

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Bedford Academy High School

High School K595

**1119 Bedford Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11216**

Principal: Adofu Muhammad

Date of review: December 19, 2014

Lead Reviewer: Karen Watts

The School Context

Bedford Academy High School is a High School with 364 students from 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 85% Black, 7% Hispanic, 1% White, and 3% Asian students. The student body includes 1% English language learners and 12% special education students. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 50%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-14 was 94.9%.

School Quality Criteria

Instructional Core		
<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</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	Well Developed
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	Well Developed
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	Well Developed
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	Well Developed
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	Well Developed

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:

1.1 Curriculum

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

All students have access to the school's curricula composed of high school level courses aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and college level courses that include Advanced Placement (AP), College Now and Computer Science courses that strategically integrate the common core shifts and include academic tasks that build rigorous habits and higher-order skills.

Impact

Students are cognitively engaged in rigorous tasks that promote the development of the college and career readiness skills and allow them to demonstrate their higher order thinking in their work products.

Supporting Evidence

- The school is focused on the development of the students' college readiness. Students participate in a College Orientation Program at Long Island University each school year. The school offers Advanced Placement courses in nine subject areas as well as preparation for ACT and SAT exams and unique courses such as Black Capitalism in the Media Studies program.
- Mathematics and English Language Arts teachers access the resources on Engage NY to use as they align the school's curriculum to the Common Core Standards. All teachers use the student assessment data, including 8th grade test scores and pre- and post-tests from summer bridge for the 9th graders, to design academic tasks that engage a diversity of learners. Universal Design for Learning principles, such as the incorporation of technology and use of graphic organizers provide access to tasks, which was evidenced in the lessons.
- Academic tasks are planned to include opportunities for students to engage in close reading, annotating, analysis of a variety of texts at various levels of complexity, asking the right open-ended questions, discussion, public speaking and all writing forms as well as to instill academic skills such as time management, perseverance and accountability.
- All lesson plans include a student learning objective, a focus question, standards that are being addressed, reading resources and opportunities for discussions either in groups or whole class and opportunities for students to write in all classes. In the classrooms, lessons begin with a Do Now followed by a mini-lesson and the students are then released to Independent Work Time.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

Instructional strategies such as open-ended questioning, flexible grouping and the independent reading of complex texts support the school's belief that student learn best through inquiry, research, and from each other in small print rich settings.

Impact

Students are consistently engaged in inquiry based academic tasks that build their research and writing skills and promote their high levels of participation, ownership and thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- Students in the AP classes are required to write chapter summaries, draft a short response with a thesis, which is a rigorous common core aligned task. Submitted student work evidenced high order, critical thinking and writing skills.
- The school's instructional focus of questioning techniques is supported with techniques such as dialogue to deepen student analysis, wait time, scaffolded questions and direct instruction to lay the foundation and springboard to inquiry. For example, in classrooms observed teachers pose open end questions that build on students' responses and challenge students to justify their answer.
- Classrooms are print rich with word walls, student work and process charts. There is more choice, voice and agency as the grade level of the student's increases. For example, students in the ninth grade were reading grade appropriate such as *Of Mice and Men* and conducted deeper analysis of autobiographical texts in the 12th grade.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:

2.2 Assessment

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

Teachers create and use a variety of assessments ranging from diagnostics to AP exams to create a clear picture of student progress towards goals across grades and subjects. Students engage in self and peer assessments to assist teachers in making effective adjustments to instruction.

Impact

Students learning needs are addressed and assessment results demonstrate increase in student mastery of content and skills because they are aware of their next learning steps.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses a variety of assessments from diagnostics to AP Exams, PSAT, SAT, and ACT that provide feedback on how students are progressing towards college proficiency. Rubrics are used to show students where they are in terms of mastery of certain power standards such as writing an argumentative essay and students receive next steps to continue to work towards reaching or exceeding mastery.
- Students participate in academic competitions, conduct research projects that end in MLA type research papers, mock Regents and AP exams as well as take College Level Exam Program (CLEP) exams for college credit.
- The principal closely analyzes the marking period grades on scholarship reports and the results from Mock exams to provide interventions such as ILearn courses where students can recover credits, Castle Learning for Regents exam preparation, and peer and teacher tutorials.

Findings

School leaders and teachers consistently share expectations about pathways to college and careers with the students and their families. The school has effective guidance and advisement structures in place to support students' progress and performance with regard to the expectations.

Impact

Students own their education experience at this school through effective feedback on their progress and performance and they are well prepared for postsecondary opportunities in higher education or careers upon graduation.

Supporting Evidence

- It is all about college at this school. Parents, teachers, students and the administration all speak to the preparation of the scholars for post-secondary success. Students are exposed to culturally relevant pedagogy as well as female and male empowerment classes.
- Students are aware of the pathways to college and careers at the school that include early college options through College Now, AP and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses. The school tests early and often to ensure that students receive the feedback they need to succeed. The school has yearly testing, such as SAT, AP and MOSL, but also has pre and post assessments. Most incoming 9th graders enter the school with passing grades on the Algebra I Regents exams and they take the English Language Arts Regents exam in January of their 9th grade year so that they can reach college proficiency and qualify to take college level courses whether AP, IB or College Now.
- Guidance counselors work closely with students and their families around the college application process and celebrate students' college acceptances at four-year competitive colleges on bulletin boards in the school. There is an open door policy for parents, and through a class-parent committee, class-parents outsource volunteer opportunities to all the parents in their class via email and phone calls. Parents are encouraged to join the PTA, and staff is trained on how to involve parents. There are grade meetings that provide parents with the specific targets of each grade.

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

Structures are in place to ensure that teacher leaders run collaborative teacher teams that systematically analyze key elements of their practice such as assessment results and participate in key decision making at the school.

Impact

School leaders listen to teachers' voice and decisions are made to support their development and effectiveness in the classroom leading to improvements in student scholarship and more students reaching mastery on Regents exams.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal distributes leadership with the teacher members of the instructional leadership team. He meets with them weekly to ensure that they are working with the teachers on their teams to shift instructional practices and ensure that more teachers are highly effective within the classrooms using the Danielson Framework for Teaching. The team leaders ensure that the principal receives the minutes from all team meetings.
- There is an implementation team that ensures that curricula revisions based on data analysis take place to include supports such as different entry points and additional supports for students with disabilities so that all students can access and be successful in rigorous curricula.
- Grade teams employ specific strategies and tactics to address students social-emotional and personal behaviors. For Example, the ninth grade team conducts a “Student Spotlight” that focus on three at risk students weekly. Subject areas teams define instructional goals and actions. Teams choose their leaders and the leaders receive professional development in facilitation of meetings. The principal and assistant principals visit the teams as they meet to support their work.