

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

The Henry Street School for International Studies

Middle-High School M292

**220 Henry Street
Manhattan
NY 10002**

Principal: Christine Loughlin

**Date of review: May 1, 2015
Reviewer: Vivian Orlen**

The School Context

The Henry Street School for International Studies is a middle/high school with 246 students from grade 6 through grade 12. The school population comprises 26% Black, 57% Hispanic, 2% White, and 11% Asian students. The student body includes 12% English language learners and 13% special education students. Boys account for 63% of the students enrolled and girls account for 37%. 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	Focus	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	Additional Findings	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	Additional Findings	Developing
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	Developing

Area of Celebration

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

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured professional collaborations on teams that are loosely connected to school goals, and the use of an inquiry approach that analyzes assessment data is emerging across teams. Distributed leadership structures are beginning to support leadership capacity.

Impact

Teacher collaboration in structured inquiry has begun to support the alignment of school goals and the integration of the instructional shifts, but does not yet typically result in improved teacher practice or progress toward goals for groups of students. Emerging distributed leadership structures are starting to engage teachers in school decision-making.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers meet in teams to develop instructional strategies to support groups of students they share or on whom they are focused. In a department meeting, teachers were beginning to implement a Looking at Student Work (LASW) protocol in order to identify skill gaps. However, the school has not yet implemented a system to track the impact of specific teaching strategies on the improvement in teacher practice.
- Social studies teachers clearly articulated specific instructional strategies connected to targeted groups of students and the process they are using to track student progress. However, as teacher team work is at varying degrees of implementation across the school, teachers on some department teams were not prepared to do so. Some teachers shared that their team is beginning to use data from student work samples to modify units for the next school year.
- Lead teachers have been identified, and structures are being established to help support their professional development to enable stronger facilitation of teacher meetings. For example, in a grade team meeting, teachers were at the early stages of using a data analysis protocol in order to identify systems of support for focused students.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.1 Curriculum

Rating:

Developing

Findings

Curricula and academic tasks inconsistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills across grades, subjects, and/or for English language learners and students with disabilities. Planning to provide all learners with access to the curricula and tasks is not consistent across classrooms and for all subject areas.

Impact

Inconsistent planning for curricular rigor and access hinders opportunities for all learners to engage in high level tasks.

Supporting Evidence

- A review of student work products and accompanying end of unit tasks inconsistently demonstrate high levels of rigor or alignment to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards. For example, in a grade 11 English course, a literary analysis unit on *Native Son* was aligned to Common Core Learning Standards. However in grade 6 English language arts poetry unit, the planned questions were predominantly recall questions at level 1 and 2 (according to Webb's Depth of Knowledge criteria).
- Lesson plans are inconsistently written to cognitively engage learners and challenge them with higher order tasks such as requiring students to cite evidence to support an aim, analyze information, draw conclusions, and apply concepts to solve real-world problems. Most lesson plans included Common Core Learning Standards that teachers were planning to address. For example, in a grade 12 English lesson plan, one learning activity listed that students would be citing strong textual evidence to support analysis of the text being used. However, in a second English lesson plan reviewed, the learning activity called on students to summarize information presented, limiting opportunities for a high level of cognitive engagement.
- A review of curricula documents revealed that targeted supports for students are not always specific nor are they consistently seen across all subject areas. For example, while some teachers identified grouping students heterogeneously as a way to support all students, there were no indications of targeted instructional support that would meet students' learning needs.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Across classrooms, teaching strategies (scaffolds in English and or native language where appropriate, and routines) inconsistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula. Teacher practice in the use of questioning and discussion techniques is not consistently effective or engaging.

Impact

There is uneven engagement in appropriately challenging tasks and uneven demonstration of higher order thinking skills in student work products, including the work of English language learners and students with disabilities. Across classrooms, student work products and discussions reflect uneven levels of student thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- Targeted supports and multiple entry points were implemented in some classes but not in others. For example, in a grade 12 integrated co-teaching English class, students were provided with varied graphic organizers and leveled texts to access the content. However, in an English as a New Language classroom, the teacher asked several questions prompting simple answers, and then summarized the student's responses for the rest of the class.
- In classrooms visited, questioning strategies to promote higher levels of student thinking and discussion were inconsistent. Some teachers asked only low level recall questions that did not ask for students to strategically think or to extend their thinking. For example, in a grade 6 English Language Arts class, students were asked to complete a worksheet using one word answers as they prepared to write a haiku. The teacher circulated around the room, answering students' questions, but did not encourage students to engage in higher-order thinking.
- Although the principal indicated that teachers were in the process of encouraging student-to-student discussion and allowing more wait time to better support students as they reflected on questions, these practices were not consistently seen across all classrooms. During an independent reading activity in an Advisory lesson, students who shared a common text were engaged in peer conversation, deepening one another's thinking through discussion. However, in a math classroom, the teacher circulated around the room assisting various groups. In this class, when students asked questions, the teacher answered the questions and moved on rather than redirecting the questions back to the group in order to promote student thinking and discussion.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use or create assessments, rubrics, and grading policies that are loosely aligned with the school's curricula. Teachers' assessment practices inconsistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact

Teacher assessment practices provide limited feedback to teachers and students regarding student mastery of learning objectives. Teachers inconsistently make effective adjustments to meet students' learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Student work displayed in hallways and classrooms does not consistently include rubrics with targeted feedback from teachers on how students could improve. Students shared that they use rubrics for assignments and that teachers confer with them to provide next steps. However, students stated that this type of feedback and conversation usually occurs with end of unit performance tasks or larger projects and not for more frequent in-class assignments.
- Across classrooms, teachers' use of checks for understanding varied. For example, in a math class, students worked collaboratively and the teacher spoke with each student to ensure they understood next steps. In other classes, teachers posed questions to the whole class or called on a limited number of students and, after receiving a few answers, moved on with the lesson.
- Across classrooms, teachers' use of peer and self-assessment practices was inconsistent. In a science class, students worked in pairs and checked each other's work before sharing it with the entire class. Although students worked together on similar tasks in other classrooms visited, they did not peer or self-assess their work or other students' work. In some classes, students were not able to articulate what they were working on or how their performance on the task might be rated.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

School leaders and staff are developing expectations that are connected to a path to college and career readiness, and the school is creating systems to provide feedback to families. Teacher teams and staff establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations for all students and are beginning to implement effective feedback and guidance/advisement supports for students.

Impact

Communication to families provides parents with partial feedback regarding student progress toward meeting expectations. Structures of targeted support for students are developing an effective level of detail and clarity needed to ensure that students are prepared for college and career.

Supporting Evidence

- Parents shared that some teachers offer guidance and support and regularly send updates on their child’s progress via Jupiter grades and email outreach. However, this it is not consistent for all teachers.
- While the principal has hired a full time College and Career Counselor, students were unsure how to obtain the help they needed with the college search process and financial aid application process.
- During a parent meeting, concerns were raised that there were not enough opportunities for families to engage in understanding important and current topics that impact schooling for students. Parents expressed that they wanted more workshops on such topics as Common Core Learning Standards, graduation requirements, and understanding the college search and application process.