



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

The Eagle Academy for Young Men

Secondary School X231

**4143 Third Avenue
Bronx
NY 10457**

Principal: Jonathan Foy

**Date of review: May 15, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Hadiya J. Daniel-Wilkins**

The School Context

The Eagle Academy for Young Men is a high school with 608 students from grade 6 through grade 12. The school population comprises 61% Black, and 37% Hispanic. The student body includes 4% English language learners and 28% special education students. Boys account for 100% of the students enrolled. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 90.0%.

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	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	Developing
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	Well Developed
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:	Well Developed
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Findings

School leaders and guidance staff have effectively established a culture of high expectations that systematically communicates a unified set of goals for supporting families and students' paths to college and careers. .

Impact

The school orchestrates ongoing events and creates multiple opportunities for families to learn about their children's expectations, and educational experiences for students that prepare them for the next level.

Supporting Evidence

- Staff members established effective systems that intentionally ensure students and families can access and navigate the pathways to college and careers. Partnerships with the College Board Initiative provide an on-site designated College Advisor to collaborate with guidance officials. This collaboration has fostered occasions for students to partake in day and overnight on-site excursions to a variety of colleges, and the school serves as host to several professionals on career day. Students are routinely provided with opportunities to access information and network with role models to inform future goals.
- The school provides ongoing clear lines of verbal and written communication with families to increase their understanding of college and career readiness expectations for their children, and empower them to help coach their youngsters to attaining or exceeding those expectations. Parents expressed an appreciation for the staffs' diligent support guiding them through the college admission and financial aid processes, the Saturday workshops, and the college trips opportunities for their children. The school has forged a partnership with parents to sustain momentum toward high learning goals.
- The school has purposefully instituted a personalized accountability system for supporting students in high-need subgroups to ensure academic and social elevation to the next level. The "Eagle Academy Wingmen Scholar Support Program," has been designed to provide, one-on-one or small group daily 'check-ins' and tutoring sessions to serve as a support method for struggling students. The personal mentorship and emotional support students are receiving, from caregivers, affords them a structure for being accountable for their educational growth.
- School leaders and staff have deliberately erected structures that communicate a unified set of clear expectations to acknowledge students' progress toward college and career aspirations. The learning community conducts an annual celebration for students who have received early college acceptance letters, with a, "College Signing Day" ceremony. It is in this ceremony students are acknowledged for their academic and scholarships accomplishments along the route to the next level. Students' efforts to meet or exceed scholastic expectations are consistently validated.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Developing

Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are beginning to reveal alignment to curricula and showed an emerging set of beliefs on how students learn best. Student work products and discussions reflected inconsistent levels of thinking and participation. .

Impact

Instruction and learning activities were inconsistently aligned to standards and stated beliefs on how students learn best. Across classrooms student-centered discussions and rigorous thinking, were uneven, thus limiting opportunities for high levels of student engagement and work products

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms students were seen completing reading and writing tasks. Evidence of the Danielson Framework for Teaching, 3c, “Student Engagement” proved sporadic across classrooms. In five of seven classrooms, teachers’ enlisted students to complete tasks by asking a series of questions to individual students. One teacher posed the following: “Is this a story? What did you write? What’s the difference?” Yet another teacher asked, “What work did you use? What did you agree upon?” Students’ learning outcomes were primarily teacher directed. Opportunities for teachers to serve as facilitators of students’ engaging learning experiences were missed.
- While lesson plans had “modifications” and “differentiation” noted to accommodate the learning needs of diverse learners, and teachers reported conducting learning style surveys, in most classrooms, students were observed completing the same task, formative assessment, and homework, to meet the same learning target(s). This disconnect between the lessons’ intention for supporting all learners, and what students were actually doing, hampered possibilities for students to meaningfully engage with the content to increase learning.
- Teachers across classrooms provided students with learning tasks. Chances however for students to present questions to each other, or the teacher, to demonstrate high levels of thinking and discourse, conceptual understanding, initiate topics, or make unsolicited contributions were inconsistent. In one class, students working in a Socratic seminar format were seen involved in an activity that required them to raise their hands to answer a series of recall questions levied by a peer assigned to lead the session. Moments for students to query content to arrive at understanding new or complex material were limited.
- While students were able to share drafts of essays and assessments, in some classrooms student work products displayed on large chart paper were produced by three or four students. Although group work is encouraged, the extended task(s) resulting from the chart paper group work activities were not evident. Occasions for students to demonstrate critical thinking, creativity, and problem solving beyond some chart paper activities were inconsistent.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:

1.1 Curriculum

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

School leaders and staff ensure that curricula are aligned to CCLS and or content standards, integrate the instructional shifts, and academic tasks are planned and revised using student work and data.

Impact

Teachers are utilizing Common Core Learning Standard aligned units and lesson plans to develop academic tasks, and refinements are made in order to cognitively engage a variety of learners.

Supporting Evidence

- Across content areas, unit plans are designed to include the following: Unit overview, Common Core Learning Standards, unit learning targets, essential questions, relevance, materials, importance, connections, skills, reading complex text and text to support writing, instructional procedures or practices, unit assessment or culminating activity, benchmark assessments, accommodations for differentiated instruction, additional materials and resources, and technology to guide teachers through the delivery of content for all students. For example, one curriculum unit, with a learning target task of, “Students will be able to distinguish between an observation and inference,” included the following accommodations for students with special needs: “Extended time on quizzes, mixed grouping during lab activities with pair strong with weak or that are arranged based on learning style depending on the activity, readings with questions, that allow options such as the way materials are expressed or choice in question difficulty.”
- Teachers planned lessons to include the following: Essential questions, student outcomes, learning targets, do now, Common Core Learning Standards, content standards, Danielson Framework elements, exploratory challenges, key content vocabulary words, potential questions, discussion activity, group-work for differentiation, exit ticket, and homework. One teacher demonstrated that the practice of planning for diverse learning considered the students in the lowest third, English language learners, (ELLs), students with Individual Education Plans, (IEPs), and advance learners. For example, for her lesson’s learning target of, “I can create a table of values and evaluate a function,” she made the following adjustment for students with IEPs, “These students may have difficulty with graphing points correctly on the coordinate plane. If needed, have them pair up with a partner and monitor their placement of learning style: verbal/tactile.” Teachers are making purposeful decisions to note considerations for all learners on lesson plans.
- Co-teachers are planning Common Core Learning Standard and/or content standards aligned lessons to provide cohesive engaging instruction to promote college and career readiness experiences for all students. Integrated Co-Teaching instructors prepared a lesson to have students create a business plan driven by the essential questions of, “Why do choices and incentives influence the behavior of individuals, businesses and economic institutions?” A diverse group of learners were observed drafting business plans.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Across classrooms teachers use assessment rubrics that are loosely aligned with curricula, and assessment practices inconsistently reflect notation of students' understandings.

Impact

Actionable feedback to support students' next academic learning steps is limited.

Supporting Evidence

- Across content areas assessments are aligned to Common Core Learning Standard or content standards in the curriculum. A variety of teachers' feedback, is evidenced on students' assessment products, however, they are generic check marks and numerical scores. For example, on one "Middle School Common Core Extend Response Rubric," the teacher affixed checks in column 2 of a 1 to 4 scale rubric, adding a numerical 75% as feedback for the learner. Opportunities to provide students with meaningful actionable next learning steps were missed.
- The school has established a process for including, "Student Assessment Reflections" of unit tests. Students provide input on a reflection sheet with the following questions: What learning target did I master in unit X? What learning targets do I still need to master? Which topics were the most challenging? What habits will I need to change in order to master learning targets in the future? Students' responses to habits to change to master learning targets in the future were primarily, "Take my time on the test, study harder, and pay attention." A system for involving students with articulating specific skills for developing and concepts for understanding is evolving.
- Although teachers have planned to deliver Common Core Learning Standard aligned instruction to promote a college and career readiness agenda, on-going checking for understanding of content information was inconsistent across classrooms. While exit tickets were distributed and completed by students in some classrooms, a school-wide system for collecting and analyzing the impact of the effectiveness of this valued formative assessment was not available. Moments for teachers to make critical instructional adjustments to meet the learning needs of all students were lost.

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

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations, and distributive structures are in place to build leadership capacity.

Impact

Teacher teams meet regularly to use an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership for focusing on improving students’ outcomes.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and teachers have built a culture of professional collaborations in which they share, “best practices” for promoting the school’s instructional goals and implementing the pedagogical shift for Common Core aligned lessons. Teachers are organized into, “critical friends groups,” for the purpose of providing collegial feedback and building instructional capacity across the school. The school is continuing to support the growth of instructors, with the focus on strengthening instructional practices across grades and content areas.
- Teacher team members articulated how they utilize structured cooperative sessions using protocols for looking at students’ work and analyzing data for the purpose of strengthening professional practice. Staff used the question of, “Does our teaching address how we think students learn best?” as the inquiry question. Teachers shared that the information garnered from their inquiry, analysis of the Degrees of Reading Power, and Performance Series data, exit slips, scholarship reports, and State assessments, informs their groupings, time allocated for activities inside of the workshop model, and strategies selected for increasing students’ learning. Progress on analyzing outcome data implications on teacher practice is improving.
- School leaders and teachers offered specific examples of teacher leadership that demonstrated how teachers play a vital role in school level decision-making. A structure for developing teacher leaders has been established. Lead teachers are empowered to conduct professional development for whole staff, department members and across grades. Lead teachers created professional learning sessions to support the instructional goal of Danielson Framework for Teaching competencies on 3c,(student engagement), and 3d.(assessment). Structures for developing key instructional leaders to support the systematic monitoring of students’ academic progress across grades and content are emerging.