



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

Office of School Quality  
Division of Teaching and Learning

# Quality Review Report

## 2014-2015

**Energy Tech High School**

**30Q258**

**36-41 28<sup>th</sup> Street  
Long Island City  
NY 11106**

**Principal: Hope Barter**

**Date of review: January 15, 2015**

**Lead Reviewer: Hongying Shen**

## The School Context

Energy Tech is a high school with 228 students from grade 9 through grade 10. The school population comprises 11% Black, 43% Hispanic, 16% White, 23% Asian, and 1% multi-racial students, with another 6% unreported ethnicity. The student body includes 5% English language learners and 21% special education students. Boys account for 79% of the students enrolled and girls account for 21%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 94.5%.

## 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>Additional Findings</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>Proficient</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>Celebration</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

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

### Findings

High expectations are consistently messaged to staff and the school community. School leaders and staff effectively partner with families to communicate a path to college and career.

### Impact

School's effort to communicate high expectations to the entire staff, parents and students results in a learning culture of mutual accountability and student progress toward college and career readiness.

### Supporting Evidence

- The principal authors an E-TECHWEEKEND newsletter which contains sections such as reflection on Previous Week's Summary, Weekly Read, Words of the Week, Glows & Grows, Giving Thanks, Upcoming Events and Weekly Challenge to reinforce mutual accountability for high expectations in professionalism, instruction, and communication.
- The principal, assistant principal, guidance counselor and college liaison conduct rounds on a daily and weekly basis and provide feedback to individual teachers about rapport with students, behavior management, wall displays, questioning and discussion techniques, rigor, and pacing of Danielson Framework for Teaching.
- The school hosts multi-day orientations prior to the opening of school in September for students, families and incoming staff to clarify the expectations of a grades nine through fourteen school. Besides the monthly Town Hall meetings for celebrating student academic success and discussing important topics as a community, the school provides monthly Community Coffee Hours, when parents can have informal conversations with the principal and staff about what is happening at the school.
- School uses Student-Led Conference as a mechanism for students to reflect on their own learning and to improve communication with parents. Students take ownership of their learning and communicate with teachers and parents about their successes and needs.
- Parents shared that the Weekly Message Blast and the monthly Family and Partner Newsletter kept them informed of what is taking place in the classroom. One parent followed the Shakespeare's Macbeth unit and read the literature to support his child in the unit tasks. Parents appreciate the PowerSchool online grading that informs them of real-time student progress toward mastery and provides feedback regarding student college and career readiness.

## Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

### Findings

While pedagogy provides multiple entry points and collaborative learning that are aligned to the articulated set of beliefs, the implementation of the strategies varies across the classrooms.

### Impact

Across classrooms, challenging collaborative learning tasks are embedded in the daily lesson plans that are informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching and the instructional shifts. Yet, there are lapses in actual implementation.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school focuses on their belief in collaborative learning as one essential skill to a college and career program. The Instructional Leadership Team has created standards-based rubrics, such as a collaborative learning rubric and STEM arguments rubric, to ensure instructional coherence across classrooms.
- A review of the lesson plans shows the consistency in planning to engage all learners in tasks via scaffolding, steps for checking for understanding, purposeful grouping with individual students and planned accommodations for students at different level of entry points. However, on the spot high-quality supports by teachers while students are engaged in high demand tasks varies. For example, in a global studies Integrated Co-Teaching class, instead of guiding the students to follow the collaborative work protocol to process the learning, the teachers reverted back to teacher-student interaction.
- Collaborative work was observed in a ninth grade literacy class, where students were to determine the theme of *Ender's Game* by connecting specific details, a skill benchmarked by Common Core Learning Standards. They worked in their analysis groups, following the collaborative steps to first look at each others' selected connections and then collectively create one connection that would represent the group's choice. Groups then switched their findings with others and gave feedback. However, these collaborative tasks were not evident in a vast majority of classrooms.
- In a ninth grade Algebra 1 class, students worked in groups to match situations given to them on one set of index cards for appropriate sketch graphs that illustrated the situations. Students were instructed to reach an agreement on their explanations for their choices. While in a Global History class, though students were in groups and were told to talk to each other and have a discussion, there were no clear intended strategies for collaboration.

## Additional Findings

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>1.1 Curriculum</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
---------------------------	-----------------------	----------------	-----------------------

### Findings

The school takes steps to ensure curricula alignment to Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and integrate instructional shifts into the curricula. Higher-order, skills-based academic tasks are embedded in all units.

### Impact

Curricula coherence across grades and subjects promotes college and career readiness and emphasize academic tasks which ensure that all students demonstrate their thinking.

### Supporting Evidence

- A review of unit and lesson plans showed consistent alignment with Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) using a backward design format and the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) components, including multiple means of representation and engagement to accommodate all learners.
- Grade teams meet weekly focusing on curricula to ensure interdisciplinary connections and instructional coherence that promote rigorous habits and higher-order skills. Action Plans with embedded instructional shifts ensure that all subjects have lessons where students need to develop a claim and support it with accurate evidence and analysis.
- A Geometry Nested Parallelograms Task shows the inclusion of instructional shifts in the curriculum. The task requires students to work collaboratively to observe a figure, develop a claim and write an argument to support the claim, using a geometry collaborative argument-writing rubric developed by teachers.
- The humanities course culminating in the Mock Trial, which was based on the topic of who the driving force of evil in *Macbeth* was, requires all students to demonstrate both rigorous habits as well as higher-order skills collaboratively and individually. The design of the task illustrates the multiple scaffolds and entry points for all learners. For example, the task includes a classwork timeline to keep students on track, a clear description of the task with build-in steps to follow, a model of Introduction-Claim-Counterclaim-Link (CEAL) paragraphs, sentence starters, counterclaim/rebuttal model, closing statement steps, and a checklist for each part of the task.
- Conversations with students revealed that they have 'vocabulary of the week' for all subjects and they have to demonstrate their knowledge of the words in a quiz at the end of the week and apply them in their course work. Students engage in weekly project-based learning focused on sustainability and clean technology.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>2.2 Assessment</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
---------------------------	-----------------------	----------------	-------------------

### **Findings**

The teacher-created assessments and rubrics are aligned with the school's curricula and teachers consistently use ongoing checks for understanding to meet all student needs.

### **Impact**

Rubrics and assessments provide feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement. Teachers make effective adjustments to meet all students' learning needs.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- Teachers use the teacher- created unit analysis rubric to assess unit alignment to Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), the level of task demands for student collaboration, multiple opportunities for checking understanding, and quality products. Teachers also use a rubric for grouping and group work to ensure support for all students' learning needs.
- Students use the teacher-created student collaborative rubric to ensure effective group work for high achievement in academic tasks. Students self-assess and group assess the group work to reflect on individual contributions to the group work, and areas the group can improve.
- Across all classrooms visited, teachers used different strategies to check for understanding, including activating prior knowledge, using thumbs up/down/sideways, checking notes, using exit tickets, and providing additional scaffolds when necessary during activities. For example, in an Integrated Co-Teaching Living Environment class, the teachers worked with different groups of students, students with learning disabilities and English language learners, who needed extra support and provided them with a glossary for the reading task and brainstormed with them for ideas.
- Students reported that their teachers gave them rubrics to help them complete their essays and projects, and received verbal and written feedback to support them in their next steps. Upon review of student work, written teacher feedback provides students with next steps to improve

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

**Findings**

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based team work and teachers have contributed to key decisions about teaching practices.

**Impact**

The work of teacher teams has resulted in improved pedagogy. The team structure promotes shared leadership and collaboration on key decisions that affect student learning across the school.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teachers have time on a daily and weekly basis to meet in grade teams, content teams, STEM and Humanities teams. The content team lead teachers participate in the school Instructional Leadership team weekly to develop their facilitative leadership skills.
- The Instructional Leadership team takes the lead on creating and implementing the collaborative rubric, which promotes the achievement of school goals to have all teachers incorporate Depth of Knowledge level 3 or above collaborative learning tasks into each unit in all disciplines, thus improving consistency of implementation across classrooms to positively impact on student learning.
- All teacher teams use Google Drive to document team work, which helps the school set goals and share progress regularly and across the school. For example, ninth grade English teachers shared strategies on annotating texts with science teachers in the integrated co-teaching classes.
- During a team meeting observed, teachers conducted data analysis of student essays in the *Macbeth* unit, followed the improvement in students with disabilities, and decided on the next instructional step to work with students on “author’s claim”. Teachers felt trusted to make decisions on the curriculum and choices of books from the Common Core book list.