



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Dr. Edmund Horan School

High School M079

55 East 120 Street

Manhattan

NY 10035

Principal: Greer Phillips

Date of review: May 27-28, 2015

Lead Reviewer: Beverly Ffolkes-Bryant, Ed.D.

The School Context

Dr. Edmund Horan School is a high school with 250 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 34% Black, 60% Hispanic, 3% White, 1% American Indian/Alaskan Native and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 35% English language learners and 100% 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 was 77.7%.

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	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	Additional Findings	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	Focus	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
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Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure curricular alignment to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) while strategically integrating the instructional shifts. Higher order thinking skills are emphasized in academic tasks and coherently embedded across grades and subjects.

Impact

The school's curricular decisions build coherence and promote college and career readiness across grades and content areas so that all learners must demonstrate their thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- Prior to piloting the Unique and Attainment curriculum, the school had created their own curriculum. The instructional specialist wrote a *Blueprint for Teaching*, based on the expectations of the New York State (NYS) Alternate Assessment (NYSAA). The *Blueprint* includes the specific CCLS skills students need to know and understand and the NYS Career Development and Occupational Studies Standards (CDOS), and contains the Big Ideas for the year written into occupational areas for work study. Also, the *Blueprint* has a math component. Teachers make a selection of which occupational areas they are going to focus on and that cohort creates their own pacing calendar. To supplement this work, the school is piloting two District 75 curricula to decide on school-wide implementation.
- The competencies that comprise this *Blueprint for Teaching* are designed to offer a comprehensive set of learning experiences to address the various academic, communicative, behavioral and socio-emotional needs of students. The information presented in each component engages teachers in collaborations about how to increase rigor by using Webb's *Depth of Knowledge* and provides multiple points of access (differentiation of instruction) by implementing the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) through application of technology resources. Teachers and related service providers can modify the instructional materials and academic task sequences in order to provide Individual Educational Plan (IEP) driven instruction. Teachers focused on the following shifts for English language arts (ELA): building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction (30%) and informational texts (70%); reading and writing grounded in evidence from text (text-based answers); regular practice with complex text and its academic vocabulary; for math: rigor: require fluency, application, and problem solving.
- The school recognizes the need for refining academic tasks as a means to support the differentiation efforts aimed at providing students with access to the NYSAA Frameworks, the CCLS and the instructional shifts for transition readiness (21st century skills). Teachers collaborate in different partnership efforts addressing the refinement of academic tasks: IEP conferences, NYSAA Collegial Review meetings, cohort team meetings, ADVANCE Academy meetings and feedback cycles, peer inter-visitation, coaching and mentoring sessions, and walkthroughs. These venues allow teachers to examine students' cognitive, social-emotional, and physical needs, refine academic tasks, and make decisions about next steps for instruction to ensure rigor and access are being provided.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

2.2 Assessment

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

Even though the school uses common assessments in all subject areas, tracks student progress and checks for understanding, some teachers do not provide consistent feedback to students with detailed reasons of their success based on specific rubrics to help them set and achieve their goals.

Impact

This practice of providing feedback to students in all core subjects is not yet an embedded practice so that all learners are aware of their next learning steps.

Supporting Evidence

- Based on recommendations from the previous Quality Review, teachers now provide feedback that includes next steps using a rubric. However, even though there were clear expectations on next steps written, teachers' positive feedback on student work included only the adjectives and no mention of what they particularly did well, some do not provide next steps and, some provided no feedback at all.
- The School Rubric is a scoring tool that is used to facilitate the formative assessment process for students on the continuum of development in alternate assessment settings. The rubric helps teachers determine the level of accuracy attained by students with regard to concepts and skills that they need to know and are able to do across content areas. This rubric measures a standard of performance of students, delineates consistent criteria for grading across cohorts, and provides focused feedback on academic tasks, prompt reflection and instructional next steps. Both rubrics are formatted to the Mood Meter from the Emotional Literacy program to teach emotional intelligence. When using both rubrics, students have verbal or physical cues or prompt to refocus them on the assessment task.
- In order to support P79M Instructional Core and the next steps outlined in the Incident Reduction Plan, Data Thursdays was implemented. The data is analyzed from Getting Ready to Learn program (GRTL) which is facilitated in all classrooms each morning and as a behavioral intervention during lunch with the 6:1: 1 population to prepare them for transition after lunch and instructional tasks. As a result, there was a decrease in self-stimming and an increase in students staying on task during instructional activities. Student work was collected in order to ascertain whether the interventions implemented would correlate to increased outcomes for students and would be evident in their work and behaviors. The data provided clearly delineates an upward trend in closing the achievement gap as it pertains to student work and behavior as evident in the Spring SANDI assessment.
- The school reviews data pertaining to student infractions and occurrences from two sources: the SWIS and the OORS. SWIS, or the School Wide Information System, is an internal data collections system that reviews the average number of referrals per day, the times these infractions are occurring, where these infractions occur, the type of location and the individual responsible. By reviewing the data from both sources, they focused on decreasing Level 4 and Level 5 infractions that were occurring in the less structured environments and identified that the greatest number of occurrences were during AM and PM bussing as well as in the cafeteria, bathroom and hall. The school created supports to help student behaviors including: restructuring delivery of counseling services from pull-out model to push in collaborative model by class; split breakfast and the introduction of the movement program for the 6:1:1 classes during instructional breakfast. As a result of these interventions, the school has seen a decrease in Level 4 and Level 5 behaviors. However, focus was not administered to all the Levels of infractions in the school, particularly since the school has been identified as a *Persistently Dangerous School* by New York State.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

Pedagogy provides consistent instructional supports, including questioning and discussion techniques. There is evidence of strategic entry points and extensions that foster deep reasoning in student work products across the school.

Impact

Across the vast majority of classrooms, curricula extensions support students to provide meaningful work products. There are opportunities for all learners, including the school's subgroups, to take ownership of their learning.

Supporting Evidence

- When planning for differentiation, teachers set different expectations or pathways for accessing the NYSAA Frameworks based upon students' individual academic, social-emotional and physical needs. Teachers differentiate classroom elements through four avenues: content (NYSAA extensions and levels of complexity, state standards), process (sensory input, grouping, questioning, tiered assignments), product (student work), and learning environment (classrooms, community, home, work study) based on the individual learner, that is, student readiness, interest, or learning profiles. This was evident in a science class where students were learning how a seed grows. Following the mini lesson, when the teacher introduced the teaching point and tasks and showed a power point presentation, the students were divided into three groups with differentiated tasks: one group arranged the steps of seed germination; one group recalled by organizing the steps of seed germination; the third group inferred by drawing a conclusion about seed germination.
- During a math lesson, students were identifying the effects of zero property when solving multiplication problems. The teacher used various materials including Realia, hundreds chart, manipulatives, graphic organizers, flash cards, media and technology to help students understand the Essential Question of "*How does repeated addition represent multiplication?*"
- Across the school, teachers express that students learn best through lessons that embed multiple entry points thus enabling students to have access to a standards based curricula. In addition, engaging, small group tasks follow explicit mini-lessons. In a 8:1:1 class, where the topic was about understanding the six different biomes of the world, photosynthesis and the needs of plants, students were in their designated tiered groups, based on their SANDI scores, discussing the main idea of the chapter and highlighting the important information that supports the main idea. The teacher and paraprofessionals reinforced the discussion by asking additional questions to ensure higher levels of student thinking and ownership.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

The school maintains a supportive environment for high expectations. The achievement and success of students and partnering with parents are central foci to the whole school community.

Impact

Structures that support the school's high expectations build buy-in and accountability amongst staff, students and their families, thus providing a clear path towards increase student achievement and college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses Communication Books to inform parents of their child's progress on a daily basis based upon student need. Each teacher sends a letter to parents to provide their contact information and survey what parents would like to hear about their child everyday in the books. Parents are also kept informed during IEP conferences. In September, IEP/triennial meetings for the school year are scheduled. All scheduled meetings are followed up a month before with personal contact. Teachers of the most fragile students keep a log (toileting log) which is written and distributed daily. Parents also receive progress reports four times per year and, in addition, a monthly calendar which informs them of various events and workshops in the school. Finally, the Transition Coordinator sends a large packet for graduation home in September and provides linkages of the various community organizations for transition.
- The school is involved in many pre-transition activities in preparation for transition for life after graduation. There is one (12:1:1) class in the school that is a participating clerical worksite. The students take orders (copies, lamination, shredding) and during two periods of the day, students complete the orders. Also, during that time, students also take care of the inter-office mail (filing and delivering to classrooms). The mail and copies are delivered during the afternoon. Students in the class rotate their job assignments. The teacher has created Student Team Leaders to facilitate the work of students during the work period. Another class of students takes orders for maintenance/classroom supplies using order forms. They then distribute the supplies to classes in the afternoon. This class is also responsible for school events where they set up and help clean up. There are 7-8 students who are part of the Printers at Work (PAWS) program where they work in the main office and provide copies to the administrative team. A cluster teacher takes two classes on Fridays to Target. Students in that class, give teachers the store's weekly circular and teachers use an order form to write what they would like and students then shop and deliver the items, the receipt and their change.
- In order to foster a collaborative partnership with parents they were asked to complete a survey, *Let Your Voice Be Heard*, which informed the school's next steps to support parents. In turn, a meet and greet breakfast was held for all parents to initiate a partnership in September. Parents receive a welcome letter from classroom teachers. A letter sent by the parent coordinator delineates the school's expectations in supporting their child's educational success, and urges parents to become involved in school-wide events and workshops. Communication is further layered with telephone calls, flyers which are backpacked and school messenger. There are four parent forums on PBIS/GRL, preparing students for learning and transitioning, and Structured Methods in Language Education (SMILE), a reading program. The afterschool program culminates in a parent event where students demonstrate to them what they have learned. Some workshop topics available to parents are: homework tips; education records organizer; computer literacy.

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

Faculty benefit from participating in professional collaborations to share and develop strengths and foster reflection as individuals and members of the teaching community. Leadership structures provide a means for teachers to have input on key decisions about curricula and teaching practices.

Impact

Teacher team work results in improved pedagogy and student progress. Shared leadership structures build capacity to improve student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- Most teachers are involved in inquiry work. The PBIS/GRTL (Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports/Getting Ready to Learn) team monitors the Incident Reduction Plan and the impact that the school-wide GRTL program has made. The team strategically looks at the data from this program and noticed, through the School-Wide Information System (SWIS) data, that most incidences occur during lunchtime. They piloted a split lunch where half of the students go to the gym and do a yoga portion of the GRTL while the other half eats. Then students "flip-flop" at the halfway through the lunch period. The incidences during lunch have dropped dramatically. The team also created a qualitative survey and distributed it to the staff. Based on teacher response that they wanted more monthly events to promote school spirit and community, the team created monthly themes, which are aligned to the CCLS, focused on academics. As a team, they are examining if these monthly events not only promote school spirit, but also how it affects the student recidivist rate in occurrences, particularly those students who have a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP). They are also tracking to see if these events have an impact on student's Student Annual Needs Determination Inventory (SANDI) scores.
- Every teacher is assigned to a Professional Assignment (PA) team based on their needs, skill sets and teacher preference of three choices. Each group is facilitating professional development for the school community. They examine structures and systems as they pertain to NYSAA, CCLS, Special Education Student Information System (SESIS), Bilingual Common Core Initiative, Math/CDOS, and Treatment and Educational of Autistic and Communication related handicapped Children (TEACCH) to monitor and refine the work in which teachers engage for the purpose of closing the achievement gap in order to teach students the skills needed for transition readiness.
- The SESIS/Related Service coordinator has a crucial role of monitoring compliance. The PBIS specialist has a clinical background and is able to foster a good relationship with students. These faculty leaders are members of the extended cabinet. The extended cabinet members check in with each other daily and also meet formally once per month or as needed. Some examples of their key decision-making that affects student learning across the school are: strengthening the professional learning community by allocating time and resources to promote collaboration and professional development; promoting collaboration and leadership roles through the teacher team model; supporting the work of the ADVANCE Saturday Academy - a teacher collaborative model. This distributive leadership process creates optimum opportunities for both pedagogical support and student success.