

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Herbert H. Lehman High School

High School X405

**3000 East Tremont Avenue
Bronx
NY 10461**

Principal: Rose LoBianco

**Date of Review: April 1, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Carron Staple**

The School Context

Herbert H. Lehman is a high school with 1450 students from grades 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 23% Black, 58% Hispanic, 10% White, and 9% Asian students. The student body includes 10% English language learners and 25% special education students. Boys account for 64% of the students enrolled and girls account for 36%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-14 was 78.3%.

School Quality Criteria

Instructional Core		
<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</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	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	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	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:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Curricula and academic tasks are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards integrate the instructional shifts and promote higher-order thinking skills across grades and subjects.

Impact

Purposeful decisions build coherence and promote college and career readiness for all students including English language learners and students with disabilities.

Supporting Evidence

- A review of curricular documents shows evidence of coherence in planning across all grades and subject areas. The principal shared a social studies template that teachers use for planning a student project. The template breaks down every element of a project to ensure teachers are aligning the tasks to standards, incorporating a writing component, and including content learned. The template also requires the teacher to scaffold the project in a way that will help all students be successful. The department team then discusses cross-curricular elements to enhance the rigor and meaningfulness of the project. Additionally, the shift to an online document sharing program allows all teachers to see the document, revise it as necessary, and use it when planning their own department projects.
- The school has implemented a lesson study process beginning with the English language arts (ELA) department and is expanding to other core areas for the purpose of co-developing a Common Core- aligned lesson plan for all. The principal stated that she believes this work is important to delve into, as Danielson Framework trends in ADVANCE from the previous school year showed planning and preparation as an area of focus.
- Lesson plans reviewed revealed that in-class tasks emphasize higher-order thinking skills such as developing logical arguments, analyzing information from a variety of sources, developing claims and counter-claims, citing textual evidence, and applying concepts in real world situations. In a grade 9 Regents Algebra class, the aim of the lesson was, "How do we model real world situations with systems of linear equations?" Students explained their conceptual understanding of the task and worked in groups to discuss how they interpreted equations citing evidence from their notes and other resources.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

Teacher practice across many classrooms at Lehman High School reflect unity around a set of beliefs regarding how students learn best that is informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Many teachers provide multiple entry points for all learners.

Impact

Although teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect a common set of beliefs, some students do not benefit from higher quality supports and extensions and, therefore, are not engaged in challenging tasks that promote higher order thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- Across a number of classrooms observed, teachers use the workshop model approach, providing students with a structured do now, a mini- lesson, as well as guided independent or group practice. For example, in an ELA class, students were using an annotation and discussion protocol to support their claim for an upcoming Socratic seminar. The teacher facilitated a group "whip around" where all students could share out their thoughts about the topic, after peer assessing each other.
- Many teachers provided multiple entry points for English language learners and students with disabilities, as well as learning extensions for higher achieving students. However, a science teacher was observed assigning all students the task of completing a pre-printed map that contained recall questions about barometric trends, temperature and wind directions. In this class, differentiated scaffolds or supports were not evident, and groups of learners who completed the worksheet were observed waiting for further directions from the teacher rather than engaging in a further learning extension.
- In a math class, students were given opportunities to demonstrate their thinking and justify their answers. They engaged in accountable talk and used sentence starters such as, "I have a question about...", and "I would like to add to that idea..." In the group practice segment of the lesson, students were observed in peer discussion, peer evaluation, and in presenting their work to the class. However, during student presentations about arcs, chords and secants, the teacher did not continue challenging students in this mode, and posed questions directly to individual student presenters in a call and response mode of interaction, rather than have more students engaged in posing challenging questions to their peers.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The school uses common assessments to determine student progress toward goals across grades and subjects. Across classrooms, teachers consistently use checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact

Assessment results are used to effectively adjust curricula and instruction to meet the needs of all learners.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams with the support of lead teachers are continually revising assessments that are aligned with Common Core Learning Standards and the school's instructional goals of on-demand writing across content areas and increased math talk in classrooms. For example, math teachers administer a minimum of one Common Core task in each unit mirroring Regents type questions and high-level tasks that require students to analyze, synthesize and incorporate content and skill and other core departments administer argumentative and informational writing tasks per marking period to support students with their claims and counter claims.
- The principal discussed the assessment cycle in which teachers are expected to use data from collaboratively developed assessments to identify students' learning needs and inform next instructional steps. Through this process, all teacher teams across content and grade levels are able to analyze student outcomes and implement revisions in instructional strategies. The math department has revised its skill sequencing, pacing, and re-teaches tasks, to better support the academic needs of students. Minutes of team meetings show analysis of assessment data and follow up interventions such as re-grouping, after-school tutoring, and Regents tutorials.
- The formative assessment process across classrooms shows evidence of teachers regularly checking for understanding. Day-to-day assessment is in the form of do-now assignments, peer- and self- assessment using rubrics, class discussions, teacher check-ins with individuals and groups, student presentations and exit tickets. These assessments help provide immediate important information to the teachers enabling them to make effective and timely adjustments on the spot and for future lessons to ensure all students' learning needs are met.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders, staff, students and parents share in a culture of high expectations for learning.

Impact

High expectations are achieved through a system of accountability for all staff aligned to Danielson Framework, and ongoing feedback and support to parents and students to prepare them for the next level.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal communicates high expectations to staff through professional development, ongoing memos, and feedback to teachers regarding professional and instructional responsibilities. For example, teachers participate in intervisitations, and academy directors and lead teachers norm and calibrate Danielson Framework competencies to support teachers with improving pedagogy.
- Teachers are engaged in ongoing professional development and collaborations, such as lesson study in which teachers assume shared accountability for meeting established expectations and next steps. Lesson study information is brought back to the inquiry teams in turnkey fashion to support the academy structure.
- Parents shared that they are in frequent contact with the very helpful parent coordinator, teachers and staff members regarding their child's growth, and that the school provides opportunities for them to participate in workshops regarding the Common Core Learning Standards, the college search and application process, as well as financial aid application procedures. Students discussed the Peer Mentors Group, a group of peer leaders who serve as role models for the freshmen in Cohort T and the numerous partnerships and coursework available to them that help build their college-readiness, such as the seven Advanced Placement Courses, and the university courses they take through Mercy and Lehman Colleges and the University of Albany.

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

Teacher teams consistently analyze assessment data and student work and build leadership capacity through distributed leadership structures.

Impact

The effective collaborative structure empowers teachers to have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning, improves practice, and supports progress towards learning goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- Agendas and minutes of all instructional meetings are shared through the use of Google docs, ensuring coherence and shared accountability for school-wide improved instructional practice. For example, minutes from an English Language Arts inquiry team meeting reflected their collaborative development of the lesson study process and noted that members of the team assume shared responsibility for crafting a common writing rubric to be used across grade levels.
- Teacher leaders and academy directors facilitate team meetings, and teacher leads assume a leadership role in supporting colleagues in instructional decisions that impact student programming and curricula development. Teachers interviewed affirmed that they that they have a voice in most instructional decisions regarding their classes, and stated that their ideas are taken into consideration. For example, the academy teams, where possible, meet to co-plan and collaboratively revise curricula across grade level and content areas.
- Teachers meet regularly in academy and content teams and use collaboratively developed protocols to analyze curricula and student work, engage in shared reflection, and develop action plans to address next steps. For example, the math teachers have developed an inquiry protocol to look at task development. They analyze student data and determine how to plan for multiple entry points, varying strategies, assessment and academic vocabulary development based on their student populations and subgroups. Teachers then implement the strategies as part of inquiry and use these outcomes to collaboratively support curricula revisions. For example directions and word problem questions in some math classes are provided in Spanish and English for the students who need additional support with English language comprehension, resulting in improved participation, work products and test scores.