



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

**Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning**

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

**Inwood Early College for Health and Information
Technologies**

High School M211

**650 Academy Street
Manhattan
NY 10034**

Principal: Samona Joe Tait

**Date of review: May 15, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Marjory Matthieu-Kodjovi**

The School Context

Inwood Early College for Health and Information Technologies is a high school with 86 students in grade 9. The school population comprises 21% Black, 67% Hispanic, 3% White, and 5% Asian students, and 3% other. The student body includes 7% English language learners. Boys account for 56% of the students enrolled and girls account for 44%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 to date is 92.5%.

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	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	Developing

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to students, staff, and families, and provide support to ensure that all students progress towards their goals.

Impact

Structures are in place to support the school's high expectations and contribute to mutual accountability for staff, students, and families, providing students with a clear path towards college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- Administration and staff have worked collaboratively to develop engagement of students relative to commitments and values. Legacy class activities focus students on being part of building the school and leaving a legacy for future students that is memorialized throughout the building and is expected to be incorporated into lessons. The principal stated that she walks through classrooms daily and gives teachers actionable feedback. Teachers affirmed that they receive feedback regularly from administration. Principal's communications include, "Dr. SJT Notes", emails, walkthrough observation slips, and principal modeling and observations, thus sharing high expectations and reinforcing core practices at the same time.
- Parents shared that they are extremely happy in regard to communication from the school about their children and the information of their progress in meeting goals. Parents highlighted the school's open door policy. They stated that they have the opportunity to meet their children's teachers and review the expectations for the class. Parents also referenced Powerschools learning management system to which they have access to track student progress. Furthermore, School Messenger is used to communicate expectations and reminders to all parents. All parents present stated that they are aware of expectations connected to college and careers and that they engage directly with principal and teachers by visiting classes and requesting targeted assistance for their children.
- The school has an advisory program in place with a curriculum that directly targets development and student self-assessment of college and career readiness competencies. For example, students spoke proudly about their advisory and the opportunities afforded them to visit colleges and feeling prepared for engaging in college-like work. In addition to the college visits, the school offers the students support from college mentors, interaction with College Faculty via their intervisitations at the school, and guest instructor days. Staff professional development joins both faculties to plan curriculum and student experiences to prepare students for college courses. Industry mentors from New York Presbyterian (NYP) and Microsoft, as well as industry-based events, reinforce and provide students with the practice of behaviors that reflect high expectations. Furthermore, the school reinforces daily expectations regarding professional dress, communication, and core commitments which students selected, including responsibility, leadership, fairness, honesty, professionalism, creativity, respect in morning meeting, and small group check-ins, 'huddles', twice daily, both AM and PM, and the school designed a College Seminar course to provide direct instruction in college and career readiness competencies.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Developing

Findings

Teaching strategies informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching are beginning to reflect an articulated set of beliefs and alignment to curricula that engages students in high levels of thinking and student participation through student-to-student discourse and reflected in student work products.

Impact

Across classrooms visited, all students were not yet consistently engaged in tasks and/or classrooms discussions, resulting in uneven levels of student thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- In most classrooms visited although students worked in groups they were worked on the same task, with no visible adjustments for the struggling students or cognitively challenging tasks for accelerated learners
- Students work products inconsistently demonstrate high-level thinking or rigorous work habits. In an Introduction to IT class, students worked productively in their work stations to determine the network that end-devices are operating on and the connectivity across network. The assignment included listing the rules to logically 'AND', a task that involves identifying networks and/or subnetworks that allow for two-way communication. Students had to complete a corresponding worksheet describing the situation that will give them a number one at the output. At the conclusion of the lesson, the majority of students completed the assigned tasks. In a physics lesson, however, students worked independently to solve routine problems by trying to explain the source of the electric current and identifying the voltage supply, replicating procedural steps that their teachers had modeled on the board. Additionally, the teacher consistently changed the questions, allowed students minimal time to answer questions, and reminded students to stay on task and complete the worksheet.
- The majority of classrooms observed had discussions that were teacher–student or student–teacher in pattern, thus providing limited opportunity for most students to demonstrate their thinking. Teachers across subjects indicated they are in process of shifting their practice to a more student-centered approach designed to have students sharing more of their thinking through higher-order questioning.
- In some classrooms visited, some students participated in class discussions. In two of the seven classrooms visited, students were able to explore their thinking, justify their conclusions, and attempt to use evidence from the text to support their reasoning. Some students had talking stems to support their conversations.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Curriculum is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and curricula and academic tasks are planned using student work and data.

Impact

The school's curricular decisions align with the Common Core instructional shifts and respond to students' needs, building coherence and ensuring cognitive engagement by all students.

Supporting Evidence

- Unit plans in all subject areas are revised as part of a continuous cycle within teacher teams. For example, the school focused on the Instructional shift relative to the integration of technology, a focus on problem solving through technology computing fundamentals (IC3) certification and preparation process including test prep prescriptions, and access to Pearson learning materials via internet. Math incorporates the use of online text, graphing calculators, and Desmos, an online math support, and school wide use by both students and teachers of Office 365, a technology tool for communication and planning.
- All lesson plans, reflected access into the curricula, such as tiered math problems, student choice in text materials, purposeful grouping, and an outline of academic vocabulary. For example upon review of the English language arts (ELA) unit plan calendars, the school has developed and revised the plan in weekly team meetings so that their work reflects additional scaffolding needed for students to have multiple points of entry into content.
- The school uses Atlas Rubicon, a curriculum management system, to capture units of study, assessments, and standards. The principal shared that it "has allowed us to analyze the progression of standards through our curricular units". For example, English units reflected reading choices that were aligned with the grade level recommendations and College Seminar Course Syllabus, a first year student course created specifically to support development of behavioral and academic skills needed to achieve Common Core Learning Standards. The units contained writing tasks that asked students to infer, cite evidence, and frame arguments. Materials such as graphic organizers and rubrics are included in the units.
- The work in curriculum development is grounded by the drafting of a six-year scope and sequence and framework for curriculum, instruction, and assessment, (CIA). The school, along with the principal and teachers, collaborated with partners such as Microsoft and NY Presbyterian, Guttman Community College, and the CUNY Early College, to engage in a skills mapping process through which Common Core Learning Standards and college and career competencies (CCC) were outlined. The curricula was planned to align with the jobs and degree programs to which students would have access.
- Teachers use complex texts, primary source documents, and articles as a source of materials for students. Students are encouraged, with the support of various scaffolds, such as close reading, annotation, and graphic organizers, to use these materials to inform their thinking, cite evidence, devise questions, and frame arguments. Teachers continue to monitor and refine the PIVOT (Prescribe, Implement, Visualize, Observe, and Test), a set of opportunities to improve academic achievement and to explore areas of strength and interest and extended day structures based on student performance and utilize curricula interventions (Accelerated Reader; Accelerated Math) to "more effectively bridge students' skill gaps".

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

The school is in the process of developing systems to use common assessments, bench mark exams, and classroom checks for understanding, to track student progress and adjust curricula and instruction to meet student learning needs.

Impact

Systems are in place for progress monitoring and are evident. However data analysis, including checks for understanding during instruction and student self-assessment, is inconsistent across many classrooms. Thus, teachers lose opportunities to make effective adjustments to meet students' learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- The ELA team has implemented a meeting schedule in which they are expected to meet on a regular basis to analyze student assessment data and work products, and make effective curricula adjustments to meet students' learning needs. This team was observed analyzing student work and beginning to plan for instructional adjustments. Teachers deconstructed the final ELA assessment results to decide whether it should mirror the unit exam on globalization. With these results they planned to develop action plans around differentiating the exam. However, formative classroom data is not consistently used to address specific ongoing instructional needs of students.
- The school is in the process of identifying common assessments to measure student progress. Principal and staff shared that in order to ensure that their practices regarding assessment align directly with their practices; they have taken steps in the classrooms to "show and tell the students explicitly what high quality learning mastery looks like." One student said that teachers review rubrics with them and model what strong answers and responses look like. The principal shared that school creates an annual assessment calendar that reflects weekly revision opportunities and students concurred that teachers are beginning to provide them with skill checks, true or false T-charts, and quick stop-and-jots, to identify knowledge gaps and misconceptions, and to serve as assessments.. However, this was unevenly evident across the classrooms.
- The principal shared that the school uses PIVOT with students. PIVOT, used for one period three times per week, is led by both academic area teachers so students can work on course related skills, and by the college and career advisor in conjunction with the principal who work with students on college readiness skills. For example, the principal shared that "we PIVOT" and that teachers are expected to use this strategy as a check for understanding. However, across classrooms, checks for understanding and adjustments were inconsistent and most teachers were not observed noting formative assessment data during lessons, and many students could not articulate how their participation in class was assessed. While some teachers were observed conferencing with individuals and small groups of students, adjustments to instruction were primarily clarification of tasks or a general encouragement. For example, a teacher in an Algebra class was observed conferencing with a small group of students and addressing misconceptions. In a math class the teacher asked the class, "Any questions, concerns?" and missed an opportunity to engage students in specifying what improvement will look like with a problem they were having or how the students know they are approaching mastery.

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

The majority of teachers engage in ongoing professional collaborations in department and grade level teams where they are implementing processes for looking at data and student work for students they share or on whom they are focused. A distributive leadership is emerging, with teachers assigned as content leaders.

Impact

Teacher teamwork is beginning to promote coherence in the implementation of Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts, and alignment of practice to the school's instructional goals. Teacher leaders facilitate team meetings, and are engaged in some decisions regarding student learning. However, teacher teamwork does not typically result in improved teacher practice or progress toward goals for groups of students

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher team inquiry work is in the emerging stages of implementation. The principal has identified teacher leaders for core content teams. Team leaders plan agendas and facilitate team meetings with guidance from the principal. During team meetings, teachers assume responsibility for maintaining minutes, which are submitted to the principal for review. Teachers shared that they have numerous opportunities to contribute ideas, and that the principal's open door policy has encouraged teachers to contribute recommendations for implementation. Teachers also shared that they are trying new practices with knowledge of support from colleagues and building relationships across disciplines and seeking out feedback from colleagues. However, teachers are not yet engaged in key decisions that affect students learning school-wide.
- Teacher teams are engaged in structured professional collaborations to review student data and work products and strengthen the instructional capacity of teachers. For example, a series of Professional Development (PDs) sessions are facilitated by a lead teacher engaging teachers in either conducting item analysis and/or deepening instructional planning with a focus on support for foundational math skill development for students at risk of failing Algebra. However, tasks created by teacher teams aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and the implementations of the instructional shifts were inconsistently seen across classrooms
- Teacher team work is at various degrees of implementation across the school. Some teachers on grade teams clearly articulated specific instructional strategies connected to targeted groups of students they are studying and the process they are using to track student progress. Other teachers on department teams spoke to how the team was moving towards beginning to use results from student work samples to modify units for this semester.
- While there is evidence that teachers are gathering and analyzing assessment data, the analysis of the data is not yet consistently informing strategic and differentiated next instructional steps to meet individual student need. For example, while English teachers shared final exam data as well as their plan to target individual students with support through peer tutoring, it was not clear what specific skill the students might need support, and the data that was gathered was primarily from a Spring 2015 final ELA Examination.