



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

School of the Future

Middle/High School 413

**127 East 22nd Street
New York
NY 10010**

Principal: Stacy Goldstein

**Date of review: December 16, 2014
Lead Reviewer: Sandra Litrico**

The School Context

School of the Future is a middle-high school with 1430 students from grade 6 through grade 12. The school population comprises 12% Black, 28% Hispanic, 36% White, 16% Asian and 8% multi-racial students. The student body includes 0% English language learners and 15 special education students. Boys account for 49% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 95%.

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	Focus	Proficient
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 curricular are aligned to content standards and the instructional shifts and include rigorous academic tasks for a variety of learners across grades and subject areas.

Impact

The school's curricula is coherent and engages all students in higher level thinking that promotes college and career readiness for all learners.

Supporting Evidence

- The curriculum supports metacognition and student empowerment. Literacy is taught across the curriculum with claim based writing throughout all units of study. Grade wide argument writing yearlong plans delineate research based argument units throughout science, social studies and English classes. They include on demand tasks and performance based assessments.
- All lessons have a clear aim that names the purpose, product and technique to be modeled and practiced. Charts and tools are cited in each unit to support independent thinking and practice. Tasks are engaging and include questions that emphasize accountable talk discussions. All units begin with a launch that includes an engaging debatable question or an interesting problem or conflict. Tasks require students to make connections, explore and experience. In the molecular genetics unit, students solve crimes by looking at evidence. Students compare the STR length between the crime scene DNA sample and the suspects to identify the assassin in the scenario.
- All units are structured and include an objectives, essential questions, enduring understandings, skills criteria, vocabulary development, discussion, practice and assessment. The thematic lens of the *Imperialism/Colonization in India* unit emphasizes student's deep understanding of the age of imperialism and industrialism and focuses on independence and non-violent resistance. The aim of the 10th grade global history lesson on British Imperialism in India is "Historians compare primary source documents with different points of view in order to give their readers context in their persuasive writing". The task asks students to examine two documents on partition by Jinnah and Gandhi and write introduction sentences for their sources.
- The curriculum includes assessment driven instruction to ensure that there is evidence of learning transfer and response with differentiation. REACH, a reading intervention program supplements the curriculum units and provides additional small group instruction. Math Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) skills are spiraled to support students' learning progressions. Universal Design for Learning is used to ensure that all students have access to the curriculum

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

Across classrooms teaching practices are clearly articulated by the *Danielson Framework* with a coherent set of beliefs around quality instruction that focuses on metacognition and student empowerment. However, there were missed opportunities to utilize effective models of integrated co-teaching where both teachers actively support students.

Impact

Classes were marked by high-level questioning, meaningful student work products and student to student discussion for most learners to accelerate student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers' goal set around the Danielson Framework, identifying goals that are grounded in school wide practices noted in the School of the Future teaching toolkit. These include techniques for asking questions that promote student thinking and give time to observe student understanding. Across classrooms visited, teachers used noted techniques such as turn and talk, think time, stop and jot, pass off, conferencing and questioning to promote metacognition and student empowerment.
- Focus questions were asked in all classrooms which supported student's conceptual understanding. Students were also involved in structured discussions. Students were prepared with notes, texts from their research. Students developed their own questions, made connections, used evidence to support their claims and analyzed information.
- Flexible grouping and partnerships supported differentiation. Students were placed in guided groups to reteach skills or to provide extension activities to higher level students. Groups received different assignment sheets with tiered questions based on assessments. In the global history class, students examine primary and secondary sources to point out the author's argument on imperialism. Some students practiced using the "Four Reads" as an analytical tool for primary sources. Another group worked on complex tasks that focused on answering the essential question "Is nonviolence an effective form of resistance?"

Although the teaching was high level across the majority of classrooms, the co-teaching model needs refinement. In the integrated Co-teaching classrooms visited both teachers were not actively involved in instruction.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

Assessments and rubrics are aligned to the common core learning standards and are used by teachers in the vast majority of classrooms. The school integrates common assessments across the disciplines and the subsequent data is used to monitor student progress.

Impact

Teachers effectively use ongoing assessment results to provide meaningful feedback to students in terms of clear next academic steps. Teachers use protocols to examine the data and make meaningful curricular adjustments so that all students can be successful.

Supporting Evidence

- The school implements a grade six through ten literacy and mathematics calendar which reflect on demand performance assessments. These are administered three times a year and scored by a committee using research based common core normed rubrics. These assessments prepare students for the schools “exhibitions” in 11th and 12th grade, given in collaboration with Consortium.
- Teachers use formative assessment indicators like exit cards, notebook checks, conferring and questioning to monitor student progress on a daily and weekly basis. Students were able to articulate their next steps for improvement based on teacher feedback.
- Assessment driven instruction is a current school initiative which has led teachers to look for evidence of learning and responding with differentiation and small group instruction. Inquiry team planning, leadership team programs monitoring, interventions and curricular decisions are all assessment based. As a result, there is an increase in students’ achievement results on the exhibitions. There is also growth in the number of students scoring in levels 3 and 4 on school-wide writing assessments.
- In all content areas, students self-assess with checklists and rubrics and set goals based on teacher and student feedback. Students also participate in peer assessments and support each other’s growth with meaningful feedback.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

The school leader communicates high expectations to the entire staff, students and parents and has created a culture of mutual accountability for these expectations with clear messaging and appropriate supports.

Impact

There is a coherent and thoughtful vision of school improvement replete with achievable goals and clear interim checkpoints to ensure the success of all students at the college and/or career level.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal sets clear expectations to teachers around professional responsibilities and implementing *Danielson's Framework for Teaching*. There is a clear culture of high learning expectations for all students to ensure that they own their educational experience and are prepared for the next level. Students participate in advisory goal-setting conferences.
- During teacher team meetings, staff communicated a unified set of high expectations for all students and provides clear and effective feedback to students. Teachers also provide support to parents in understanding the expectations which include requiring four years of math and science for graduation. Additional requirements include "exhibitions" in 11th and 12th grade, completion work internships, college classes in 11th and 12th grade and attendance at college trips and Family college nights.
- The school offers Advanced Placement classes and College Now programs. There are also 9th and 10th grade Bridge College Preparation classes and SAT classes for all 11th grade students.
- To ensure clear expectations, the school has established common grade books. Each department has five grading categories on *Skedula*, online grading system, that are the same from grades 6 to 8. Students receive four grades (at minimum) per category per semester. Rubrics and grading criteria for all assignments are posted on *Skedula*

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

All teachers are involved in focused teachers that collaboratively analyze classroom practice, assessment data, student work, and curricular products for the purpose of making thoughtful adjustments to teacher practice to increase student achievement and ensure Common Core alignment.

Impact

Teacher teams have a clear instructional focus supported by professional structures and protocols. This collaboration results in shared improvements in teacher practice and increased student learning. The inquiry based teacher teams' model distributive leadership and builds a sense of communal ownership for student success.

Supporting Evidence

- The school has solid infrastructures of distributive leadership that promotes effective collaboration and collective monitoring of student progress. During weekly grade level team meetings, teachers' action plan around students of concern and review student achievement data .Grade level inquiry team data meetings are also held three times a year based on school wide assessment. School wide Data team comprised of grade team leaders cull and prepare data for inquiry teams. Monthly department head led meetings are held to share investigations and to plan out school wide initiatives. Weekly youth development team meetings include college guidance discussions.
- The administrative team includes the principal, assistant principal, Leaders in Education Apprentice Program (LEAP) intern, literacy coach and math department heads. This team discusses teacher evaluation indicators, professional development and assessment calendar. The literacy coach also holds weekly planning sessions with teachers. Staff uses a backward design mapping protocol to revise units of study and create differentiated assessments including public exhibitions of student work.
- The grade level data team agenda focused on student written editorials. The teachers had several essential questions to discuss including: Does the data support elaboration as the targeted strand? What can we glean about the kids' actual levels? What do we need to adjust to meet kids where they are and successfully move them? The teachers looked at the checklist and discussed what targeted specific instructional moves can be utilized and what resources can be shared to aid in the transfer and metacognition. Teachers share plans, tools and resources on google planning doc.