17% Hispanic, 0% White, and 8% Asian students. The student body includes 8% English language learners and 0% special education students. Boys account for 33% of the students enrolled and girls account for 67%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 76.0%. International Arts Business High School is in its last year of Phase Out status. The school will not accept new students after June 30, 2015.

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	Developing
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	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

Findings

School leaders communicate high expectations consistently to staff and offer feedback regarding student progress to families.

Impact

Structures and systems that hold the entire staff accountable to the school's high expectations are in place. School leaders and staff members offer families ongoing feedback to understand their child's progress towards college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- As stated during the leadership interview, the school's instructional focus is, "Students will develop rigorous habits and higher thinking skills by engaging in learning experiences that support college and career readiness." Teachers are provided training and supported monthly as evidenced by the professional learning plan. Professional development topics such as, "How do we create engaging lessons that promote student learning and questioning?" and "collaborative learning" ensure that staff are held accountable to those instructional expectations.
- The principal had all students sign a senior activities eligibility contract. This contract outlines that all students must maintain a 75 grade, not an overall average, in each class. Students spoke highly of their contract and mentioned that guidance supports them to achieve high expectations and advise them of their progress.
- School leaders provide students and parents with a monthly subscription of *Senior Prep News*. All students must sign that they have received a copy of the senior prep news for their parents. The content of the October issue of *Senior Prep News* reminds seniors and their parents about the college admissions process, scholarships, grants, American College Test (ACT) and Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) study tips, and several other strategies as they prepare for college and career.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Developing

Findings

Pedagogical practices about how students learn best as informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching and the instructional shifts were inconsistent across classrooms. The school is beginning to find strategies to engage all learners in rigorous and appropriately challenging tasks as demonstrated by meaningful student work products.

Impact

Across classrooms, teaching practices led students, including English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities (SWDs), to uneven engagement in tasks relative to demonstrating higher order thinking skills and meaningful work products.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal's belief about how students learn best is, "engaging students in a learning experience that supports college and career readiness." In two out of four classrooms observed, lessons were not rigorous and students did not demonstrate higher order thinking skills. In the ecology course and the health course, students were observed during the mini lesson. The teacher did not use strategies to engage students in a high level discussion, provide rigorous texts, or writing tasks to challenge the class. Modeling and samples of the intended product were not visible for students to use as a guide.
- A health class observed was teacher-centered and provided very little time for all students, including English language learners and students with disabilities, with time on task. The two teachers used the instructional time to review lesson expectations, clarify and provide examples. Students spent very little time applying, synthesizing information and evaluating the skills taught. They sat passively, listening to the teachers, leaving very little time for student-to-student engagement, collaboration, or time on task.
- During a science ecology lesson, students transitioned in pairs to create a pamphlet assignment on tourists visiting a biome. Although students were paired, there was very little evidence of purposeful pairing for differentiated instruction. The teacher walked around to follow up on students' pacing. One pair of students' work was lost and they had to start the project over. As a result, these students were very far behind all the other students.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that the curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards yet instructional shifts are in the process of being integrated. Academic tasks with higher order thinking skills were planned inconsistently across classrooms and for a variety of learners.

Impact:

School leaders are beginning to plan for opportunities for students to engage in rigorous tasks and use student work to refine curricula. However, the current limited access to curricula and academic tasks for all learners, including English language learners and students with disabilities, across classrooms impedes college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- A review of curricula revealed that unit plans from two out of four classes are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards yet the integration of the instructional shifts is being developed. For example, the health curriculum was aligned to the content standards. Although the lesson plan for health has Common Core Learning Standards, the activity did not fully integrate the instructional shifts.
- The ecology curriculum map reflects planning, yet lacked higher order thinking and learning activities to challenge 12th grade students. The essential questions on the map for the ecology unit were: “What is a biome?”, “How do we differentiate among types of biomes?”, “What type of adaptation do organisms need to survive in each biome?” The goals of the unit started with verbs such as, “distinguish between”, “describe the characteristics”, and “identify organisms”, which align to Depth of Knowledge levels 1 and 2, resulting in a lesson lacking cognitive rigor.
- Curricula and academic tasks were not differentiated to the students’ levels or learning needs. Lesson plans reflected no evidence of planning for individualized instructional support.

Findings

The school uses rubrics that are not fully aligned to the curricula across subject areas. Across classrooms, teachers' assessment practices are inconsistent in their use of ongoing checks for understanding and self-assessment.

Impact

Across classrooms, teacher assessment practices are beginning to provide feedback to students and some adjustments are made towards having their learning needs met.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, teachers used some rubrics and other assessment practices, yet provided limited guidance and feedback to meet the needs of all learners. For example, during a science ecology lesson on biomes, the students were asked to work in pairs and create a pamphlet that would encourage tourists to visit each student's biome. The rubric given to students did not provide a clear pathway to successfully complete the assignment, or how to improve the quality of work. Furthermore, the rubric provided some guidance to explain the responsibilities for students working in pairs on the assignment.
- A review of student folders and work products showed inconsistent use of rubrics and actionable feedback. For example, feedback given to students using post-it notes on a bulletin board in a health classroom indicated the students' writing level aligned to a rubric with rating levels 1-4. However the rubric used was not appropriate for this task. The task stated students were required to use their, "notes and other sources, complete the following task on the homework sheet provided. Define the term emotion, name and describe five common emotions, and explain how emotions are linked to health and wellness. Give an example." The rubric used was a writing rubric that checked for organization, paraphrasing and paragraph development which was not germane to the task provided to students.
- In most classrooms, observations conducted revealed that self-assessment practices were not evident. For example, in a 12th grade health class, the teacher provided some opportunities for students to engage in self or peer-to-peer assessments. The teacher made some adjustments to the activities in accordance with the learning needs of a variety of learners.

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

Teachers are engaged in shared leadership activities, and inquiry-based professional collaborations on teams that analyze assessment data, student work and goals for groups of students.

Impact

Teachers are actively involved in the inquiry process which leads to adjustments in curricula and instruction based on student progress. Teachers' voices result in professional development and other key decisions that affect student learning across classrooms.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher leaders conduct the professional learning for all teachers. One professional development session conducted by an English teacher in October centered on component 4e relative to growing and developing professionally. The teachers engaged in a TED TALK by Sarah-Jayne Blackmore, about the mysterious workings of the adolescent brain. During the professional development, teachers engaged in activities on developing interdisciplinary projects to enable students to acquire new knowledge and skills, while engaging them in the way their brain processes information. Several teachers interviewed commented on their excitement about professional development opportunities within the school.
- During a 12th grade teacher team meeting, teachers developed a protocol that determines which students were going to retake their Regents to obtain a 75 or 80 on the English language arts and math tests. These students were chosen based on their current performance on the Regents exam. The team of teachers determined which students would only take one or two exams in January versus taking all three exams. Professional learning teams analyzed June and August Regents results and current in-school formative performance. This work resulted in next steps for refining curricula, assessments and professional development. These teacher team meetings occur daily.
- The principal provides distributive leadership opportunities for his teachers. On the 12th grade team, the math teacher is the data specialist, and the English teacher runs professional development. After interviewing the teacher team, they confirmed that their voices are heard and are part of the decision making that affects the school and student learning. A review of documentation revealed that the principal meets with his cabinet and teacher teams weekly.