



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Eleanor Roosevelt High School

High School M416

**411 East 76th Street
Manhattan
NY 10021**

Principal: Dimitri Saliani

**Date of review: November 20, 2014
Lead Reviewer: Rod Bowen**

The School Context

Eleanor Roosevelt High School (ERHS) is a high school with 531 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 4% Black, 11% Hispanic, 62% White, and 21% Asian students. The student body includes 1% English language learners and 3% special education students. Boys account for 40% of the students enrolled and girls account for 60%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 96.0%.

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	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	Celebration	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	Additional Findings	Proficient
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	Focus	Developing

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, curricula aligned instruction illustrate the belief that students learn best when they are expected to engage in discourse characterized by expressing their opinions and using academic language.

Impact

As a result of the schools instructional beliefs, student discussion and work products reflect high levels of thinking, participation and ownership.

Supporting Evidence

- In a Digital Photography class, students explored composition within group portraits while “playing” with traditional gender specific postures. For example, a group of girls avoided traditional female gestures such as placing a hand on a hip and incorporated closed fists in their photographs. Their verbal reflection noted the role of sexism in the compositions of models in contemporary ad campaigns.
- During a philosophy class, students were observed watching and then analyzing the video projects of students from the previous year. The previous year’s projects served as samples of what the students will have to do this year. The teacher pushed student thinking with such prompts as: “Keep finding this theme: someone suspects that what you’re looking at isn’t there.” Student analysis and discussion included connecting themes in the videos to literary works like *The Giver*, historical events and phenomena such as World War I and dystopia, as well as larger themes such as the human desire to strive for perfection.
- Collaborative groups of four were observed using select materials to build small-scale walls that could withstand natural disasters, as an activity in a social studies class. Students had to reflect on how their processes paralleled the construction of the Great Wall of China. Written student work showed an analysis of the Great Wall as a symbol of standardization and tyrannical rule.
- An American Literature class was observed collectively reflecting on each other’s work from a recently completed *Scarlett Letter* Installation Project, which required students to create an artistic piece inspired by the text. Students selected one of the *Six Ways of Understanding*: explanation, interpretation, application, perspective, or empathy to respond to *The Scarlet Letter*. Sculpture, paintings, digitally designed posters and performances were just some of the student work products that students generated. During the discussion, students were empowered to: pick whose piece they wanted to respond to, decide to reflect on their own work, as well as, determine if and when they wanted to go back to a point previously made by a peer or one of the teachers in the room.

Area of Focus

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

Teacher teams infrequently analyze assessment data and student work or use an inquiry approach to address gaps in student learning.

Impact

The work of teacher teams does not typically result in improved instructional practice or progress toward goals for targeted groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- Content teachers whose students take New York State Regents and/or Advance Placement exams meet upon receiving pre-analyzed student performance data and determine how their courses will be adjusted to increase student achievement in the subsequent year. However, this type of teacher collaboration is specific to the annual reception of standardized test data and is not sustained consistently over the course of the year with other assessments across grades and subject areas.
- An art teacher noted that sharing students' pieces with a colleague from time to time was invaluable in helping to think through feedback that effectively pushed students' artistry.
- Teachers noted that department meetings were venues to share what they were doing and pick up ideas from each other. English language arts teachers remarked that their meetings are focused on planning with an emphasis on pacing. They also talk about goals. However, consistently looking at student work and/or data was not owned as a common practice.
- Collaborative planning meetings between Integrated Co-Teaching meetings occur two-three times per week. During this time, student work and an understanding of the students themselves impacts lesson plan development, and the implementation of purposeful modifications for students who need them.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

The school effectively communicates high expectations to parents regarding pathways to college and career readiness. The culture of high expectations provides effective feedback, guidance and support to all students.

Impact

Parents have a clear sense of what their role is in supporting their children's progress toward meeting the school's high expectations. Students own their educational experience and are prepared for the next level.

Supporting Evidence

- Parents stated that the availability of their children's grades, attendance and assignment completion on PupilPath are invaluable in supporting their efforts to keep their children on track. They also noted that the school has weekly time slots where teachers are available to have scheduled conferences with parents.
- Parents were integral in organizing and facilitating a career day. Most students claimed that though it did not change their intended career aspirations, it did expose them to options they had never considered. One student's take away from the experience was, "Since many people changed their careers many times, it was good to see that when leaving high school, you don't have to have a fixed idea of what you want to be, which is really helpful."
- Students also mentioned that in advisory they complete a number of surveys that support their understanding of potential career compatibility as well as their communication styles. Students noted that they've learned how to react to different people and professional settings; write college essays and professional emails; and search for jobs.
- The vast majority of seniors have taken at least one Advanced Placement (AP) class while attending ERHS. In addition to the eleven AP courses offered, College English/British Literature is offered to seniors through a partnership with St. John's University.
- 100% of seniors are accepted into four-year colleges and universities.

Findings

The schools curricula are all aligned to Common Core and/or content standards, while emphasizing rigorous tasks and higher order skills.

Impact

The school's curricular approach builds coherence, promotes college and career readiness for all students, and consistently ensures rigor across subject areas.

Supporting Evidence

- New York State content standards and Common Core Learning standards embedded in curricular documents include: initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on topics, texts and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively; explain chemical bonds in terms of behavior of electrons; and use matrices to represent and manipulate data.
- Rigorous tasks found within curricula include: discussing the differences between ionic and covalent bonds, explaining why an atom wants to bond and building compound formulas; writing essays based on the analysis of primary and secondary documents pertaining to imperialism and progressivism; and comparing narrators from two different texts, then discussing the reliability and like ability of different first person narrators.
- Atlas Rubicon is purposefully used to build coherence by providing a framework for curriculum mapping. Documents generated from the website showed the expectation to present: course essential questions, unit questions, content, skills, learning standards, assessments and learning activities among other components.

Findings

Curricula aligned assessments and rubrics are evident across classrooms. Teachers consistently monitor student understanding and provide them with opportunities to self-assess.

Impact

Across classrooms feedback for improvement is available for students and teachers. In addition, teachers make adjustments to instruction to meet the needs of all learners.

Supporting Evidence

- The majority of checks for understanding at Eleanor Roosevelt are in the form of discussion prompts from teachers and an expectation that students challenge, support and correct each other. For example, in a philosophy class, after a student made a claim, the teacher asked the class, “Do you think that’s accurate? And if so, why do you think so?” He also asked, “Why do you suppose that’s so?”
- As groups of students completed the construction of small-scale walls in a social studies class, the teacher circulated and instructed them to assess the integrity of the walls by replicating seismic tremors and wind gusts. When necessary, students were then tasked to revisit the construction of their models to make them sturdier.
- All students asked were able to clearly acknowledge errors made in their work and what they would do differently on assignments to achieve higher grades. For example, a student referred to a rubric and articulated how it showed that though he had good ideas and good analysis in his essay, he did not provide enough evidence to support them. Another student shared that the reason she did not earn the grade she had hoped for was because though she referenced different documents connected to the same thesis, they were all from those presented in the class. A higher grade would have been attainable had she noted outside sources.
- Students noted that conferencing with their teachers is a primary and appreciated means to get individualized feedback that improves their performance in class.