



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Schuylerville Preparatory High School

High School X348

**3000 East Tremont Avenue
Bronx
NY 10461**

Principal: Roberto Ossorio

**Date of review: April 1, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Renardo Wright**

The School Context

Schuylerville Preparatory is a high school with 172 students from grade 9 through grade 10. The school population comprises 21% Black, 64% Hispanic, 8% White, and 4% Asian students. The student body includes 16% English language learners and 23% 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 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	Additional Findings	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	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	Focus	Developing

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders have established a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families. These high expectations are consistently communicated through professional collaborations that provide instructional supports and prepare students for college and career readiness.

Impact

There is a supportive learning environment where school leaders share and communicate high expectations for professional growth for teachers and a pathway for college and career readiness for students

Supporting Evidence

- At the beginning of the school year, school leaders provide a professional handbook for teachers that outlines clear expectations and professional duties. The staff handbook also includes the school's vision, mission, values, and the expectations for observations and evaluations based on the Danielson Framework for Teaching.
- School leaders have incorporated structures within the school schedules for teachers to meet weekly for teacher team meetings and professional learning opportunities. Teachers meet weekly for one hour of professional collaboration and learning followed by a teacher team meeting that discusses students' social and academic progress across the grades.
- The school has secured a school-wide interactive online grading system, Jupiter Grades, to communicate with students about their social and academic progress. During the meeting with students, it was shared that this communication tool affords them the opportunity to know their current academic status and next steps. Since this tool is interactive, teachers and students engage in ongoing communications related to students' strengths, challenging, and clear next steps.
- School leaders have partnered with the Fordham Campus to provide an Upward Bound College Program and a summer institute for students. Here, students can enroll into college level courses and earn college credits. In addition, students are exposed to a range of Ivy Leagues and top tier colleges and universities through annual field trips such as Harvard, Yale, NYU, Mount Saint Mary, and Manhattan Collage.
- During the students' meeting, it was shared by students that school leaders meet with every student on campus to discuss his or her academic progress and the next steps for moving forward.

Area of Focus

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

While the vast majority of teachers are engaged in structured professional collaborations on teams, they are still emerging as they fully incorporate the inquiry process based on data and students' work. Teachers are beginning to look at patterns and trends to closely analyze students' work and current data that they all share.

Impact

Professional collaborations and teacher teams are beginning to properly place students and provide them with additional academic supports.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders have established a time within the school's instructional day for all teachers to meet for professional learning and collaboration. School leaders have developed and allotted time on Fridays for teacher team meetings and professional learning opportunities. During this time teachers meet on and across grades in the different content areas to discuss assessment, data, class participation, behaviors, and attendance. In addition, professional learning opportunities are provided to teachers by their peers or school leaders.
- During the initial meeting with the school leader and members of the teacher teams, it was expressed that teacher teams meet regularly to discuss students' progress, but they are still in the process of effectively identifying students using the inquiry process to fully analyze students' work and school-wide assessment data. During the teacher team meeting, a teacher shared that the team is still in the process of obtaining folders of students' work and assessments to help the team to better assess students' academic progress using an inquiry approach. Another member of the team expressed that the school is looking for additional common assessments to help track measures of students' academic progress.
- Teacher teams engage weekly in grade/content level collaborations to discuss the academic and social behaviors of identified students at risk. During the visit, it was noted that a teacher team met to discuss the social and academic progress of nine male students with IEP's. The nine identified students are currently in the classes of each team member present at the team meeting. During this time each team member is provided the opportunity to share with the team the current progress and challenges that each student is experiencing in his or her classroom during instructional time. Students who were identified as not making academic progress across the different subjects were suggested by the team to be placed in a portfolio class for additional instructional support. The team has established meeting protocols, but still developing the process for looking at pattern and trends as well as using the inquiry process to fully evaluate students' progress.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Curricula emphasize rigorous tasks and is consistently revised and modified to address the diversity of learners.

Impact

Across classrooms, all students are engaged in rigorous tasks and are pushed towards college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- Samples of reviewed curriculum unit overviews across the different content areas provided evidence of alignment to the Common Core and emphasize rigorous tasks. For example, a 9th grade English language arts (ELA) unit overview required students to draw evidence from informational text and determine the central idea or information of a primary source.
- A math course syllabus is aligned to the subject unit overview and provides extensive unit planning and pacing. For example, an Algebra 1 course syllabus includes the curriculum emphasis, which highlights several instructional shifts and rigorous performance tasks, along with a week to week pacing.
- Written ELA overviews are divided into three stages to ensure basic understanding to more complex and rigorous learning from all learners. For example, in ELA, the first stage for all learners is called Grammar where students explored the basic understandings of the origins of the English language. The second stage is called Logic where students are asked to support their findings by using various recourses, such as dictionaries and thesauruses. The third and final stage is called Rhetoric where students use close reading strategies and annotation techniques by examining various pieces of writing from different genres to gain better understanding of the material.
- Written unit overviews across different subjects were adjusted and modified to address the diverse learning needs for all learners, especially English language learners and students with disabilities. For example, in a 10th grade Earth science unit overview, students with disabilities were provided a summary and the connection of one unit to the next at the beginning of each subsequent unit to support their learning.
- Reviewing a health lesson plan, students were instructed to find the five factors for violence and to cite text evidence to support their findings. In a reviewed science lesson plan, students were also directed to explain how the genetic code is read and to use text-based evidence to support their claims.

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Across classrooms, teaching strategies inconsistently lead to uneven levels of engagement in challenging tasks and demonstration of higher-order thinking and discussions.

Impact

As a result there were missed opportunities to engage students, and student work products and discussions inconsistently reflected high levels of thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- Questioning techniques were inconsistently observed across classrooms providing limited opportunities for higher-order thinking skills and discussions. The majority of classroom lessons was teacher-directed and offered few opportunities for engaging students in higher-order thinking and discussions. However, in two classrooms visited students were engaged and demonstrating their thinking. For example, 9th grade math students were presented with solving systems of equations algebraically. Students were asked, “How can substitution help them determine the solution to a system of linear equations?” Here, students required to apply background knowledge and multiple mathematic steps to resolve the problems. While in a 9th grade social studies class, students with disabilities were assigned to work in groups to answer questions provided by the teacher. Teacher engaged students by asking the “How”, “What”, and “Why” questions about Germany and the effects of the Cold War.
- During the teacher team meeting, teachers were discussing that ELA classes are in the process of incorporating Socratic seminars for students, which would foster high level discussions that are facilitated by students. In addition, during an ELA classroom visit, the teacher shared with the students that he plans to incorporate Socratic seminars in classroom lessons when they learn the proper protocols and academic behaviors needed to begin the process.
- Across classrooms, teachers’ instructional approach for active engagement provided very little opportunities for peer to peer discussions or self-reflections. During the meeting with students, it was expressed by students that teachers encourage classroom participation, self-reflection, group and peer discussions. Students are still in the process of developing protocols for self-reflections and peer to peer reflections.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use grading policies, create assessments, and content rubrics that are aligned with the school's curricula. However, meaningful feedback and checks for understanding that lead to effective adjustments are limited.

Impact

Lack of consistent checking for understanding and meaningful feedback results in students not being fully clear on their next learning and instructional steps.

Supporting Evidence

- While teachers across the grade and subject areas have created content rubrics and grading policies that are aligned to the curricula, there is very limited meaningful feedback and next steps provided on student work products. While some classes visited had student work samples with meaningful feedback related to the different content rubrics, the vast majority of work products did not have specific feedback that referenced any particular content rubrics. For example, the majority of students' work samples reviewed were provided with written comments that stated, "Good job", "Good Work" or "Excellent".
- During the seven classroom visits, it was noted that only three classroom teachers checked for understanding during the lesson. In both the science and math classrooms, the instructors constantly walked around the classrooms to check students for understanding during the lessons. In a math class the teacher asked students to raise their hands if they were unable to properly solve the assigned task. While in a special education social studies classroom, the instructor provided a list of high level questions for students to assess their understanding for information that was presented during the lesson. However, this practice for checking for understanding during the lesson was not evident in other classrooms visited.
- During the student meeting, students were asked to present their work samples and assessments for review. At the meeting students shared their assessment folders and revealing inconsistencies in the feedback provided from teachers. While several reviewed assessments had written feedback from teachers to students about their strengths and next steps, there were many assessments without any written comments. Many assessments were graded numerically without comments matched to any specific rubrics and without meaningful feedback. Student feedback was limited and there were no opportunities for next steps.