



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

Henry Street School for International Studies

Secondary School M292

**220 Henry Street
Manhattan
NY 10002**

Principal: Miles Doyle

**Date of review: May 3, 2016
Lead Reviewer: Deborah Burnett- Worthy**

The School Context

Henry Street School for International Studies is a secondary school with 185 students from grade 7 through grade 12. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 12% Asian, 26% Black, 57% Hispanic, and 4% White students. The student body includes 14% English Language Learners and 34% students with disabilities. Boys account for 65% of the students enrolled and girls account for 35%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 84.4%.

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	Developing
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	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	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	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 are engaged in structured, inquiry-based collaborations. Distributed leadership structures allow teachers to have a voice in key decisions across the school.

Impact

The work of teacher teams has strengthened teacher collaboration resulting in improvements to pedagogical practices and a stronger voice in key decisions affecting supports for student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- During a teacher team meeting teachers spoke about how they regularly meet in grade and content teams to examine student work using a ten-week inquiry based protocol model. The protocol is based on the school's instructional focus, STORM (student-to-student interaction, textual based evidence to support ideas, ongoing checking for understanding, rigor as aligned to Webb's *Depth of Knowledge*, and multiple entry points) and is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and annual school goals. The Principal shared that the infusion of STORM through teacher team practice has strengthened the instructional capacity of teachers. As measured by Measures of Teaching Practice ratings throughout the fall term, the school experienced a 26% increase in teachers rated highly proficient and a 4% increase in those rated proficient. These measurements included both walk-throughs and formal observations of both classes and teacher teams.
- The principal provided evidence and teachers spoke to how best practices shared during team meetings are collected and regularly shared with the entire staff during monthly whole school professional development sessions. An example is the use of the strategy, RACE. (Reword, Answer, Cite, and Explain), which was originally introduced by the middle school and 9th grade teams, and then shared school wide. An analysis of student work showed that students were struggling in their use of text-based evidence in their writing. Evidence gathered from teachers after the school wide implementation of RACE indicated that 80% of students now cited text-based evidence in their writing.
- School leaders and teachers described the various ways the school has implemented distributed leadership structures and given teachers a voice in key decisions. Each teacher team has a teacher facilitator. Through the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT), teachers have a voice in decisions regarding professional development. Teachers shared that this regular practice of seeking teacher input has been instrumental in providing targeted professional development to staff, often created and facilitated by teachers, on a school, small group, and individual basis.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are becoming aligned to the curricula, and student work products and discussions around instructional shifts, reflect uneven levels of student understanding.

Impact

Across classrooms, missed opportunities to engage all learners in consistent challenging tasks and higher order thinking hinder students from exhibiting their work at high levels and being integral to their learning.

Supporting Evidence

- Although students were working collaboratively across classrooms visited, in some instances not all students were prompted to actively engage in the discussions within their groups. Some students had limited opportunities to articulate the work of the group or have a full understanding of the material being covered. For example, in a Global History class, while students were debating European Imperialism in Africa the teacher allowed only some students to participate. In a math class, student groups were heterogeneously arranged and asked to solve problems and present solutions to the class. While groups presented, their classmates in the audience were not consistently engaged in the examples and did not attempt to record the problems in their notebooks.
- Although written lesson plans aligned to the curricula and the principal and teachers include the school-wide instructional focus of STORM, teacher practice inconsistently reflected the articulated set of beliefs. For example, teachers expect students to cite evidence in their writing and speaking. This practice was unevenly observed across the majority of classrooms visited. In one history class, although students were asked to read an article and defend a claim and counter claim during class discussion, the teacher did not ask the students to cite evidence during their discussion. In another history class, while there was evidence of students annotating the text that they had just read, some students could not explain how this practice was helping them complete the task.
- In the majority of classrooms visited, questioning strategies to promote higher levels of students thinking and discussion were inconsistent. Some teachers asked only low-level recall questions that did not ask for students to specifically think or to extend their understanding. In other lessons, when students asked questions, instead of redirecting these questions back towards the class to promote student thinking and discussion, teachers simply answered the questions and moved on.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

School leaders are in the process of aligning curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards and content standards. Curricula and academic tasks reflect planning to provide students access.

Impact

As a result, considerations are yielding adjustments to curricula and academic tasks that will cognitively engage and provide access for all learners.

Supporting Evidence

- In an interview with school leadership, as well as the review of curriculum documents revealed that the school is still in the process of aligning curricula, in all subject areas to the Common Core Learning Standards. The school is currently in the process of defining criteria for checks for understanding so that units and lessons can be adjusted to move student performance. School leadership and faculty members utilize professional development workshops and planned collaboration periods to unpack the standards and create specific, contextualized skill based daily learning objectives. Departments are scheduled to create vertically aligned skill sequences in a summer retreat in the last week of August 2016. These sequences will be included in the 2016-2017 curricula.
- Aligned curricula such as *GO Math!*, *EngageNY*, the New York City Scope and Sequence for Science and Social Studies, and the Common Core Learning Standards in all content areas are used as tools in this school to create Common Core aligned curricula across all grade and subjects. Teachers are also developing a new Scope and Sequence based on the classic novels *Lord of the Flies*, *13 Reasons Why*, and *Catcher in the Rye*.
- Adjustments to curricula will include rigorous tasks that are accessible to all learners, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities. A living environment unit on homeostasis, development, and evolution will require students to construct and revise an explanation based on evidence for the cycling of matter and flow of energy in aerobic and anaerobic conditions. At the completion of this lab, students will be able to construct a claim about how yeast are affected by low-oxygen stress and analyze evidence to determine if that claim is supported or not. Purposeful grouping, picture diagrams of the procedure, a checklist to track completing the procedure, and sentence starters for the post lab write-up will grant access to a variety of learners.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use and create assessments, rubrics, and grading policies that are loosely aligned with the school's curricula and are developing their use of common assessments to measure student progress toward goals.

Impact

Students receive inconsistent actionable feedback hindering teachers' ability to set goals that gauge student progress, and adjust curricula and instruction.

Supporting Evidence

- Conversations with teachers indicated that the school is inconsistent in its use of common assessments to measure student progress towards goals across grades. Not all students take common baseline assessments across subject areas and classes. Although the school administers a common mid-term and final in each subject, interim benchmark assessments to measure student progress were not evident. Teacher teams analyze the data from these larger assessments; however, they do not use this data to set goals for students or groups of students.
- Across classrooms teachers use assessments, however, actionable feedback to students is limited. A review of student work products captured in the school's Benchmark Portfolio System, notebooks, and displayed work in classrooms and hallways across all subject areas showed limited actionable feedback. For example displays of student work in a math, English and science classrooms consistently contained student work with check marks, plus signs and the words "Nice Work!" or "Good Job". Actionable feedback with detailed next steps for students was not evident in most classrooms. Conversations with teachers and students also confirmed that feedback was not used to measure student progress towards goals.
- Teachers articulated the importance of rubrics accompanied by actionable feedback, however, a review of the school's Professional Development Plan did not indicate any sessions devoted to rubric development, use in assessment or providing actionable written feedback.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

High expectations are consistently communicated to staff via the use of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and professional development opportunities. School leaders and staff consistently communicate high expectations to students connected to a path for college and career readiness.

Impact

School leaders hold staff responsible for knowing and communicating high expectations of college and career readiness to all students.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to staff through *The Henry Street Herald*, a weekly newsletter with a message from the principal. For example, the principal's first message spoke to expectations around discussion, differentiation, and data. Teachers were also given a rubric for classroom expectations, schoolwide expectations and teacher expectations which outline the expected standard of professionalism. Philosophies for teaching practices are shared with staff members in the three instructional buckets outlined by the principal. It is expected that all teachers create strong writers using the guiding acronym TEAL (topic, evidence, analysis, and link). The second bucket speaks to the expectation that all students will be good readers guided by the skill to annotate text. The third instructional bucket speaks to the expectation that students will build knowledge and experience an education that requires them to discuss topics in all their classes and be given the opportunity to push each other's thinking.
- Distribution and regular reference to the mission statement and the *three Big Pillars* (Heart, Stewardship, and Service) communicates school leaders' expectations for staff members to strive for personal achievement and model these concepts for students. Materials outlined the school's Mission that "100% of Henry Street School will graduate and will have the choice of college establishes a schoolwide rigorous goal." School leaders expect teachers to exhibit the *three Big Pillars* of Heart: Reaching all students, Stewardship: Creating the Path and Service: Knowing your students.
- High expectations are communicated to students through a variety of methods. The online tracking system *JupiterED* mandates student awareness of their progress towards credit achievement and graduation. It is a 24-hour service where they can monitor their progress in real time. The Henry Street School calendar is distributed to all students to ensure every student is aware of the dates of the four major academic celebrations, which honor academic excellence and hard work. School leaders spoke of their intent that every student works to be honored on these days. Students are also expected to know and live by the three core values of Heart, Stewardship, and Service. Three students who have demonstrated each core value are honored at a core values award ceremony. College week lessons and activities also speak to the high expectations communicated to Henry Street students. A 9th grade college week lesson requires students to read *Lord of the Flies* and contemplate the question "Is College worth it?"