



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

Office of School Quality  
Division of Teaching and Learning

# Quality Review Report

## 2014-2015

**Business, Computer Applications &  
Entrepreneurship High School**

**High School Q496**

**207-01 116<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Queens  
NY 11411**

**Principal: Lynne Callender**

**Date of review: May 11, 2015  
Lead Reviewer: Donald Conyers**

## The School Context

Business, Computer Applications & Entrepreneurship High School is a high school with 86 students from grade 11 through grade 12. The school population comprises 85% Black, 11% Hispanic, 0% White, and 4% Asian students. The student body includes 10% English language learners and 14% special education students. Boys account for 74% of the students enrolled and girls account for 26%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 78.4%.

## 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>Focus</b>	<b>Developing</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>Developing</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>Developing</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>Developing</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>Developing</b>

## Area of Celebration

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>3.4 High Expectations</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Developing</b>
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### Findings

The principal is strengthening her ability to consistently convey high expectations to teachers and students connected to career and college readiness. Teachers and the teacher team are developing a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to all students.

### Impact

The training and accountability systems regarding the high expectations are beginning to take form and students are receiving some information and support that helps to prepare them for the next level.

### Supporting Evidence

- The principal sends emails monthly to the staff to communicate expectations regarding instructional practice, professional development, curriculum, and assessment. For example, the communications speak about data analysis, curriculum planning and design, adolescent literacy, and higher order thinking.
- Students during the interview indicated that they would appreciate being challenged more in classes so that they are ready for the real world. The students requested more assignments and assistance within the areas they need to move toward graduation; for example, more support with passing the United States (US) History Regent.
- The students indicated that receiving regular and frequent information about progress toward graduation and progress in class is really important and they expressed more help in that area. The principal held one town hall meeting with the community and did not have any others. Students indicated that the student government was launched and dissolved shortly thereafter due to a lack of adult participation and guidance.
- Teachers speak about student needs and discuss options during teacher team meetings that generally focus on social-emotional wellness, but discussions have not moved to systemically and practically speaking about movement to college and career readiness.
- The school offers a student progress and achievement plan document to be completed by teachers that highlights academic performance, student attendance, remedial or supplemental activities to address student achievement. Students sign an agreement with teachers, but also reported that there was no real accountability if the student does not follow the plan.

## Area of Focus

**Quality Indicator:**

**1.1 Curriculum**

**Rating:**

**Developing**

### Findings

Although curricula are in the process of being fully developed and aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards across all subjects, the curricula and academic tasks presented reveal uneven levels of cognitive demand for students.

### Impact

The lack of fully developed curricula inconsistently provides all students, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities, with high-level thinking and rigorous challenging tasks.

### Supporting Evidence

- Examination of a US History lesson plan focusing on Women in the 1950s involved students with reading two of the four articles: Harper's Weekly, The Feminine Mystique, Historian Joanne Meyerowitz and Historian Alice Kessler- Harris. The student assignment required students to complete a graphic organizer to develop an historical claim. The questions were "What were suburban women doing and how did they feel?"
- English curriculum is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and teachers use the resource of Engage NY. These units are created and followed to support whole class discussion, interaction with nonfiction text, and the recording of important facts on a graphic organizer. For example, a lesson plan highlighted black men being forced out of society. The lesson plan supported students reading a New York Times article: Forcing Black Men out of Society and a limited writing task.
- Math lesson plans are rich in content and support student exploration and hands on application of models. The lesson plans detail a series of questions that drive the lesson; however, the unit plans do not indicate alignment to Common Core Learning Standards.

## Additional Findings

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>1.2 Pedagogy</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Developing</b>
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### Findings

Teaching practices are beginning to align to the school's expectations about student learning, the Danielson Framework for Teaching, and the instructional shifts. Student discussions and work products reflect uneven levels of student thinking and participation.

### Impact

Teaching practices result in limited opportunities for students to be appropriately challenged in activities that include discussion, writing, and critical thinking.

### Supporting Evidence

- The principal reported that the school believes “all students are capable of great thinking. They often need scaffolds to ensure that they can receive high level content and texts.” She also indicated that interaction with complex texts lead to higher ideas. The school's shared beliefs were not consistently observed across classrooms visited. Additionally, the principal indicated that, “teachers are not comfortable with scaffolding.” This was evident in observed teaching practices that reflected missed opportunities to include scaffolded instruction.
- In a Spanish 6 class, students read a short story about a family vacation that did not go as planned. The teacher assessed students understanding of the story. The teacher asked, “What went wrong on the vacation? Students were asked to create a PowerPoint in class based on an imaginary vacation. Students were asked to give basic information about the country visited, describe points of interest, describe their favorite place, and indicate what interested them the most.
- Within a virtual enterprise class, students worked independently to support the created business. The created business is Next Generation Scholars who sell educational applications based on educational support. The students were observed completing various assignments with the different departments: human resources, sales, ITT, accounting, administrative and marketing. The business operates on a 350-thousand loan with a 5 year maturity date. The students were meeting to discuss the terms of the loan and repayment plan while other students were preparing employee payroll. Additionally other students were improving marketing strategies and meeting with sales representatives to assess progress in the business experience. Students reported that this exercise improves their leadership skills, presentation skills, and business experience. However, this type of student discussions were not observed across classes visited.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>2.2 Assessment</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Developing</b>
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### **Findings**

The school continues to establish the use of assessments and rubrics to understand student progress across grades and subject areas. The ongoing checks for understanding are uneven and limit the opportunity for students to self-assess their work.

### **Impact**

The varying use of assessment data and rubrics to make adjustments to instruction and lessons diminishes the academic progress of all students. More attempts at the timely understanding of student learning needs are being made in classrooms.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- The teachers are expected to provide exit slips in order to gauge student understanding of the lessons. Only one of the six classes observed provided students the ability to complete exit slips. The Living Environment science class gave students an exit slip that asked them to complete the statement, "Today, I learned that...."
- Mock regents are given to students by classroom teachers and analyses are performed in order to target the areas of weakness. Global Studies assessment results revealed that students continue to struggle with the document based questions and the thematic essay. Teachers responded by providing support to students during the student lunch period.
- The use of rubrics by teachers is limited. They use them primarily in English, Spanish and the Virtual Enterprise classes. However, the use of rubric was sporadic across the school and during the student interview; most students indicated that they do not use them often. A review of lesson plans and observation of lessons revealed that there was no evidence that the rubric ratings drove adjustment to lessons or instruction in classrooms.
- The principal indicated that she rarely sees adjustment based on teachers checking for understanding. Classroom visits revealed that teachers did not ask probative questions across all classes, nor did they have a visible way to gather information about student learning in the midst of the lessons.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Developing</b>
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**Findings**

The teacher team engages in professional collaborations that emphasize responding to student learning and socio-emotional needs. The teachers discuss student progress and share possible strategies to facilitate solution to concerns.

**Impact**

The work of the teacher team is beginning to align to the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards and loosely improves teacher practice.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The principal indicated that the teachers typically utilize student work products and student data along with an established protocol to review student progress and to determine next steps for the students and teachers. Previous agenda and notes support the occasional adherence to this teacher team practice.
- The teachers and guidance counselor engage in case conferencing, where they select a student to discuss and develop a strategy leading to positive solution. During a teacher team that was observed, teachers presented information on a student who was recently placed in temporary housing. The teachers and the guidance counselor discussed the needs of the students; for example, school supplies, school books, and graphic novels. However, the team did not consult any student academic or behavioral data to create a viable solution that would deeply benefit the student beyond the surface provisions that – after satisfaction- will connect the student to deeper learning. The team made no projections about how well the student should be doing nor did the team discuss instructional strategies to employ in forthcoming lessons.
- The observed teacher team meeting did not support the school’s belief about student ongoing use of complex text to stimulate thinking and the evolving command of the skills found in the Common Core Learning Standards; specifically citing textual evidence and use of academic vocabulary.
- In advance of the school’s anticipated close of the school in June 2016, the teacher team is not consistently using the known data about student achievement and progress to ensure a successful path from high school to college or career realities. This is evidenced by a review of teacher team agendas and notes as well as interviews with various teachers.