



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

Bedford Stuyvesant Preparatory High School

High School K575

**832 Marcy Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11216**

Principal: Darryl Rascoe

**Date of review: January 21, 2016
Lead Reviewer: Gary Knight**

The School Context

Bedford Stuyvesant Preparatory High School is a high school with 153 students from grade 10 through grade 12. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 1% Asian, 82% Black, 16% Hispanic, and 1% White students. The student body includes 1% English Language Learners and 5% students with disabilities. Boys account for 43% of the students enrolled and girls account for 57%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 64.9%.

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 <i>Framework for Teaching</i> , 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	Celebration	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:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

The school leader consistently communicates high expectations to the entire staff and provides training. The staff establishes a culture for learning that systematically communicates a unified set of high expectations for all students and provides clear, focused and effective feedback and guidance supports.

Impact

The school has developed a culture of mutual accountability among the staff for its high expectations. All students own their educational experience and are prepared for the next level.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal provides the staff with weekly memos regarding academic expectations and consistently includes the school belief statement, “We at Bedford Stuyvesant Preparatory High School believe that our students learn best when: all students participate in classroom activities and discussions, students deepen their thinking by answering high level questions, each lesson offers students multiple entry points, students are taught how to collaborate, students are taught to cite evidence to make their arguments stronger and instruction is student centered. In addition, multiple professional development activities are conducted for staff regarding mindset, instruction and mutual accountability. For example, topics, included understanding the *Danielson Framework for Teaching*, understanding the *Framework for Great Schools*, and “how adhering to our instructional focus can help improve instructional coherence” and student outcomes.
- The school also provides a new teacher induction process to acclimate staff to the school culture and expectations. In addition, all staff are provided handbooks to further reinforce the school’s expectations regarding its mission statement, why consistent high quality instruction is a teacher’s moral imperative, differentiated instruction, questioning, objectives, college readiness, Habits of Mind, data and grading policy. The administration conducts classroom observations and feedback to ensure staff is carrying out expectations. Staff, through professional collaborations, holds each other accountable.
- The school systematically communicates high expectations to students through several approaches. These approaches include an awards dinner to recognize students’ academic achievements, annual college trips to expose students to college and the college process, individual meetings with students regarding credit accumulation and the college application process, a senior meeting that includes information on how colleges admit students, admissions deadlines, financial aid, and an application checklist.
- The staff also works directly and collectively with students via scholarship meetings to discuss the importance of their grade point average. There is a formal student conference process focused on college and career readiness that occurs six times during the school year. Students are also provided a college knowledge quiz and a student survey to capture their overall academic experiences, strengths and weaknesses. The results of these approaches have led to improved passing rates on Regents exams and improved credit accumulation, which in turn led to an increase in the 2015 graduation rate.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula, consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula and reflect an articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best. Although multiple entry points were provided, high-quality extensions were not observed across classrooms.

Impact

The school's teaching practices are informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching and the instructional shifts and all learners are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks, resulting in them demonstrating higher-order thinking skills in student work products.

Supporting Evidence

- Various forms of scaffolds and multiple entry points were observed throughout classrooms including the infusion of technology, writing prompts, student handouts and organizers, student choice of tasks, teacher modeling and student pair-share, For example, a chemistry class investigated the dangers of lead poisoning watched a CNN video clip on the toxic water that plagued the citizens of Flint, Michigan. Although multiple entry points were provided, there was little evidence of high quality supports observed across most classrooms.
- Lessons were aligned to curricula as evidenced in classrooms visited. For example, in a history class, students were to cite specific evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources and draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection and research. Curricular alignment and instructional shifts were also seen in a math lesson where students were asked to differentiate between two types of functions using a variety of descriptors such as graphical, verbal, numerical, and algebraic.
- The school's belief is that students should be independent thinkers and staff should fully educate the students in the fundamentals of critical thinking, problem solving and interpersonal relations. Lessons observed demonstrated students using higher order thinking skills. In an English class, students had to analyze or critique a film's interpretation of *The Hobbit*, explaining and supporting their arguments with evidence. In another English class, students were asked to examine a literacy piece to identify the theme or message and respond to how the story conveys the message.

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, integrate the instructional shifts and build coherence. Curricula and academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher order skills.

Impact

The school's ability to ensure curricula alignment promotes college and career readiness and infuses rigor across the grades and subjects for all students.

Supporting Evidence

- The school utilizes *EngageNY's* scope and sequence along with teacher-made curricula across grades and subjects as the basis for the curricula. Teachers work collaboratively during common planning time to fine tune curricula documents in an effort to build coherence. Teachers receive support from administration and curricula consultants to help build coherence and to integrate instructional shifts.
- The Understanding By Design planning template is used for unit planning. The template requires teachers to: explain the desired results of the lessons based on standards taught, indicate the enduring understanding, knowledge (what students will know) and skills (what students will be able to do) at the center of the unit, describe what assessment evidence will be generated through tests, discussions, projects, writing, researching, and provide a learning plan to capture the daily learning activities.
- The school's curricula include higher order thinking skills and instructional shifts across grades and subjects for all students. For example, an English project for grades 11 and 12 includes closed reading, text-based writing, questioning and discussion. The module also includes performance-based and summative assessments, a culminating performance-based assessment, a student checklist, as well as scaffolds, modifications and extensions and resources for vocabulary, text-dependent questions and literature circles.
- Higher order thinking skills were revealed throughout various other curricula documents. For example, in a math planning document, literacy skills were infused throughout the unit such as creating thesis statements, citing evidence, and the use of close reading with word problems. It also addressed high order thinking questions such as, "How do you represent relationships between quantities that are not equal?", "What is the relationship between the domain and the range of a relations?" and "How can you use quadratic procedures to solve non-quadratic situations?"

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use or create assessments, rubrics, and grading polices that are aligned with the school's curricula. Common assessments are used to determine student progress across grades and subjects.

Impact

The school's use of aligned assessments provides actionable feedback to students and teachers and results are used to adjust curricula and instruction.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use various assessment tools such as rubrics and exit slips to determine student progress. For example, in a chemistry class, an exit slip was used as a means of capturing students' understanding of concepts taught and progress towards standards. Across grades content rubrics are aligned to the curricula and are used as a tool for assessing and monitoring progress. As observed in an English class working on a literary analysis unit, students were graded against a 4-point written classwork rubric that addressed characteristics of a good thesis statement, quality of response, evidence and supporting details, analysis of evidence, use of conventions and neatness. In a math class, student feedback indicated the use of the wrong math formula, making a conceptual and computational error, and errors in calculation and forgetting to divide.
- Periodic assessments and unit tests are also administered and tracked to capture student outcomes and used to make instructional next steps. For example, data from the first assessment in a geometry class detailed each student's performance from their mastery of the subject as exhibited through multiple choice responses, open ended responses, overall assessment average and total assessment score, standard alignment. Each criterion was color coded and used to inform if and how the teacher might reteach the subject or skill.
- The school also uses the Regents exam results in U.S. History, Comprehensive English, Integrated Algebra and Living Environment to determine student progress and inform next steps for each student towards progress and credit accumulation. Each student is tracked and results are used to provide next steps with student placement. As a transfer school, the tracking of each student is crucial since, unlike traditional schools, many students are at different places in terms of courses needed and credits toward completion.

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

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations and consistently analyze data and student work for students they share.

Impact

The school's inquiry-based professional collaborations promote the achievement of school goals and the implementation of Common Core Learning Standards, strengthening the instructional capacity of teachers and results in improved teacher practice and progress towards goals for students.

Supporting Evidence

- The focuses of various teacher teams include: professional development, inquiry, data, attendance and new teacher induction team. The team meetings have resulted in enhanced collaboration and support amongst teachers, sharing of best practices and strategies which are followed up with colleague inter-visitations during instruction in order to provide feedback on strategies discussed during team meetings.
- Teachers were provided training on the collaborative inquiry process. The training included looking at student work with guided questions to help in the process of doing so. Their inquiry meetings use the tuning protocol as the basis for conducting meetings. For example, an agenda for an inquiry meeting objective read: identifying a skill we can share with teachers to increase student achievement. The process includes an introduction of protocol goals and guidelines and participants, presentation to share the context of student work, clarifying questions, the actual examination of student work samples, and reflecting on warm and cool feedback.
- Data meeting agendas include topics such as “Why Do You Need to Monitor data,” “What Do You Need to Monitor,” and “The Purpose of the Data Team”. The teams also received professional development titled, “Knowing Your School: Find Critical Data in Your School, Interpret Your School’s Data, Use Your School’s Information To Improve Student Achievement.”