



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Institute for Health Professions at Cambria Heights

High School 243

**207-01 116th Avenue
Queens,
NY 11411**

Principal: Gareth Robinson

**Date of review: December 10, 2014
Lead Reviewer: Renee Peart-Zachary**

The School Context

Institute for Health Professions at Cambria Heights is a high school with 200 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 74% Black, 13% Hispanic, 1% White, 8% Asian, and 4% other students. The student body includes 6% English language learners and 11% special education students. Boys account for 37% of the students enrolled and girls account for 63%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 89%.

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	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	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	Proficient
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	Proficient

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The principal communicates high expectations to staff and has a system of accountability for meeting those expectations. The school staff has a culture that consistently communicates high expectations for students.

Impact

As a result of communicating high expectations, teachers are well informed about instructional and professional expectations. Furthermore, students can speak about their future goals and are fully aware how to prepare for the next grade-level, college, and a career.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal's daily morning meetings with staff, written feedback from teacher observations, staff handbook, and lesson plan templates, reinforce school-wide instructional and professional expectations.
- The student handbook that outlines grade-level expectations, and weekly community student meetings, clearly inform learners how to prepare for the next level and meet graduation requirements.
- Teachers attended summer training on topics such as the role of an advisor, advisory structures, and restorative circle. Advisory periods allow students to receive information on college and career information from their teachers/advisors. Additionally, students are guided on how to improve in their academics as well as developing socially appropriate behaviors.
- Students shared that they e-mail teachers with their questions on content, academic progress, or graduation requirements. Furthermore, students reported that they feel teachers are constantly giving them feedback on their work, providing a nurturing environment, and supporting their progress to the next grade-level as well as graduation.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Developing

Findings

Pedagogical practices are becoming aligned to the school's core beliefs about teaching and learning.

Impact

Instructional practices are not yet meeting the needs of diverse learners, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities as not all students are afforded opportunities to engage in high levels of thinking, resulting in uneven meaningful student discussions and work products.

Supporting Evidence

- The school's instructional belief that all students use academic language and evidence to communicate arguments both orally and in writing is not yet a consistent practice across classrooms, as it was evident in only three out of seven classes.
- In a tenth grade English humanities class, students worked in heterogeneous groups to read a social studies non-fiction text about Malcolm X. Students engaged in high levels of accountable talk and cited evidence to support a claim and counterclaim. The teacher asked Webb's Depth of Knowledge level four questions and provided immediate feedback to push students' thinking. However, this practice of promoting high levels of student discussions was not observed across classrooms.
- In a Living Environment class, the lesson started with a question of the day about the distinction between a diagnostician and a regular doctor. Students quickly finished the question and waited for another task. Additionally, the ensuing teacher-directed discussion allowed minimal opportunities for elevated levels of student-to-student conversation and participation, and student work products for this question were limited to one or two phrases.
- In a tenth grade geometry class, students were placed into heterogeneous groups to solve problems. During peer discussions, students expressed their ideas using math terminology. A student leader led the class discussion summary where students explored, explained, and elaborated, on their math process. However, this high level of discussion was not observed across classrooms.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Curricula align to Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Additionally, units of study are planned and refined to ensure all students, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities, have access to tasks.

Impact

Curricular decisions promote college and career readiness and provide access to coherent curricula for diverse learners, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal created a unit plan template that requires teacher teams, across content areas, to include Common Core Learning Standards, content area standards, essential questions, content skills, assessments, essential academic skills, research-based instructional methods, resources, supports, extensions for differentiated tasks, and performance tasks in units of study. For example, a review of the tenth grade Lord of the Flies writing unit showed all required unit plan components and an argumentative end-of-unit task where students must support a claim and counterclaim, thus promoting college and career readiness.
- A review of teacher team agendas, minutes, and refined units plans, reveals teachers meet during a structured block of time to plan and make adjustments to unit plans based on student work products and assessment results. For example, during a recent grade team leaders meeting, teachers reviewed English Language Learners' work products and made adjustments to a native language research project to now include academic vocabulary supports.
- Grade leaders, department leaders, and the principal created a weekly lesson-planning sheet and a lesson plan template to support access to curricula units of study. Across classes visited, teachers used the lesson plan template to plan their lessons and make adjustments for groups for students. For example, a tenth grade global history teacher planned supports that included use of dictionaries and project evaluation checklists for an Industrial Revolution task.

Findings

Teachers create assessments, use rubrics, and a school-wide grading policy that are aligned to the school's curricula. Additionally, teachers use assessments across grades and subjects to adjust instruction and curricula.

Impact

As a result of the school's assessment practices, students are receiving feedback to support their next learning steps, teachers are adjusting lessons, and struggling learners receive targeted support to address specific skills.

Supporting Evidence

- Across subjects, teachers create assessments such as English interim assessments and provide students with rubric-based actionable feedback, from the New York Performance Standards Consortium Literary Analysis Rubric. Students shared that the rubric-based feedback provides them with a clear understanding of their next learning steps.
- A review of the student handbook reveals learners have documented information about the school-wide grading policy. Furthermore, across classrooms observed, the school-wide grading policy is displayed on bulletin boards. The grading policy aligns to rubrics implemented across content areas.
- Teachers track results of assessment results and use item analysis to adjust lessons and curricula. For example, in a Living Environment course, the teacher reviewed an item analysis report from the cell theory and organelle assessment. Based on the assessment results, the teacher retaught the content, created a structure and function of the cell nucleus student group activity, implemented a cell membrane lab, and designed an alternative assessment to retest students' understanding of the content.

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

Grade-level teacher teams analyze student work and assessment data. Moreover, teachers have opportunities to assume leadership roles and provide input into instructional decisions.

Impact

Teachers have opportunities to share best practices and influence key decisions, resulting in school-wide implementation of teacher practices and academic progress for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- Department and grade-level teams meet once a week to examine student work, review unit plans, and disaggregate assessment results in the Jumprope online grading system. Teachers collaboratively use structured tuning and consultancy protocols to review data to determine students' areas of strengths and areas of concerns followed up by adjustments in forthcoming lessons. For example, teachers shared how they adjusted their learning targets and included a checklist form based on teacher team discussions and data results.
- A review of teacher team agendas, minutes, and notes captured in Google Drive, reveal teachers gauge where their students are by looking at interim assessment results. Teacher teams identify students of concern, point out what learners need the most help with, and develop support action plans. For example, the Global History team reviewed interim assessment results and created a six-week instructional support plan that included Common Core Learning Standards.
- Grade leaders shared that their input informs school-wide instructional shifts. For example, a teacher discussed a specific inquiry-based approach that cyclically reviews 10 to 15 students' assessment results, resulting in support action plans for these students. This inquiry approach is now being implemented school-wide across teacher teams.