



**Department of  
Education**  
*Carmen Fariña, Chancellor*

Office of School Quality  
Division of Teaching and Learning

# Quality Review Report

## 2015-2016

**Manhattan Comprehensive Night & Day High  
School**

**High School M575**

**240 Second Avenue  
New York  
NY 10003**

**Principal: Michael Toise**

**Date of review: October 28, 2015  
Lead Reviewer: Rosemary Stuart**

## The School Context

Manhattan Comprehensive Night & Day High School is a high school with 770 students from grade 9 through grade 12. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 23% Asian, 30% Black, 40% Hispanic, and 6% White students. The student body includes 47% English Language Learners and 6% students with disabilities. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 73.7%.

## School Quality Criteria

<b>Instructional Core</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
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	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
<b>School Culture</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations	<b>Celebration</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
<b>Systems for Improvement</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>

## Area of Celebration

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>3.4 High Expectations</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
---------------------------	------------------------------	----------------	-----------------------

### Findings

All members of the school staff, in partnership with the parents, communicate to students the importance of preparing for college and career. There is a culture for learning based on a unified set of high expectations with supportive feedback and support for all students.

### Impact

Students make progress toward meeting the expectations set for them by the staff and parents and own their educational experience as they prepare for their future.

### Supporting Evidence

- Students at this school own their learning experiences because they choose to attend a school that offers both the programming flexibility to pursue a high school diploma while working or caring for family members, and the supportive environment to allow them to achieve where they have not been successful in the past.
- The school's mission outlines the goal of helping students achieve their full potential and preparing them to be successful at college and employment. In the school handbook, the principal communicates to students and parents the high expectations he has for students to be successful in college or in career choices and he emphasizes the services the school provides to help students achieve their goals. He adds, "You, however, hold the key to your own success."
- The school partners with a community-based organization (CBO), Comprehensive Development, Inc. (CDI), which was created by members of the school community specifically to support the unique needs of transfer high school students. This CBO provides individualized tutoring, test preparation, counseling, and referrals to medical, legal, and housing resources. CDI helps students through the entire college application process from selecting schools to obtaining scholarships and financial aid. Most importantly, CDI continues to support students through the first two years of college. Students indicated that peer tutoring is available through CDI and that many students aspire to become peer tutors in order to help their classmates.
- Parents indicated that although their children at this school are adults, many with children of their own, they still benefit from the strong relationship the school has developed with parents. Several parents stated that their children have to travel long distances to attend this school and that even though the commute takes a long time, their children have better on-time attendance than they did in previous schools that were closer to home. Parents stated that they have access to PupilPath, an on-line system that monitors assignments, attendance, and test results. One parent affirmed the mutual accountability for student success by saying, "We are important to this school."
- The school offers a variety of school-to-work opportunities such as internships with local research hospitals and businesses. One participant in the internship program related that the organizational skills he learned "helped me at school, work and home" and that he is better able to concentrate on his school assignments.

## Area of Focus

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>1.2 Pedagogy</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
---------------------------	---------------------	----------------	-------------------

### Findings

While teaching practices provide multiple entry points into the curriculum, not all strategies provide high quality supports and extensions into the curriculum. Across most classrooms, student work products reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

### Impact

Students engage in challenging tasks and demonstrate higher-order thinking as they produce meaningful work products.

### Supporting Evidence

- While teachers often make connections between the topics of the lessons and the skills needed to be successful in earning credit and passing Regents exams, the focus is not always extended to the real-life applications of the skills. Teachers reference the rubrics used to score the exams and point out ways students can use the rubrics to improve their writing. For example, a teacher reminded students that including details directly from the text in an essay not only makes the essay more interesting and relevant, but can also earn points on the Regents exam.
- Most students are highly engaged in challenging tasks such as using Internet resources to research the impact of the Louisiana Purchase on the expansion of the United States or the relationship between works of literature and actual historical events. However, the instruction is frequently teacher dominated hindering the opportunities for students to explore their own hypotheses or to share their problem solving strategies.
- Teachers support English Language Learners (ELLs) by using and explaining academic language, both verbally and in task directions. One unit plan includes a list of academic discourse sentence starters such as, "My partner/group and I determined that..." and "I don't believe your argument is viable because..." However, not all teachers encouraged students to actively practice using academic language and new vocabulary words thereby losing the opportunity for them to improve spoken English.
- Improving writing is a school-wide instructional focus which was seen in the abundance of writing posted on bulletin boards and included in classroom activities. Students shared many samples of their writing, both short answer and extended response essays. Students engage in a writing process that includes drafting and revising work with teacher and peer feedback. One student wrote a college application essay about her home country with vivid details from her memories of life before coming to America.

## Additional Findings

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>1.1 Curriculum</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
---------------------------	-----------------------	----------------	-------------------

### Findings

School leaders ensure curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards, integrate the instructional shifts, and consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills.

### Impact

There is coherence across content areas that promotes college and career readiness for all sub-groups of students.

### Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use a checklist that prompts them to examine their lesson plans for characteristics of high levels of rigor such as expectations for learning that exceed minimum standards, scaffolds, differentiation, and the study of essential concepts or understandings. In addition, the checklist requires teachers to determine if their lessons and tasks include opportunities for students to engage in higher-order thinking, to read complex texts, and to reflect on their own goals for learning. School leaders review lesson plans as part of their observation of teacher practices.
- A lesson plan on argumentative writing for ELLs includes a graphic organizer for listing the pros and cons of a position in preparation for writing a persuasive essay. The lesson plan also includes definitions and examples of usage of academic language associated with this task, such as, “counterargument”, “mandatory”, and “refute.”
- Teachers make purposeful decisions to promote skills needed for college and career by reminding students of the reason they chose to attend a transfer high school, to prepare for their future. One teacher provided a reading list described as, “the basic ‘canon’ of academic literature,” with an introduction that urged them to continue their personal reading on a daily basis as they prepare for college.
- Students perform tasks that are designed to prepare them for success on the Regents exams they must pass to meet diploma requirements. For example, a lesson on the effect of toxins on human fetal development included a close read and analysis of a task from a prior years’ Regents exam concerning the relationship between physical characteristics of infants and alcohol use by their mothers during pregnancy.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>2.2 Assessment</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
---------------------------	-----------------------	----------------	-----------------------

### **Findings**

The vast majority of teachers use and create common assessments and rubrics within a school-wide grading policy that is aligned with the school's curricula. Teachers use information about student mastery to adjust curricula and instructional decisions.

### **Impact**

Clear information and meaningful feedback about student mastery supports improved achievement for all students.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- ELL students entering this transfer high school complete a diagnostic writing assessment which is used to group them in a program of study designed to support their language development and move them toward graduation. Units of study for these groups are differentiated and gradually include more college ready skills. For example, students identified as level 1 (minimal fluency with control of simple tenses in English) will learn to write a persuasive claim, students in level 3 (understanding of spoken complex sentences) will write a persuasive essay using one or two texts. These diagnostic assessments are administered every semester to identify students who are ready to move to the next level.
- School leaders and teachers track the progress ELL students are making as they master skills and move toward graduation. By the spring of 2015, 22 out of 40 level 1 students moved to level 2; 50 out of 55 level 5 students tested out of English as a New Language (ENL) status or graduated.
- Content area teachers administer teacher designed periodic assessments every marking period. The results of these assessments are analyzed to create a clear record of each student's achievement across all content areas. A database used by all teachers includes ongoing and updated instructional feedback for each student. Teachers note how the students are performing and suggest additional supports if needed. One teacher recommended that a particular student would benefit from individual tutoring on English grammar. Another student was identified as needing support to develop presentation and speaking skills.
- Teachers and students utilize rubrics that are aligned with the school's curricula and which support students as they complete their tasks and provide feedback from teachers on their work. Some of the rubrics are those used to score Regents exams, allowing students the opportunity to be familiar with the expectations of those assessments. Others are task specific, such as a rubric for an art project that includes the requirement that the shapes and lines in a collage be "accurately presented and proportioned." A rubric for a college application essay assignment included a section for peers to provide meaningful feedback and a similar section for teacher feedback.
- The 2014-2015 School Survey indicated that 95% of students say they learn a lot from feedback on their work.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
---------------------------	---	----------------	-----------------------

**Findings**

All teachers are engaged in structured, cyclical, inquiry-based collaborations that continuously analyze improved teaching practices, student work, and assessments. Teacher team work promotes the integration of the instructional shifts and implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards.

**Impact**

School wide coherence is reinforced and there is increased student achievement and mastery of goals for groups of students.

**Supporting Evidence**

- This year the school established teacher-led professional learning communities (PLCs) based on topics the teachers identified. These teams engage in a cycle of inquiry that includes identifying an instructional strategy focus, planning lessons and related assessments, visiting peer’s classrooms, evaluating student work and modifying the lessons for future instruction. Teachers indicated that their PLC is focusing on developing opportunities for student-to-student interaction and discussion and incorporating rigor with support for low-level ELLs.
- Teachers were observed analyzing student work to identify obstacles to learning as part of a cycle of inquiry. One teacher suggested that students might be spending too much time on filling out the graphic organizer intended to help them write their essays. As a result, many of them ran out of time before completing the actual writing task. They discussed ways to support struggling students and made suggestions for different tools to help students learn this vital college and career skill.
- Teacher teams meet during the transitional time period between the day and evening programs in order to build instructional coherence for all students, including ELLs and students with disabilities. They develop assessments and analyze curricula for alignment to the standards and share their successful practices with each other. One teacher commented that he finds teaching strategies that are successful with his evening students who have individual educational programs are also successful for his daytime general education students. He then shared a frame he uses to help students organize for writing essays.
- As a result of the focus on individual student performance and achievement that best serves the over-age under-credited student population, 97% of graduates in 2014 earned a Regents diploma. The overall passing rate on the English Regents exam rose from 38% in 2014 to 49% in 2015.