



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

**Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning**

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Eagle Academy for Young Men of Staten Island

Middle School R028

**101 Warren Street
Staten Island
NY 10304**

Principal: Jermaine Cameron

**Date of review: May 21, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Dr. Joseph O'Brien**

The School Context

Eagle Academy for Young Men of Staten Island is a middle school with 62 students in grade 6. The school population comprises 55% Black, 31% Hispanic, 8% White, and 6% Asian students. The student body includes 3% English language learners and 34% special education students. Boys account for 100% of the students enrolled and girls account for 0%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 0.0%.

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	Developing
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

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations, and provide training on them to staff. School leaders and staff consistently communicate expectations connected to a path of college and career readiness and offer ongoing feedback with families to support student progress.

Impact

School leaders and staff have a system of accountability for expectations and support families in understanding high expectations for their children.

Supporting Evidence

- High expectations are conveyed to staff through pre and post observations, meetings and weekly professional learning opportunities led by school administration, Children's First Network (CFN) support, and teacher leaders. Weekly instructional reminder emails from the principal provide teachers with clear instructional expectations each week. Additionally, all teachers are provided with an "Educator Handbook" which includes the school's mission and vision statements, and policies and practices for communicating with families. For example, "Be flexible when contacting parents...Be willing to call evenings or early mornings. Most parents want to discuss their child's progress...."
- School leaders, teachers, and the parent coordinator have offered family workshops on the Common Core Learning Standards, and math and literacy in the home. The school provides both humanities and math parent guides with unit descriptions, goals, rubrics, and ways to help promote literacy and math skills at home. Parent resources including documents explaining unit goals in math, description of a unit project, student response exemplars and ways to prioritize and celebrate math success for students in the home were seen in the parent math and literacy guides.
- The school designed an additional progress report to keep families further updated on student academic and social behaviors. Additionally, teachers receive professional development on how best to provide feedback to families about their children. Documents including sentence stems for strengths, needs, and suggestions are reviewed with teachers. For example, "Connect next steps to challenges identified" and "try not to use teacher jargon when speaking with families" were some comments that were evident.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Teaching practices are becoming aligned to the curricula and beginning to reflect a set of beliefs about how students learn best informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Teaching strategies inconsistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula.

Impact

Across classrooms, inconsistent instructional practices and mixed levels of appropriately challenging tasks result in missed instructional opportunities for all students to engage appropriately in challenging tasks or to produce meaningful work products.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal shared that he believed students learn best when teachers use the workshop model, provide structure, and use high-interest texts to provoke meaningful discussions. In some classrooms, students collaborated in flexible groups on activities in the workshop model. For example, teachers use non-fiction sports articles to engender discourse and debate. In a grade six English class, students reviewed one of three sports-related articles then participated in a debate on whether or not football is too dangerous for young athletes to play. Academic charts and colorful graphs provide illustrations and visual representations to assist English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities (SwDs).
- Instructional tools and supports for students with disabilities, English language learners and advance students were provided in some classes. For example, in an ELA class, students were placed into one of three ability-based groups to identify textual evidence, and supporting details using unique texts. However, in many classes, students worked on identical assignments using the same resources. For example in grade six math class, all students used identical resources to represent data with a frequency table and line plot in order to examine distribution.
- Opportunities for meaningful student discussion in math and ESL were evident in some classes. In a sixth grade ELA classroom, students were given multiple opportunities to discuss their findings with their peers and with their group. The teacher facilitated the conversation by promoting discussions among students via turn and talks. Contrastingly, in an ESL push-in English class, student-to-student discussion was not evident and the interaction was teacher–student–teacher. For example, after a student answered a question, the teacher said “good” or “excellent” and moved to the next one.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

School leaders and faculty are in the process of ensuring that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Curricula and academic tasks are inconsistently planned and refined using student work and data so that tasks have access for a diversity of learners.

Impact

The school is working on building coherence and promoting college and career readiness across grades. Curricula and tasks provide limited opportunities to engage all student subgroups in cognitive learning.

Supporting Evidence

- Curricula plans are currently in development. The school has begun to develop units of study aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards. The six members of the faculty met over the summer to design curricula that is a hybrid of teacher-created resources, Connected Math Project 3 (CMP3), Kaplan Advantage, Engage NY, and Expeditionary Learning. For example, a unit outline on introduction to computers includes an overview, list of Common Core Learning Standards addressed, content standards, learning targets and big ideas, essential questions, and vocabulary. In sixth grade English lesson plans, learning targets require students to “support a debate topic and thoroughly be able to explain that evidence.”
- In English, teachers note that students struggle in using claim and counterclaim, and redesigned units with high-interest readings about sports and sports-related figures. Teachers report an uptick in student writing as a direct result of students’ high engagement with the source material. However, a review of lesson plans and tasks reflect that this process is still in its early stages of development across grades and subject areas.
- Some lesson plans offer insight on tasks to support the instruction of specific subgroups. However, information is not reflected across all maps in different grades and subjects. In English language arts (ELA), the task requires students to use one of three tiered readings in heterogeneous groups. However, these written directives detailing specific supports have yet to be developed in other areas. For example, the activities in a sixth grade math lesson plan read, “Class will receive different levels of scaffolding in order to complete the task” and “Small group instruction with English as a second language (ESL) teacher to remediate skills.”

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Across classrooms, teacher teams use and create assessments, rubrics, checklists that are aligned with the school’s curricula. Teachers use common assessments to determine student progress toward goals.

Impact

School-wide assessments provide actionable feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement. The school uses data consistently to adjust the curricula and instruction at the teacher team and classroom levels.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers create resources, protocols, checklists, and rubrics to aid in the assessment of student learning outcomes. For example, the sixth grade teachers created two different debate rubrics, one for the pro side, and one for the con to assess students’ understanding and use as a tool to address and refute the counterclaim.
- The school has collaboratively defined a school-wide grading policy delineated by “proficiency in content” and “work ethic.” Specific percentages, related assessments and details including, “At least three or four tests inclusive of writing tasks within each marking period” or “Pre-tests are not to be factored into a Scholar’s grade” were seen on the grading policy. Students shared their knowledge of the grading policy and one stated, “It helps me understand what I need to do.”
- After reviewing students’ classroom and writing data, teacher teams noted students struggled with figurative language and poetry. The team met and designed a poetry book checklist to aid in gaining a deeper understanding of what steps were necessary to complete in the task in order to receive a perfect score.
- The analysis of individual student data includes fall and spring benchmark scores and a color-coded column denoting the growth range between seasons among benchmarks. For example, a list of sixth grade students with disabilities math data helps inform student groups in classrooms. For example in a grade six English class, the teacher divided struggling students into flexible groups based on data from the previous day’s on demand writing task.

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

The majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations that promotes the achievement of the school’s goals and the Common Core Learning Standards. Teacher teams consistently analyze assessment data and work for targeted students.

Impact

Structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations result in the strengthening of instructional capacity of teachers. Teacher teamwork results in improvements in teacher practice and progress toward goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- At least three times per week, teacher teams use a Collaborative Analysis protocol to review student work and identify gaps in student instruction. Student levels and analysis of work products, standards, target learning gaps, and implications for teaching with next steps were seen in team agendas and notes. For example, the teacher team reviewed a student’s fact-based essay about the limitation of man-made pollutants. Listed on the protocol are the analyses of student data: “The student is able to write an introduction, body, and conclusion,” and what is missing in the work in relation to the learning target such, as “Student needs to elaborate on evidence.”
- Teachers noted that students were having difficulty in providing supporting details in their writing. Teacher teams designed additional units of study on identifying textual evidence and its use in essay writing, different types of details, citing quotes, elaboration stems, and how quotes connect to support the thesis. Preliminary evidence from the Measures of Student Learning (MOSL) ELA assessments note an increase in student achievement in using textual evidence in essays.
- The school notes that students were struggling in multi-step questions and word problems in math. After deeper analysis, teachers uncovered that students were only completing the first step in multi-step problems. Teachers met to discuss strategies and made adjustments to curriculum to ensure student completion of math tasks. Strategies utilized include underlining the text, the use of visual cues and more complex, state exam-style questions in daily classroom activities and collaborative tasks.