



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

Office of School Quality  
Division of Teaching and Learning

# Quality Review Report

## 2014-2015

**High School for Community Leadership**

**28Q328**

**167-01 Gothic Drive  
Jamaica  
NY 11432**

**Principal: Carlos Borrero**

**Date of review: February 12, 2015  
Lead Reviewer: Juan Mendez**

## The School Context

The High School for Community Leadership is a high school with 423 students from grades 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 42% Black, 27% Hispanic, 4% White, and 22% Asian students. The student body includes 17% English language learners and 5% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 82.7%.

## 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>Proficient</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>Additional Findings</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>Focus</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>Additional Findings</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>Celebration</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>

## Area of Celebration

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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### Findings

Teachers consistently examine data and student work within inquiry based teams. Leadership structures allow teachers to have input on key decisions about curricula and teaching practices

### Impact

The work of teacher teams results in strengthened curricula and pedagogical approaches and embedded Common Core learning shifts leading to improved student achievement on assessments. Shared leadership structures build capacity, with teachers playing an integral role affecting student learning across the school.

### Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams meet in both interdisciplinary and content area structures using student work inquiry at the center of inquiry conversations. For example, teacher teams use ATLAS protocols to examine the work of an English as a Second Language (ESL) student and whether the objectives of the task are met.
- Shared leadership structures are evidenced by department team leaders, who also serve as conduits with administration to discuss team practices and outcomes; all shared practices are logged on the school's Google Drive.
- Gains in student assessments are evidenced by increased weighted Regents pass rates. For example, the Global History Regents citywide pass rate successfully reached 97% and Mathematics pass rate 98% citywide.
- Teacher teams adjust and refine curricula based on shared practices and inquiry. For example, an Algebra teacher noticed overlap in content – factoring, quadratics, graphing and made adjustments to ensure the curriculum was vertically aligned for the next grade level.
- Teachers articulate that they feel empowered and have input on decisions toward the development of instructional goals and strategies across grade levels.

## Area of Focus

**Quality Indicator:**

**2.2 Assessment**

**Rating:**

**Proficient**

### Findings

The school uses common assessments to measure student progress and adjust curricular and instructional decisions to meet the needs of learners.

### Impact

The school's systems to monitor progress through data analysis regularly guide adjustments in units and lessons to meet the needs of students. However, the school is working towards making curricular and instructional decisions and adjustments so that all students, including English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities, demonstrate mastery.

### Supporting Evidence

- Teachers monitor student progress through Google Docs tracking systems and adjust grouping and instructional strategies accordingly.
- The school uses technology such as Datacat and PupilPath as a school wide grading system.
- Teachers rely on in class facilitative strategies (e.g. 3 response questioning) and rubric aligned checklists to ensure that they are monitoring student understanding. The school is progressing towards student self-assessment in all classes.
- Student written assessments displayed on bulletin boards in the classrooms and in hallways reflect multiple content areas with Common Core aligned tasks. For example, "Logic Characteristics" in mathematics, "Exploring Literary Criticism" in English and "A Biographical History" in English as a Second Language.
- Although common assessments are prevalent and used to adjust instructional practices across the school, English language learners and Special Education students have not yet demonstrated mastery. For example, in mathematics, teachers suggested differentiating for students with disabilities by adding a worksheet and fill in the blank questions.

## Additional Findings

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>1.1 Curriculum</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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### Findings

Across grades and subject areas, teacher-created curricula and academic tasks are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards. Curricula are planned and refined using student work and data to apprise adjustments

### Impact

The school's curricular decisions build coherence both within a grade and as students advance through grades to promote college and career readiness. Across grades and content areas, academic tasks push student thinking.

### Supporting Evidence

- Curricula is planned and refined across grade levels and content area teacher teams. Teachers use Depth of Knowledge (DOK), Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and the instructional shifts to plan units. For example, units in American literature are aligned to those in U.S. History; students study the Roaring Twenties while reading F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*.
- Academic tasks reflect instructional shifts (balancing informational texts, writing from sources and academic vocabulary) essential for college readiness. For example, students write research papers analyzing Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory and its impact on Shakespeare's *Macbeth*.
- Curricula maps provide evidence that the school develops rigorous academic tasks through adaptation of materials from EngageNY and the Common Core Library.
- Teacher teams use student work and data from formative and summative assessments in order to make adjustments to curricula. For example, Special Education and ESL teachers collaborate on developmental processes and refine pedagogy to reflect the needs of English Language Learners.
- Lesson plans emphasize access to curricula for all learners. In Integrated Algebra, students construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others pertaining to function notations; students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP's) are offered guided support and grouped heterogeneously.

**Findings**

School leaders and faculty share firm beliefs about how students learn best informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching and a facilitative model of instruction.

**Impact**

Across classrooms, teacher practices encourage high levels of student thinking and participation with meaningful work products reflecting real world application and high levels of student participation.

**Supporting Evidence**

- In all classrooms visited, students were engaged in collaborative learning structures fostering discussion. For example, in a Trigonometry course, students worked in pairs to create, analyze and compare functions with restricted domains verbally and in writing.
- Student work reflects higher order thinking skills infused with technology. For example, in a ninth grade U.S. History class, students compared and contrasted different types of maps and evaluated how our perceptions influence geographical representations utilizing individual laptop computers, historical context sheets, map exploration techniques and guided questions for discussion.
- In many classrooms visited, students participated in discussions reflecting critical thinking skills. For example, in a ninth grade English class, students discussed how characterization reveals emerging conflicts in Sherman Alexie's *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*.
- Teaching practices are aligned to the Common Core instructional shifts, such as balancing informational and literary texts (Common Core shift 1). For example, in an eleventh grade global history class, students use primary and secondary sources to apply ideas from the Enlightenment Era to modern day United States government with excerpts from John Locke's *Vindication for the Glorious Revolution*, Montesquieu *Identifies the Necessity for the Separation of Governmental Powers* and Rousseau *Espouses Popular Sovereignty and the General Will*.
- Meaningful student work products are accessible on a shared Google Drive accessible to learners and staff. Student research papers demonstrate critical thinking skills with topics such as, "Does Gender Equate Our Worth?" and "Does Government Aid Help Poverty?"

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>3.4 High Expectations</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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### **Findings**

High expectations are consistently communicated to staff in a supportive learning environment with teacher teams and staff establishing a rich culture for learning focusing on whole student success for all learners.

### **Impact**

Structures to support high expectations emulate a culture where mutual trust and accountability are reciprocal, while students are empowered to take ownership of their learning process, carving a clear path to college and career readiness hinged on student achievement.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- The school's highly structured guidance and advisory structures support the success of the whole child. The School Intervention Team (SIT) meets by grade monthly to ensure the needs of at risk students are being met. These teams garner input from guidance counselors, social workers, classroom teachers and parents.
- Professional development incorporates high standards and staff input embedding elements of the Danielson Framework for Teaching. For example, teachers engage in training with a focus on questioning and discussion strategies.
- Student ownership of their learning process is evidenced through the two-term college advisory class fostering student self-assessment, college trips and college essay writing. Students write college entrance essays and receive specific feedback from teachers and students to ensure a path to college acceptance and readiness.
- The school's instructional foci are communicated consistently through feedback and observations. The foci include student engagement, students challenging each other's thinking and high levels of participation.
- A student says, "teachers at this school offer you exemplary advice and life advice, the school emphasizes people's individuality, students feel important here." The School Environment Survey suggests 97% of parents are satisfied with the education their child receives.