



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

School for Tourism and Hospitality

08X559

**900 Tinton Avenue
Bronx
NY 10456**

Principal: Brian Condon

**Date of review: December 18, 2014
Lead Reviewer: Sheila S.- Gorski**

The School Context

The School for Tourism and Hospitality is a high school with 243 students from grade 9 through grade 11. The school population comprises 36% Black, 61% Hispanic, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 22% English language learners and 22% special education students. Boys account for 33% of the students enrolled and girls account for 67%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 86%.

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	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	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	Additional Findings	Proficient

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations leveraged by the Danielson Framework for Teaching (DfT) regarding professionalism and student achievement. The school supports families and students in their understanding of these expectations linked to college and career preparation.

Impact

The principal's high expectations linked to pedagogical and academic progress are continuously reinforced in a variety of ways providing ongoing feedback to stakeholders and assisting families in achieving those expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal's high expectations include clear protocols and procedures represented in the School Policy Handbook and the Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) Handbook. A focus on classroom instruction informed by the DfT highlights student engagement. For instance, all students are required to actively contribute to rigorous, student-focused, discussions or inquiry-based class work. To encourage this teachers receive staff development in selecting texts and designing learning experiences to build on student background knowledge, engaging students in the learning. Parents are informed and often discuss these efforts supporting their teens with habits of resiliency and perseverance in preparation of higher education. Also, experiential learning via hands-on projects and trips are planned enhancing the student's repertoire. The principal's ongoing classroom visits assure consistent efforts toward these expectations.
- The school's core belief that academic success is accomplished when students are "Globally Aware, Socially Aware, and Self-Aware" is communicated via staff leadership roles serving as role-models ensuring student awareness through meaningful instruction, strengthening student understanding of personal behaviors and learning habits that increase academic readiness linked to college and career preparation. For example, the school affords students a two-hour college readiness class engaging them in research of schools of interest and financial aid sources. This is communicated to parents ensuring they are informed of methods to support their teens' progress toward future academic endeavors and independent living.
- The school communicates with families every Thursday, as the time allotted for parent outreach. Parents are informed of their teen's strengths and needs ensuring that the community is accountable for supporting student progress in meeting school expectations. For example, teachers contact parents by phone calls, texts, mailings in English or the community language, Spanish. They also use the auto-dialer messenger, and Skedula, the school's online system all stakeholders use to inform conversations. Monthly mailings and calendars, School Leadership Team (SLT) and Parent Association (PA) meetings and workshops are planned for parents by the Parent and Culture and Climate liaisons. Individualized parent meetings with teachers, deans, guidance counselors, or scheduled parent/teacher conferences also inform families. During the parent meeting, parents expressed their satisfaction with the school stating, "The school's vision is to lift our students not only in scholastics, but also in life."

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Developing

Findings

Across classrooms, teaching strategies inconsistently afford students instructional supports and student discussions reflect uneven levels of student thinking.

Impact

Teaching strategies across classrooms result in uneven levels of student engagement in challenging tasks and hinders student participation and discussion that demonstrates high levels of thinking for a diversity of students.

Supporting Evidence

- A review of lesson plans from classrooms visited show that some teachers plan and execute experiential learning activities. For instance, in a Global History class students engaged in a mock trial placing the thinkers from the scientific revolution on trial. Students conducted group work and research. They used primary and secondary sources and independent research as evidence to be presented in front of the court. Individual students portrayed a judge, prosecutor, defense attorney, the scientists as witnesses, and the jury. Student-led discussions highlighted text-based evidence supported by visual representation via video clips from the time periods used to elevate the severity of the contentions made in the court. A mock court proceeding was in session during our visit, and students were observed in direct and cross-examination at high levels of thinking, illustrating the roles of cruelty to workers and debating on what constitutes cruelty versus obedience to employment policy.
- In another visit to a history class working on a unit of study on the Industrial Revolution, the lesson plan required students to note the differences between Karl Marx's and Adam Smith's perspectives pertaining to the impact of business during that period. In a mock court proceeding students were to begin with opening statements from both sides. However, this was delayed as students at the court bench were unclear as to how their roles would be portrayed. The teacher spoke to them at length in effort to bring clarity to the expectations. Several conversations with other students indicated that students did not understand their roles and lacked credibility of their roles. Although the configuration of the classroom depicted a courtroom structure, most students were unable to articulate their connections and comprehension of the content and engagement in the task.
- During classroom visits, it is noted that in some classrooms teachers prompt student-led discussions and engagement in the lessons, as in an English class implementing a Socratic Seminar from a task based on Frederick Douglass. Students used a Socratic Seminar Critical Lens Exploration graphic organizer to collect textual evidence and create questions, such as, "What is the connection between physical freedom and mental/emotional freedom?" In other classrooms, lessons observed were teacher-directed with the majority of questions generated by teachers and at recall levels. Some questions only required a choral response. In a grade 9 math class the teacher referring to a handout asked, "The bottom picture is supposed to represent what?" Student responses include, "Union", and "The wiggly lines!" It is noted that the responses were one-word answers and minimal content-specific vocabulary used.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The school ensures that the curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards, making purposeful decisions across the subject areas and grades and consistently emphasizing rigorous habits and higher-order skills.

Impact

Common core aligned curricula build coherence across the school promoting rigorous habits, and higher order skills, thus, encouraging college and career preparation for all learners.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers received professional development on the design of Common Core Learning Standards and the alignment of units and lesson plans. They continuously research collaboratively and share their findings regarding new resources and technology that is Common Core aligned stressing instructional shifts. Units reveal elements that support conceptual understanding. For instance, the math department includes math handouts that require students to represent math data in multiple forms, such as using equations, charts, graphs, tables, or in written explanation to exhibit their understanding. In addition, teachers assess student work to inform their planning of future lessons. English language arts and second language teachers plan together, each contributing to the lesson plan opportunities for discussions in efforts to deepen student conversations and character analysis. Unit designs link informational and literary texts, and text-based evidence to support claims and counterclaims, and text-based evidence to strengthen informational writing.
- Lesson plans reviewed indicate that teachers use Bloom's Taxonomy for questioning and discussion, a school initiative. Plans also show tiered questioning to prompt accountable talk and promote student engagement in classroom discussions. Lesson plans are written to prompt teachers in eliciting student prior knowledge or acquired learning to link to new rigorous content. For example, Socratic discourse is planned requiring students to participate in either the expressive and overt activity of direct verbal discussion on a topic stemming from a unit of study, or the receptive, covert activity requiring students to use a task-aligned rubric to measure the discourse between their peers and pose questions for them on a Socratic feedback sheet. Protocols in the plans require students to listen carefully to each other in order to afford effective feedback to peers and ask well-informed questions.
- Teachers include written student group assignments in lesson plans in a variety of ways to encourage higher-order skills and thinking and align to peer support for designed tasks. For example, students assigned to a group or to independent work may be required to demonstrate their thinking in written expression or chunked into shorter paragraphs. Another group may be required to develop a more complex research-based report. This approach informs teacher planning related to content acquisition versus the design of scaffolds needed by some students as they gradually become independent and engage in more rigorous work.

Findings

All teachers incorporate data results, daily checks for understanding, and monitor student progress. Common assessments across all grades and subject areas are used to inform curricula and instructional adjustments.

Impact

Across the school the use of common assessments and practices determine student progress toward goals affording teachers opportunities to use student data to appropriately adjust the coursework to meet the needs of all students.

Supporting Evidence

- The school shares an assessment calendar designed to ensure that the staff is informed of all assessments and dates of test administration. Ongoing content and unit assessments are represented in the form of questions, discipline-specific rubrics, quizzes, essays, and projects. Results from an end-of-unit summative assessment inform student comprehension and are used to adjust instruction as needed. For example, a rubric for textual evidence is used to assess student understanding of written support they have cited from a text they have read. Rubric categories indicate the level of how well-chosen, how relevant, how sufficient, and how appropriate for the audience the text in a student essay is as it pertains to a given topic. Teachers rate students on a mastery scale indicating A- approaching, M- meeting, or E- exceeding in each category.
- Teachers use the Cornell Notes to identify student's strength and needs, develop student action plans and make instructional adjustments. For example, a Cornell Notes rubric ranging on a scale of 1 through 5 is used in a literature class to measure a student's abilities to take notes, evaluating elements such as, the accuracy of the notes, and paraphrasing versus quotes cited from the text read on the student's essay. Teachers use the student work to make adjustments explicitly teaching the difference between plagiarism and paraphrasing.
- Assessment practices include data-tracking via use of comprehensive data-driven instruction worksheets. Skills assessed are captured on this worksheet identifying class level and individual student achievement, struggling students, as well as student strengths and needs. Additionally, the worksheets depict targeted instructional strategies, targeted SMART goals, assessment procedures, student progress toward Individual Education Plan (IEP) goals and language acquisition for English Language Learners (ELLs). A review of a teacher's worksheet packet exhibited an action plan for a student in need of demonstrating control of the conventions of Standard English, making adequate use of relevant evidence and introducing a clear, central idea. The action plan identified, one-on-one tutoring during period nine, the use of a graphic organizer to encourage the selection of evidence with an explanation, and multiple edits of writing assignments.
- Students engage in self and peer assessments to show their understanding and provide feedback to each other. For example, in a grade 11 English Language Arts (ELA) class, students were provided with their peers' essays and asked to identify important elements of an essay. Such include: specified central idea, the details that support the development of that idea, and how a detail is linked to the central idea. Students then discussed the essay with their peers and provided quantitative and qualitative feedback with opportunities to reflect on their individual work.

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

Teacher leadership structures promote the achievement of school goals and implementation of the school's instructional focus. Teachers evaluate instructional practice, pedagogy and teacher capacity.

Impact

Teacher teams analyze assessment data and student work to strengthen instructional capacity making key decisions that improve teacher practice and affect the learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers support the instructional goal: "To ensure that texts and experiences enhance each other to strengthen students' background knowledge and engagement with learning." Teachers examine student work, identify learning gaps, and implement Common Core aligned lessons and tasks addressing student needs. For instance, the results of an ELA Regents-based assessment showed that 11th grade students were unable to explain how details of a topic were connected to the topic in an explicit way. Thus, a mini-unit was created requiring students to implement a structure explicitly connecting details to topics by applying it as such, "This shows that ...". Teachers also use in-class data, open-ended questions, and exit slips to determine student needs and plan individualized interventions at the team and classroom levels. Aligned with school goals teams plan tasks that require students to ground reading, writing and discussion in evidence from the text and in math, tasks incorporate activities to encourage fluency, application, and conceptual understanding.
- School leaders encourage leadership roles via daily conversations with teachers creating an inclusive and supportive environment for teachers' professional opinions to be heard. Teachers also take on important roles in the area of professional development contributing in the decision-making process regarding teacher development. Teacher representatives sit on the professional development committee and are afforded opportunities to assess and make recommendations leveraging future professional development. A recent decision afforded teachers the flexibility to determine how best to spend their time while working in teams. Teachers shared that they may choose to do more planning by grade level team on a given week and more planning with their cooperating teacher, the next to best impact on student learning throughout the school.
- Teacher teams use the Authentic Intellectual Work (AIW) rubric to assess lesson plans and instruction and provide feedback. The AIW rubric is also used to identify gaps within their own learning activities and within performance tasks. For example, during a team meeting teachers used the AIW rubric to provide a peer with feedback on the lesson from an English language arts unit of study on Frederick Douglass and the relevance of his work in today's time. The team provided feedback in three areas: construction of knowledge in language arts, elaborated knowledge in language arts, and value beyond school. Feedback provided indicated the lesson needed more clarity around language arts concepts, choices of vocabulary, and discipline-specific concepts. In addition, the task reviewed by the team was found to engage all students in higher-order thinking levels of questions, was content focused, informational, and rigorous. The next step for the lesson includes a mock panel discussion.