



**Department of
Education**

Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Bronx Aerospace High School

High School 11X545

**800 East Gun Hill Road
Bronx
NY 10467**

Principal: Erika Hurtado

**Date of review: December 11, 2014
Lead Reviewer: Kristine Mustillo**

The School Context

Bronx Aerospace High School is a high school with 433 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 30% Black, 65% Hispanic, 2% White, and 3% Asian students. The student body includes 12% English language learners and 34% special education students. Boys account for 82% of the students enrolled and girls account for 18%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 83%.

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	Focus	Developing
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	Celebration	Proficient

Area of Celebration

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

The majority of teachers engage in structured professional collaborations to review student work and inform instructional practice.

Impact

Professional collaborations are resulting in improved teacher practice as evidenced in observation reports and teacher team meetings. The work of teacher teams is also resulting in progress towards goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams meet daily during 8th period. Each period is designated for a professional responsibility; looking at student work, professional development, parent outreach, tutoring, and curricula review.
- In meetings with two teacher teams, one team used a presentation protocol to look at student work and a second discussed ways to reteach concepts with an alternate delivery in order to give struggling students access. The first team has been focusing on six students in particular and discussing implications for instruction for “like” students. They noted qualitative gains in the work students were producing as a result of the team’s interventions.
- School leaders noticed consistent improvement in the instructional capacity of teachers to meet the needs of a diverse population of students and engage them in high level tasks through the team’s work in curricula planning and questioning strategies.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Staff has established a culture of learning that communicates high expectations for students and is developing clear and consistent expectations for students on path to college and career readiness

Impact

While the school communicates high expectations, students and parents state inconsistencies in accessing information and detailed feedback on their next steps at each grade level.

Supporting Evidence

- The school provides opportunities for students to visit colleges and to participate in College Now class in partnership with Lehman College. However, parents note that not all students are able to participate in trips and not all students received information around the College Now opportunities.
- Students expressed that guidance support is available for assistance with college applications and information but if they do not seek it out, they are unaware of the offerings.
- The new principal has started a College and Career Readiness course as an advisement for some upper grade students. Students in the class were reviewing personal essays, assessing quality and looking to apply elements to their own essays.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and tasks within curricula emphasize higher order skills across grades and content.

Impact

Lesson and unit plans, across grades and content, include Common Core aligned objectives, essential questions and culminating tasks that ask students to engage with higher order skills such as analyzing and synthesizing information.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers began mapping units of study over the summer. In pairs, teachers exchanged plans to get peer feedback on CCLS alignment and shift integration. Following peer feedback, administration reviewed plans and held review conferences. All lesson plans are grounded in essential questions.
- Teacher teams use protocols to present student work and discuss implications for instruction. Teachers group students by performance level and discuss ways to give each group access to the next level of learning or how to reteach in a different delivery system to cognitively engage a variety of learners, including English language learners and student with disabilities.
- Regent exam item analysis is used at the beginning of the year to refine the scope and sequence and depth and breadth of each content area.

Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are becoming aligned to the belief that students learn best through active engagement with content. Across classrooms there were uneven levels of student thinking and participation.

Impact

In some classes students were engaged in rigorous tasks that were tiered and provided students opportunities to explore content at different levels. Other classrooms were teacher centered with low level tasks.

Supporting Evidence

- In a humanities class students were reading about the arguments of the federalists and anti-federalists regarding ratification of the constitution. Students used different graphic organizers to collect information. Higher level students were asked to not only gather information on the arguments but explore the cause and effect relationships, on-level students looked for commonalities as well as differences on each side and high needs students focused more on collecting relevant facts. In this double period, students were then going to discuss this information in groups and present their argument for or against ratification of the constitution.
- In another classroom, students were given “modified text” where the modification was simply three vocabulary words with little rationale for the switch. In a science classroom, students had an overall objective to jigsaw a reading on dysfunctions of the excretory system but were presently organizing information on a graphic organizer when the information was already organized with bullets in each identified category.
- Teacher teams spoke to a range of strategies that they were beginning to utilize in instruction that included tiered mathematics, roles for student group discussion, and questioning scaffolds in order to support student engagement with rigorous content.

Findings

Across classrooms teachers have created rubrics aligned with curricula tasks and have incorporated Check for Understanding (CFU) questions in all lessons.

Impact

Teachers are beginning to use assessment practices with increased consistency but presently students receive limited feedback on tasks and have inconsistent opportunities to self-reflect.

Supporting Evidence

- All classrooms post CFU questions and the time of the lesson where they will use the questions. Teachers are beginning to take check-in notes based on these questions. Some classes use exit tickets and/or color codes to check in with students during the lesson. Exit tickets are most commonly used to make adjustments to instruction for the following day, but most students report staying in the same groups and getting varying levels of guided support during each lesson.
- Rubrics are present for a majority of assignments but feedback is inconsistent and often limited. For example, on one project the rubric addressed five components. The feedback to students gave an overall number grade on a scale of 1-4 and listed one component title.
- Assessment results and task performance are used regularly by teacher teams to modify curricula maps and lesson plans as well as inform intervention.