



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

**Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning**

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

Queens Collegiate: A College Board School

High School Q310

**167-01 Gothic Drive
Queens
NY 11432**

Principal: Jaime Dubei

**Date of review: April 19, 2016
Lead Reviewer: Adam Breier**

The School Context

Queens Collegiate: A College Board School is a high school with 660 students from grade 6 through grade 12. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 27% Asian, 51% Black, 15% Hispanic, and 3% White students. The student body includes 9% English Language Learners and 15% students with disabilities. Boys account for 48% of the students enrolled and girls account for 52%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 94.8%.

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	Additional Findings	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	Focus	Developing

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:

3.4 High Expectations

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations. Teacher teams and staff establish a culture for learning.

Impact

Communication and professional development around high expectations results in a culture of mutual accountability. High expectations for all students are maintained and supported through clear, focused and effective feedback so that students are prepared for the next level.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders consistently communicate high expectations for teaching and learning through regular trainings and coaching teachers around best practices aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* that are consistent with the needs of students. This takes place through professional development (PD) offerings detailing monthly topics covered around high expectations. School leaders and teachers are mutual accountable is ensured through active maintenance of teachers' Individualized PD Plan. The Individualized PD Plan template includes sections titled, "What would you like to learn?" "What resources will you use?" and "How will this help increase our students' performance?" On the reverse of these PD plans is evidence of the regular conversations between teachers and school leaders pertaining to progress toward those goals. Additionally, school leaders maintain model classrooms as they teach courses along with the attention paid to their administrative responsibilities.
- Frequent classroom observations and feedback from administrators based on Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* contain specific language from the rubric, evidence from the classroom observation that supports the rating, and actionable next steps. These are then addressed in subsequent classroom observations. This takes place through modeling, coaching cycles, and daily debriefs where actionable feedback for shifts in teaching practice is provided.
- All students, including students with disabilities and ELLs, benefit from an advisory program in which students receive individualized supports. One student stated, and all agreed, that "We have conferences with our advisor to make sure we're on track. Also, guidance counselors taught us how to read a transcript. We review them over and over." Another student then added "I check my grades on PupilPath. Every teacher uses PupilPath. It's great."
- All students attend a program called the Summer Bootcamp during the summer between grades 11 and 12. During this 2 week program, all students engage in essay writing activities with individualized editing supports. Students complete profiles on the Common Application online college application system, attend a college visit and attend workshops. Examples of these workshops are "Myths and Facts about College," "How to Pay for College," and "How to Select Best Fit Colleges." College visits commence for students in grade 6. Parents concurred when one stated "My kid went to Columbia University in the 6th grade." To date, 69 of the current 73 graduating seniors have received college acceptance letters and scholarship money, including TAP and Pell grants, totals 1.2 million dollars.

Area of Focus

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

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured professional collaborations. Teacher teams analyze assessment data for students they share.

Impact

Use of an inquiry approach is developing across teacher teams. Analysis of assessment data does not typically result in progress toward goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- During the grade 7 teacher team meeting, teachers collectively analyzed student work related to a science writing assignment. Student work was measured against students' use of the "Illustrate, Calculate, Explain" ICE method. However, review of the grade 7 teacher team minutes reveal that this team decided on March 22, 2016 to launch an inquiry cycle that included student work. As stated in the minutes "The team has decided to pull away from the behavior inquiry as it has seemed to help and students are not lining up on their own. We found that this has helped the students to enter the classroom more calmly and they are more prepared to begin their Do Now."
- Teachers across teams agreed that the year began with teachers conducting inquiry work based on individual students within their respective classes. The second school wide inquiry cycle involved analysis of student behavior. No evidence was provided to show that any teacher teams other than the grade 7 team have yet engaged in inquiry work based on the analysis of student work.
- Teacher teams have engaged in work related to the development of coherent teaching strategies and the planning of common projects. For example, the science team designed a project in which students are to write an argumentative letter to President Obama advising him on whether or not to expand nuclear power in the United States.

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 and the instructional shifts. Curricula and academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills.

Impact

Curricula promote college and career readiness for all students. Across grades and subjects, rigorous habits and higher-order skills are emphasized for all students, including English language learners and students with disabilities.

Supporting Evidence

- Review of unit plans across grades and content areas evidences consistent alignment with Common Core Learning Standards and the promotion of college and career readiness. Lesson plans from each class observed evidenced the same. In a grade 6 math unit, alignment to one of the math instructional shifts is evidenced in the essential question “Why is it important to understand percent when it comes to purchasing?” and “How does the cost to ship an item depend on the surface area of the package?” A grade 11 English Language Arts (ELA) unit requires that students “Carefully read each of the four texts provided. Then, using evidence from at least three of the texts, write a well-developed argument regarding whether or not American citizens should be required to vote.” These curricular documents all contain detailed information as to which standards are covered.
- Throughout curricular documents were writing assignments requiring students to emphasize evidence in the making of arguments. For example, a grade 6 ELA unit includes a summative assessment that has students “Complete their learning about the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire and how it affected the people of San Francisco by writing a newspaper article about the event. They research to gather factual information and eyewitness accounts.” A grade 6 lesson plan has students apply math to a real world situation as each pair in the class is to create their “dream store.” This project involves the application of math toward the tasks of choosing a floor plan, graphing the chosen floor plan, finding the area of the store, graphing cost analyses and determining the ideal volume of boxes to be stored in the store’s back room.
- In a grade 11 ELA unit, students are to create high-order thinking questions. In a grade 12 Participation in Government unit, students are to “Analyze the degree of success of American Government foreign affairs policies,” and “Analyze the political, social, and economic impact of the political parties on American society.” All lessons contain adjustments for students with disabilities and English language learners. Some examples of these adjustments are the inclusion of graphic organizers specific to student subgroups, station teaching, writing checklists and sentence starters.

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect an articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best. Across classrooms, student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

Impact

Students produce meaningful work products and take part in discussions that reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- Teaching practices evidence the shared belief that all students learn differently and that multiple entry points are vital to student success. In one class, alternative texts were provided that included definitions and visual aids. In another class, stations were flexible in terms of the time students could take at each as well as the work available at each. For example, one station was devoted to extensions while another was devoted to students engaging in an annotation exercise. A third station was established for students who needed extra help. Four students voluntarily reported to this station.
- In a math class, one student asked a partner student to clarify the difference between independent and dependent variables. This student was able to explain the difference, allowing the partner to take the next step in the academic task in which the class was engaged. In a science class, students applied real world situations to a lesson about the digestive system as they considered which foods would be safe to consume in relation to the pH count. In a grade 9 global studies class, students worked in groups while conducting a gallery walk of documents related to the Protestant Reformation. Together, students discussed “How did people view the church before the Reformation?” and “How did the European religion change from 1500 to 1560?”
- In an English Language Arts (ELA) class, multiple character-treatment postings decorate the room showing students’ work in understanding characterization and supporting that work with textual evidence. In a Participation in Government class, student written questions asked as part of their process to determine what issue they would take up were posted on post-it notes. Some examples were “Should individual states be able to write their own gun control laws without federal interference?” “How does zoning effect earthquake prone cities? And who makes zoning decisions?” “Should legal gender be determined by genetics or by personal identification?” and “Should immigrants have the same rights as US citizens?” A posted “Presidential Briefing on Why We Should Not Attack ISIS” essay includes the statement “America should not declare war on ISIS because we have no strategy for intervening there, and no reason to think it will work.” This essay includes multiple references to web-based and print articles. This is only one of many essays displayed, all evidencing equally high levels of student thinking.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use rubrics and grading policies aligned with the school’s curricula. Teachers’ assessment practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding.

Impact

Students receive actionable feedback regarding their achievement. Teachers make effective adjustments to meet all students’ needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, samples of student work products showed teacher written actionable feedback. Some examples of that feedback were “This thesis is not as strong as it should be. The argument of ‘no strategy’ is one good reason not to intervene but there must be more than that,” “Thesis must be arguable, make a claim and be focused. This one needs work,” and “You are introducing an economic argument here so it needs to be discussed in a new paragraph.” A Narrative Writing Rubric used as a tool of self-assessment includes statements such as “I describe my characters with many vivid details,” “I include many descriptive/sensory details,” and “I wrote my story using correct grammar.”
- Teachers continually check for understanding throughout daily lessons through check-ins. In a math class, the teacher conducted a check for understanding and determined that a majority of students were making a common error. The teacher announced “I observed that many of you are not aligning your points on the grid properly.” The teacher then adjusted the lesson by re-teaching the appropriate skill to the entire class. In another class, the teacher initiated a student to student questioning session where students asked each other about the point of view of the story. The teacher used student answers to these questions to suggest the stations to which students should report when the next stage in the lesson was launched.
- In a grade 6 algebra class, students are initially grouped based on their grade 5 state exam results. Student groups are then adjusted to meet the needs of English Language Learners and the modifications mandated by Individual Educational Plans. In addition, data from in-class formative and summative assessments drives the adjustment of student groups. In a grade 9 global studies class, the teacher used data from mock document-based questions modeled on the type that will be asked on the New York State Regents Exam in the design of each station for the gallery walk on the Protestant Reformation to ensure that strategies for researching and using evidence would be reinforced through the assignment.