



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Harvey Milk High School

High School M586

**2 Astor Place
Manhattan
NY 10003**

Principal: Daphne Perrini

**Date of review: April 24, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Amanda Lurie**

The School Context

Harvey Milk High School is a high school with 64 students from grade nine through grade twelve. The school population comprises 39.06% Black, 46.88% Hispanic, 9.38% White, and 3.12% Asian students. The student body includes 2% English language learners and 22% special education students. Boys account for 41% of the students enrolled and girls account for 59%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 81.3%.

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	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	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	Celebration	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:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

The school has established effective and targeted outreach around a set of high expectations for all students that involves the support of families.

Impact

As a result, all constituents contribute to a culture of learning and high expectations and students are on a clear path to college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- The school tracks all juniors and seniors with data that shows which colleges they have applied to, where they have been accepted, the status of the FAFSA application, which college workshops have been attended, and which colleges they have visited. The school has a full time college counselor and a part time counselor which has been provided by their community based organization, the Hedrick Martin Institute. Many of the juniors and seniors reported that for the first time, they see opportunities to attend and be successful in two and four year colleges, which was not the case before coming to Harvey Milk. Parents reported that the school makes continuous outreach and efforts at every step of the college process to involve them in their child's post-secondary process.
- The school uses "Engrade", an online grading system, to track student progress and access individual assignments. Through Engrade, students and parents can communicate with teachers to discuss assignments and student achievement in real time. Both parents and students reported that teachers update Engrade daily, and that workshops are consistently offered to show parents how to access the tools in Engrade.
- The school has a longstanding and well developed partnership with its community based organization, The Hedrick Martin institute. Through this partnership, the school is able to offer extensive services to students and families. These services include daily tutoring in all subject areas, health and wellness services, workshops on financial literacy, job readiness and resume writing, PSAT AND SAT prep classes, and counseling services.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Teacher pedagogy reflects a belief in high cognitive student engagement, student choice, and independence. However, while a majority of classrooms have strong pedagogical practices, there are still some classrooms that have inconsistent practice around extensions for advanced learners.

Impact

As a result, high levels of thinking and ownership for some students are not yet evident in all classrooms.

Supporting Evidence

- While most teachers asked level 2 and 3 Depth of Knowledge questions throughout their lessons, or had strong guiding questions built into group work assignments, there were uneven levels of discussion and student engagement observed in some classroom visits. For example, in an English class, the teacher had students placed in groups, using a graphic organizer to cite evidence from the book "The Palace Thief". While students were seated in groups and encouraged to work together, many, instead, were working silently and independently. When students had questions, the teacher came over and provided help, instead of first encouraging students to look to a partner.
- While there was consistent evidence of multiple entry points and scaffolds for struggling learners, the opportunities for more advanced students through extensions was limited. In an algebra II/trigonometry class, for example, students were working on the same equations at the same pace, even though there were some students who had easily mastered the work and were waiting to move ahead.
- The ability to expand student to student discussions was uneven throughout the classroom visits. While many teachers encouraged students to frame their own questions and respond to other students, there were instances in some classrooms of teachers serving as the gatekeeper of information, by reframing student responses, repeating student answers, or answering student questions instead of expanding the arrow of recitation to other students.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The school has developed lessons and units that push student engagement are rigorous and are aligned with the Common Core Learning Standards.

Impact

As a result, all students are engaged in coherent, rigorous tasks across grades and subjects that consistently promote college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- In all classrooms, curricula and tasks were aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and content standards. In all classrooms, there was evidence of primary source documents, document-based questions, the use of informational and non-fiction text, books and literature that were aligned to the reading lists from state Engage New York website, and math problems that were aligned to real world applications and reflected the mathematic instructional shifts.
- Tasks within units and lesson were consistently rigorous. Tasks consistently asked students to cite evidence, make inferences, synthesize information, defend an argument and show thinking. In an English class, for example, students had to view photographs and magazine advertisements throughout the 1940's. In groups they had to come up with a definition of "beauty", write an analysis of each image and how it reflected on American culture and values of the time, and how those perceptions may have changed in modern times. Students were engaged in high level discussions that pushed their thinking and forced them to defend their answers based on prior knowledge of history and literature that has been covered throughout the school year.
- Multiple entry points and scaffolds were seen across all classrooms. All teachers used well-designed graphic organizers that helped students to highlight academic vocabulary, break down challenging text, find evidence to support a claim, and annotate. For example, in a US history class, the teacher had students in groups, using primary source documents on the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki to frame arguments for a debate. Students were seen annotating the documents, and the graphic organizer provided helped students to organize their supporting evidence.

Findings

Assessments, including common assessments and ongoing checks for understanding, are aligned to the school's curricula and used strategically to drive instruction, make curricular adjustments, and push students to think critically.

Impact

Targeted assessment decisions that inform instruction and curricula positively impact student learning outcomes.

Supporting Evidence

- Harvey Milk High School is a small school and opportunities to standardize assessment practices have been maximized. The school has a school-wide grading policy and writing rubric. Common assessments are used across subject areas.
- Teachers use baseline and diagnostic assessments at the beginning of each school year and for all new students upon entry. The results of those exams are provided to every teacher, and all teachers must draft a learning plan, with specific strategies for each of their students.
- Across all classrooms, there was consistent evidence that teachers are checking for understanding at various junctures throughout the delivery of instruction. All teachers frequently circulated around the room and provided individualized support and conferencing. All teachers used an exit slip at the end of the lesson. Other methods included "stop and jots", "turn and talks" and quick writes.
- The school has aligned all assessments to Regents exams. Midterms and finals, as well as summative assessments use Regents questions, ask students to write document based and thematic essays, and are scored using Regents aligned rubrics. As a result, the school has seen yearly gains in Regents pass rates in most subjects. For example, in 2011-2012, 58.33% of students passed the Integrated Algebra Regents exam. In 2013-2014, 100% of students passed the Integrated Algebra Regents exam. Similarly, in 2011-2012, 62.50% of students passed the U.S. History and Government Regents exam as compared to 100% in 2013-2014.

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

Distributive leadership structures are embedded so that there is effective teacher leadership. A shared vision has led to teacher team work which is data driven, inquiry-based and targeted.

Impact

As a result, both teacher pedagogy and student outcomes are strengthened and teachers have a key role in the decision making process.

Supporting Evidence

- All teachers are engaged in an extensive, teacher-led process of instructional rounds. Teachers create their own teams, have created their own protocol, and make their own schedule that includes teams of teachers observing one another and providing warm and cool feedback based on the protocol. In the teacher team meeting, teachers discussed a deep trust that has been developed between teachers and amongst the staff and administration that has created an open and collaborative space for inter-visitiation, sharing lessons and unit plans, and collaborating on ideas that improve their practice and foster greater student outcomes, such as improved Regents results, and improved task design within their units. The principal reported that teacher pedagogy has vastly improved, and that MOTP (Measure of Teacher Practice) scores have improved as a direct result of the work happening in teacher teams.
- Teachers were engaged in rich conversations that were targeted and data-driven in the observed teacher team meeting. For example, two social studies teachers were looking at essays that the students wrote taking a position on whether the United States should have dropped the atomic bomb. Through their analysis of the essays, they noticed that students struggled with synthesizing information to make their essays cohesive. Tools used in that meeting included a template for tracking and analyzing data, and protocols for looking at student work.
- Teachers report that all decision making is shared and that distributive leadership structures have formed organically as a result of high expectations for students, and culture of professionalism and trust by the principal.