



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Academy of Urban Planning

High School K552

**400 Irving Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11237**

Principal: Kyleema Norman

**Date of review: April 21, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Steven Strull**

The School Context

Academy of Urban Planning is a high school with 279 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 28% Black, 69% Hispanic, 1% White, and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 29% English language learners and 28% special education students. Boys account for 54% of the students enrolled and girls account for 46%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 79.0%.

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	Proficient
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	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	Celebration	Well Developed

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

All teachers are engaged in multiple teaming structures utilizing an inquiry approach to support their learning and development.

Impact

Teachers' professional time yields a continuously strengthened instructional capacity of teachers and a systematic analysis of student work.

Supporting Evidence

- Each department team chose three students to shadow for an entire school day using a school created student observation log. In subsequent teacher team meetings, teachers focused their professional conversation on engagement of the students and student-to-student discussion in class. Additionally, teachers collected and discussed samples of student writing and student assessment in class.
- In grade team meetings, teachers present their lessons for feedback utilizing a lesson plan refining protocol. The following week, teachers bring in student work from the lesson to determine if the goals were met. Teachers discuss places where student writing, student discussion, and both teacher-to-student and peer-to-peer assessment could occur more effectively based on analysis of student work products and teacher input.
- Based on data collected at teacher team meetings, including analyses of student work and student achievement data, teachers feel empowered to lead professional development that address areas of concern. School-wide protocols and templates are created out of these endeavors, including the Academy of Urban Planning Student Work Protocol and the Academy of Urban Planning Lesson Plan Learning Protocol. This has led to a more defined instructional coherence, improvements to teacher practice, and increased achievement for all students. As a result there has been an increase in the number of students passing the ELA Regents from 60% to 63% and an increase in the percentage of students passing the math Regents from 42% to 51% from the 2011-2012 school year to the 2013-2014 school year.
- Department teams utilize a Formative Assessment of Student Work Protocol to analyze a formative assessment such as a mock Regents examinations or a performance task. The protocol asks teachers to describe the assignment, look at work samples from each student in the class, engage in a more in-depth analysis of four student's work as a case study, develop hypotheses around patterns and trends observed, and collaboratively determine next steps as a department.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

There is a school-wide grading policy aligned to the school's curriculum and teachers regularly check for understanding and student engagement.

Impact

Across classroom, teachers provide students with actionable feedback and students know how they are progressing in each of their classes and what their next steps are, however, the practice does not yet sufficiently allow students to respond to teachers' comments.

Supporting Evidence

- On bulletin boards in both classrooms and hallways student work is displayed with specific feedback from teachers, including strengths, challenges, and next steps. The practice is not yet iterative. For example, students do not have a chance to respond, either verbally or in writing, to the teacher's comments. However, there is clear indication that students use the feedback to improve future work as evidenced during the student interviews.
- In a physics class, students were engaged in peer-to-peer assessment and feedback around the completion of a formative task applying an equation to a specific problem. Each learner was charged with giving their colleague two strengths and two challenges or next steps relating to the completion and application of the equation.
- Exit slips are used across classrooms to inform teachers on a daily basis of each student's progress. In an eleventh grade English language arts classroom, the exit slip was for each learner to create his or her own example of irony. The lesson's aim was "How does dialogue highlight the juxtaposition of the words in *A Streetcar Named Desire*?" Students were to look for examples of verbal irony and sarcasm embedded in the text. The exit slip was a vehicle for the teacher to determine the level to which the students understood the use and application of irony in text.
- Across classrooms, students utilize a peer editing worksheet and a peer editing summary sheet with rubrics attached to each document. Students can give peer-to-peer formative assessment of the writing process as well as a self-evaluation based on the feedback received. Students then write the next draft of the assignment based on two "glows" and two "grows."

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The school's curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards ensuring there is rigorous and engaging curriculum in each subject.

Impact

A high level of student engagement is achieved by the teachers' development of curriculum through the active use of the Common Core Learning Standards.

Supporting Evidence

- There is a Curriculum Unit Map rubric created by the Curriculum Review Team that serves as an exemplar for all unit map development ensuring the Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts are included as part of the curriculum planning process. A roll out workshop was designed and facilitated ensuring that each teacher knew how to use the rubric as part of his/her curriculum planning.
- Lesson plan protocols are used to refine lessons after teachers submit their lesson plan to their teacher grade teams. An example of a calculus lesson plan shows the teacher's initial planning, the feedback that was given on the lesson plan, and the subsequent adaptations and adjustments that were made to the lesson based on warm and cool feedback that the teacher received. This is an example of refining a lesson plan so that the academic task is accessible to a variety of learners including English language learners and students with disabilities.
- Teachers receive one-to-one feedback from administrators concerning the alignment of Common Core Learning Standards and the promotion of higher order thinking skills. To promote effective and highly effective ranges in planning for instruction, teachers meet with administration to discuss various teaching techniques as to how the planned curriculum will be delivered and subsequently units and lessons are refined or recreated to allow for the purposeful planning of the instructional shifts. Teachers report the planning time with administrators is a key element in their planning as they feel their lesson plans are refined through multiple lenses.
- Teachers take pride in their increased level of mastery in curriculum planning working with both peers and administrators. Additionally, teachers are able to attend professional development sessions with the goal of improving their written curriculum. An example is a science teacher who attended a math modeling professional development and reports she "can't wait" to apply the knowledge learned toward the creation of scientific modeling to use in her science curriculum.

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Student work products and discussion reflect high levels of student thinking and there are multiple entry points for all learners including English language learners and students with disabilities.

Impact

Students are engaged in classrooms performing tasks that are appropriate and challenging and create work products that demonstrate high levels of participation and thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- In a self-contained global studies class, students were preparing for a presentation to share their learning in response to the question “Will technology replace the human work force?” Students were first asked to engage in a gallery walk with examples of different types of technology and respond to the question using their own lived experience and background knowledge. They then read a text related to each of the technologies and were asked to pull textual evidence to support their claim. Each student then presented their findings based on both prior knowledge and textual evidence to the class.
- In a ninth grade Living Environment class students were seated in groups of three or four based on each student’s reading level, readiness, learning preferences, and language proficiency. Group roles were assigned based on the teacher’s knowledge of each student and included manager, time-keeper, presenter, researcher, and recorder. Some of the roles were doubled based on the size of the group and the academic readiness of the students in each group. Additionally, each group was charged with developing their own inquiry-based questions about anatomical structures, as an example of higher-order thinking skills.
- In a tenth grade English language arts classroom devoted to Urban Studies, discussions reflected high levels of student thinking and the students were empowered to create their own learning with the teacher acting as a facilitator or guide. The task was to understand the author’s use of characterization to further create conflict in a novel and students were able to build off of each other’s comments as well as incorporate textual evidence to back up their claims.
- In a tenth grade integrated co-teaching global studies class, students analyzed primary and secondary sources toward gaining a better understanding of Ho Chi Minh and his role during the Cold War. Students facilitated their own learning as they rotated among eight stations and were asked to fill out a graphic organizer with information they learned from the sources. As a pedagogical strategy, the teacher created a carousel whereby students left one question or statement at each station blank for other students to complete.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

A culture for learning has been established through the consistent communication of high expectations of administrators to teachers and teachers to students and families.

Impact

Consistent communication of expectations by and to all stakeholders yields a positive school tone and climate. Additionally, there is a mutual system of accountability for those expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- As a way of promoting a college going culture and preparing students for the next level, the school instituted additional field trips to colleges and universities. The school offers “College Summit” classes to prepare students for college applications and assistance with receiving financial aid. To help prepare students for college, each student is expected to write, perform, or participate in a research based exit project by grade. The projects consist of a visual presentation, a research paper, or an oral presentation. Each grade level has a class programmed dedicated toward the project where college appropriate expectations are outlined.
- Expectations are extended to parents and families in a variety of ways. The parent coordinator is expected to reach out to 10 parents each week to discuss academic progress and provide families with feedback on students who are either in danger of failing as well as students who are excelling in their classroom. Teachers have frequent contact and communication with parents through phone calls, e-mails, text-messages, and one-to-one meetings. Parents report these communications are invaluable in helping them assess their children’s progress through the instructional program.
- Students report they have access to rubrics for all their classes, which allows them to know what is expected of them in the completion of academic tasks and preparation for examinations. Students comment that their teacher’s notes with “next steps” help them know how to improve their work and meet the high expectations their teachers set for them. Students repeatedly spoke of feeling supported by their teachers and understand their teachers are helping them to not only succeed in high school but to help prepare them for the college or career of their choice.
- Guidance counselors are involved in helping students prepare for their success beyond high school. In one instance, a guidance counselor found an enrichment course on environmental issues because she knew the student was interested in the topic and could possibly pursue environmental studies in college. In another case, a student indicated she was interested in the medical field and the guidance counselor arranged for her to apply for a course to learn about what it is like to become a surgeon and practice medicine.