



**Department of
Education**

Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

**The Marie Curie School for Medicine, Nursing and
Health Professions**

High School 10X237

**120 West 231st Street
Bronx
NY 10463**

Principal: Rodney Fisher

Date of review: December 22, 2014

Lead Reviewer: Kristine Mustillo

The School Context

The Marie Curie School for Medicine, Nursing and Health Professions is a high school with 588 students from 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 36% Black, 57% Hispanic, 3% White, and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 10% English language learners and 19% special education students. Boys account for 17% of the students enrolled and girls account for 83%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 82.0%.

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	Celebration	Well Developed
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	Proficient
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	Additional Findings	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:

1.1 Curriculum

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

Across grades and content areas, curricula is aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts to give all students access to rigorous tasks that promote college and career readiness.

Impact

The school's curricular decisions build coherence across grade and content areas promoting academic tasks and thinking essential to college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- All core subject areas in all grades have developed Common Core aligned unit and lesson plans with instructional practices informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Tasks and lessons within units consistently ask students to demonstrate strategic and extended thinking. A 9th grade English language arts unit on Euthanasia policy asks students to produce an argumentative essay citing information from at least three complex texts; develop claims; explore counter claims; provide evaluations and analyses of the strengths and weaknesses of arguments.
- Planning units begins in the fall when content area leads attend monthly network meetings using the EQulP rubric to assess and refine units. Leads then work with content teams using the rubric. Throughout the year, student work products are used to make adjustments, plan for divergent learning tasks that require all learners to demonstrate their thinking. A 10th grade global history unit on imperialism asks students to analyze the causes and effects of imperialism across countries. A range of resources and presentation options allow learners to actively engage with rigorous content,
- Weekly planning meetings include guidance and teacher specialists to incorporate College and Career Readiness skills within units. These support self-regulation skills through opportunities for productive struggle, organization, project pacing and communication, collaboration and engagement through group tasks and discussions.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practice reflects the belief that all students learn best when they are actively engaged in learning collaborations that involve high level discussions and the exploration of rigorous tasks.

Impact

Teaching strategies are not yet consistently strategic to offer high quality supports and extensions so that all students, especially higher-level students, engage in meaningful and challenging activities regularly.

Supporting Evidence

- During a 12th grade forensic science lesson, students worked in teams to analyze crime scene evidence and reports to determine a series of events and identify a likely suspect. Students had to analyze blood samples and DNA as well as assess the credibility of reports and witness statements. Teams came together to discuss, question and support conclusions.
- A 10th grade global studies unit asks students to evaluate imperialism during the late 19th early 20th centuries in Africa, India, China and Japan. Each student group explored a country for three days examining their wars, policies and relationships. For the culminating projects students were asked to create a presentation where they would select their role, audience, topic and presentation format. For example, a student would be able to present a poem to Indian citizens on the effects of British Rule from the perspective of an Indian soldier.
- An 11th grade English language arts class worked on analyzing Hamlet's final soliloquy. Students worked in roles within heterogeneous groups to answer leveled questions using textual evidence. Graphic organizers and text translations through No Fear Shakespeare were available to support students in accessing high level content and increased understanding.
- While planning is designed to support all students in accessing rigorous content, it was evident in two classrooms that pacing and execution sometimes decrease student engagement and understanding. For example, one English language arts class had students participating in Socratic seminar, assessing valid claims within current newspaper articles. Students were aware of the participation rubric, even citing it at points. However, a lack of structure and guidance through the questions resulted in students calling out and not necessarily reflecting on the responses of others leading to disengagement on the part of some students. In a special education classroom, students were working to identify the organs of the excretory system and examine life systems. A lack of structure to around the guided questions and resources resulted in random guessing and disengagement.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use common assessments. Assessment practices consistently incorporate the use of ongoing checks for understanding and self and peer reflection.

Impact

Teacher collaboration on data analysis results in modifications to curricula and instruction. Daily reflections and checks for understanding lead to effective instructional adjustments to meet the needs of all learners.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses common assessments to determine progress towards goals across grades and subject areas. Teachers have adopted a common rubric for use in developing written arguments in science, social studies, math and English language arts. Grade and content teams use this information to modify curricula and instructional strategies.
- Teachers use hinge questions during lessons to assess student understanding and make adjustments to instruction. Exit slips are used in all classrooms and are reviewed daily to modify grouping and/or delivery of content for the following day.
- Students use rubrics for writing and discussion to guide their work through self and peer-reflection. Teachers review student self and peer reflections, looking for trends, to make lesson modifications and provide supports.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

High expectations are conveyed to teachers through ongoing professional development aligned the Danielson Framework for Teaching. High expectations are communicated to students, grounded in Common Core Learning Standards and College and Career Readiness, with ongoing advisements and supports.

Impact

Teachers engage in self-selected cycles of professional development designed to grow practice in the instructional domain. Guidance and administration create opportunities for ongoing dialogue with students in group and individual settings to support their post-secondary goals.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders hold staff workshops over the summer to review data and discuss implications for instruction utilizing the Danielson Framework for Teaching and Common Core Learning Standards to set expectations. Departments focus on reading, writing, speaking and listening skills and department leads facilitate this work throughout the year. Collaborative work sessions and data reviews with direct links to practice foster mutual accountability for student success.
- The school has identified Domain 3, Instruction as the professional focus for this year. Staff members design professional development cycles based on their strengths. Staff regularly participates in inter-visitations for professional growth. Staff receives both peer and administrative feedback and can self-select professional development options within given cycles.
- The school offers Advanced Placement courses to 11th and 12th graders in US History, Statistics, Language and Composition and Biology. The school offers tutoring to prepare for AP exams as well as SAT and ACT prep. Students also have the opportunity to take College Now classes through partnerships with Monroe and Lehman College.
- Guidance and seminar support students in the college application process, scheduling school visits, discussing options, supporting application completion and often getting application fees waived, and giving feedback on personal essays. The school also supports students in accessing internships, summer employment and other post-secondary options.

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

The majority of teachers engage in professional structured collaborations around planning and practice. Teacher teams consistently analyze assessment data and student work.

Impact

Teachers have strengthened their instructional capacity and student data shows progress for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams use the ATLAS protocol to learn from student work. After the work is presented and analyzed, teachers ask, “What could be a next step for the teacher to take?” and “How does this connect to my own practice?”
- Teacher teams analyzed benchmark assessment results for high school history. Faculty noticed increased growth in classes where there was a heavy emphasis on Socratic Seminar, performance based writing tasks and guided note-taking. Strategies for incorporating these techniques across grades and content will be part of the upcoming professional development sessions and will be modeled by the teachers from these classes.
- Teacher teams analyzed benchmark assessments in mathematics and saw increased growth in students who participated in small group tutoring sessions and students who were enrolled in classes that emphasized an exploratory method of instruction paired with structured student discussions.