



**Department of  
Education**  
*Carmen Fariña, Chancellor*

Office of School Quality  
Division of Teaching and Learning

# Quality Review Report

## 2014-2015

**Baruch College Campus High School**

**High School M411**

**55 East 25<sup>th</sup> Street  
Manhattan  
NY 10010**

**Principal: Alicia Perez-Katz**

**April 30, 2015  
Lead Reviewer: Amanda Lurie**

## The School Context

Baruch College Campus High School is a high school with 451 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 1% Black, 15% Hispanic, 20% White, and 59% Asian students. The student body includes 0% English language learners and 6% special education students. Boys account for 44% of the students enrolled and girls account for 56%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 97.7%.

## School Quality Criteria

<b>Instructional Core</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
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	<b>Celebration</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
<b>School Culture</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
<b>Systems for Improvement</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Proficient</b>

## Area of Celebration

**Quality Indicator:**

**1.1 Curriculum**

**Rating:**

**Well Developed**

### Findings

Curricula and academic tasks are consistently rigorous and embedded in a coherent way across grades and subject areas. Curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined using student work.

### Impact

The consistently rigorous curricula and academic tasks ensure that all students have access, are cognitively engaged and required to show their thinking.

### Supporting Evidence

- Unit and lesson plans incorporate rigorous habits and higher order thinking skills across grades and subjects. The tasks embedded in the units were consistently Common Core aligned and rooted in real world concepts and applications, pushing students to think, cite evidence and defend their positions. For example, in a U.S. History class, students used primary sources and text based articles to frame their positions around U.S. - Cuban relations. A graphic organizer enabled them to pull key evidence from the text and organize their information, which resulted in a rich, high level, student-to-student discussion.
- The school uses the concept of “core values” as a theme from grade to grade to align their curricula and promote learning outside of the classroom. These core values include world connections in grade 9, global citizenship in grade 10, rigor in grade 11 and community in grade 12. The core values curricula emphasizes a focus on group work, project-based learning and a spiraled curriculum. Projects emphasize community service, citizenship, internship, and experiential learning. Department teacher teams evaluate the projects and tasks and adjust them from year to year based on feedback from students and teacher analysis of the quality of student work.
- Science and math classes were inquiry based, centered on investigations, and had students construct arguments based on evidence. The school’s expectation is that students complete four years of science and math that end in Regents or Advanced Placement exams.

## Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

### Findings

Across classrooms, teacher pedagogy includes scaffolds and multiple entry points to engage learners. Student work products and discussions in most classrooms reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

### Impact

While a majority of classrooms utilize strong pedagogical practices, there are still some classrooms that have inconsistent practice around the Danielson Framework for Teaching and instructional shifts. As a result, there are uneven levels of engagement in some classrooms.

### Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, teaching strategies, including questions and scaffolds, consistently provided access and multiple entry points into curricula that cognitively engage all students. In some instances, however, teachers missed opportunities to ask level 2-4 Depth of Knowledge (DOK) questions, and instead, asked questions that elicited choral responses, one word answers and recall. For example, in an Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) math class, the teacher asked, “Can someone remind us how we define piecewise function?” and “Which would be an independent variable, age or cost?” When the students provided answers, in both instances, the teacher did not follow up by asking students to expand upon their responses to push students to think beyond basic recall.
- In a majority of classrooms, student work product and discussions reflected high levels of student thinking and participation. In several instances, however, there were missed opportunities for rich, student-centered discussions and exchanges when teachers answered student questions or reframed student answers, instead of encouraging student-to-student conversations. There were several instances of the teacher serving as the “gatekeeper” of information, instead of the teacher serving as a facilitator of student learning.
- In all classrooms, teachers provided multiple entry points and scaffolds so that all students could access rigorous materials and challenging text. Examples included differentiated materials, modified text, graphic organizers, annotation and other scaffolds. In some instances, however, the scaffolds impeded more advanced students from expanding their ideas and thinking and to engage in more rigorous table discussions. For example, in a grade 12 English class, students were reading an article from an online political website, and debating the merits of teachers giving more failing grades to students. The teacher provided a detailed graphic organizer that supported students in finding evidence from the text. In several instances, however, students focused more on filling in the many boxes of the graphic organizer than on discussing their evidence and defending their positions. While some students may have needed this level of support to complete the task, many students did not.

## Additional Findings

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>2.2 Assessment</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
---------------------------	-----------------------	----------------	-----------------------

### Findings:

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers strategically use curricular aligned common assessments to analyze information on student learning outcomes and adjust instructional decisions. Teacher's assessment practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

### Impact:

As a result of a rigorous assessment cycle, the school makes strategic, data-driven decisions about curricula and lesson planning. Embedded, school-wide practices have created a culture where teachers continually make effective adjustments to meet the needs of all students, and students are aware of their next learning steps.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school uses common assessments for midterms and final exams. Teachers grade assessments in committees and strategically use the data yielded to make curricular adjustments, and modify lesson and unit plans. The school has a uniform grading policy to ensure that there is alignment and continuity between subjects and grades.
- Student led conferences give ownership and put the responsibility of progress monitoring in the hands of all stakeholders, including students.
- Uniform rubrics across subject areas and a school wide writing rubric create clear and transparent standards for all students. Rubrics focus strongly on the quality of evidence and strength of arguments instead of compliance driven metrics, such as neatness and grammar.
- Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers assess student understanding of lessons by using various checks for understanding. Examples include "turn and talks", "quick writes" and conferencing.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>3.4 High Expectations</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
---------------------------	------------------------------	----------------	-----------------------

### **Findings**

School leaders and staff effectively communicate a unified set of high expectations to students and parents and provide clear, focused and effective feedback and guidance/advisement supports to ensure students are prepared for the next level.

### **Impact**

Effective and targeted outreach and communication to students and families has resulted in a culture for learning that systematically communicates a set of high expectations and provides supports for all students, thereby ensuring they are all on a clear path to college and career readiness.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- The school has built strategic partnerships with Baruch and other area colleges that provide opportunities for students to take college classes for college credit. In addition to the school's College Now partnership, students can take calculus on Baruch's campus that provides six to eight college credits. The school has a dedicated college office, with a full time college counselor, and an advisory curriculum that supports the college application process.
- The school has a mentorship program where seniors "adopt" freshman students. In meeting with the students, several freshmen reported that their transition to the school was made easier because their senior mentors alleviated stress. Seniors reported a sense of pride and ownership in the culture of the school through their role as mentors.
- Embedded in the school curricula are projects and opportunities for students to have voice while being community and civic minded. For example, the theme of the grade 10 curriculum is social action, which focuses on projects in all subject areas that allow students to focus on their school community, neighborhood and city. Some examples of projects include food drives and book swaps. Additionally, advisory and student government empower students to make decisions about pep rallies, dances, mixers and clubs. The school play is completely student run, and students decide upon the choice of play.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
---------------------------	---	----------------	-------------------

**Findings**

Teacher teams consistently analyze assessment data and student work for students they share or on whom they focus. Distributive leadership structures and vertical and horizontal teacher teams play a critical role in shared decision-making.

**Impact**

The work of the teacher teams has resulted in improved pedagogy and progress toward goals for groups of students. Distributed leadership structures have built leadership capacity and given a voice to teachers in key decisions that affect student learning.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teachers make curricula decisions based upon the analysis of student data in vertical team meetings and all curricula is teacher designed and revised. Advisory leaders developed their own advisory curricula. The professional development calendar is teacher driven and teacher led.
- In the observed teacher team meeting, the math department debriefed their school wide math conference. Teachers had targeted discussions on the quality of individual projects and how they can help students improve their projects for next year. Teachers focused on individual student work, as well as the overall quality of the conference.
- The school has a rigorous inter-visitation program that teachers lead and monitor. Teachers report that there is an open door policy in all classrooms and that they often “drop by” a colleague’s classroom when they are teaching something interesting, or trying to improve on a classroom practice that a colleague does well.