



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

Office of School Quality  
Division of Teaching and Learning

# Quality Review Report

## 2015-2016

**Humanities & Arts Magnet High School**

**High School Q498**

**207-01 116<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Queens  
NY 11411**

**Principal: Rosemarie Omard**

**Date of review: April 12, 2016  
Lead Reviewer: Deborah Burnett-Worthy**

## The School Context

Humanities & Arts Magnet High School a high school with 485 students from grade 9 through grade 12. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 5% Asian, 82% Black, 11% Hispanic, and 1% White students. The student body includes 5% English Language Learners and 16% students with disabilities. Boys account for 38% of the students enrolled and girls account for 62%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 87.7%.

## 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>Developing</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>Developing</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>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Developing</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>Celebration</b>	<b>Proficient</b>

## Area of Celebration

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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### Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry-based, structured grade level and content area professional collaborations that promote the implementation of Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts, and that align practice to the school's instructional goals. Teacher teams consistently analyze assessment data and student work for students they share or on whom they are focused.

### Impact

Teacher collaboration in structured inquiry supports the alignment of instruction with the school's goals, and results in improved teacher practice and progress towards goals for groups of students.

### Supporting Evidence

- The instructional cabinet has developed a common understanding of instructional expectations so that department leaders can lead this work in their content area. This includes aligning units to the Common Core Learning Standards and the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, target and task alignment, and analyzing student work products for mastery and gaps in student learning. Teacher teams regularly analyze assessment data.
- Teacher teams use a variety of data to inform their instructional practices and further strengthen school culture. The principal shared examples of data such as Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) scores, mock Regents data and school learning environment data. School leadership reported that DRP data has been used to assess the impact of the implementation of literacy strategies and to identify appropriate resources for groups of students based on their reading levels such as leveled texts, as well as tiered user guides.
- In an observed math inquiry team meeting, teachers articulated specific instructional strategies connected to school achievement goals and to targeted scores for groups of students. A teacher presented student work on a task where these goals were implemented and teachers collectively developed strategies to improve teacher practice.

## Area of Focus

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>1.2 Pedagogy</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Developing</b>
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### Findings

Across classrooms, teaching strategies and routines inconsistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula. Across classrooms, student work products and discussions reflect uneven levels of student thinking and participation.

### Impact

There is uneven engagement in appropriately challenging tasks and uneven demonstration of higher order thinking skills in student work products, including the work of English Language Learners and students with disabilities. Teacher practice in the use of questioning and discussion techniques is not consistently effective or engaging.

### Supporting Evidence

- When asked, several students across classrooms could not articulate what they were learning and why it was important. In a grade 9 reading workshop, students were asked to compare and contrast the immigrant experience in America to a character in a novel and to analyze the impact environment has on identity. Students were unable to articulate how the current political environment impacts immigrant teenagers in America.
- Although the principal indicated that teachers were in the process of encouraging student to student discussion and allowing more wait time to better support students as they reflected on questions asked by the teacher and their classmates, these practices were not consistently seen across all classrooms.
- In 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 strategically think or extend their thinking.

## Additional Findings

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>1.1 Curriculum</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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### Findings

School leaders ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and the instructional shifts. Curricula and academic tasks are refined using student work and data.

### Impact

Coherence in curricular planning for tasks aligned to the Common Core across grades and subject, promotes college and career readiness for all learners. All students, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities, have access to the curricula and tasks and are cognitively engaged.

### Supporting Evidence

- Conversations with school leadership, as well as a review of curriculum documents, reveals that the school is in the process of aligning curricula in all core subject areas to the Common Core Learning Standards. For example, the principal spoke to how this process has helped teachers to develop their skills in designing end of unit tasks, as well as to ensure that a daily learning objective should align with the content and skills being addressed in the unit. Rigorous habits across grades and subject areas are also included in curriculum maps.
- Minutes from department meetings reflect the ongoing process in the development of the Academy of Government and Law unit plan rubric that uses the Tri-State rubric and the Danielson rubric. The instructional cabinet normed and refined the rubric using a unit plan created in one of the departments.
- Team meetings have focused on the analysis of student work products, including work products from English Language Learners and students with disabilities. Teachers identify gaps in student learning and devise next steps. Sample lesson plans reviewed showed that teachers are using specific literacy strategies, such as user guides, double entry journals, and vocabulary rings, as supports to provide all students with access to texts.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>2.2 Assessment</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Developing</b>
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### **Findings**

Across classrooms, teachers use and create assessments and rubrics that are loosely aligned with the school's curricula. Teaching practices inconsistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student assessment.

### **Impact**

There is a lack of evidence of assessments that provide meaningful actionable feedback to students and teachers being used to make effective adjustments to meet the needs of all learners.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- Structures are being developed to provide actionable feedback to teachers and students. The school has adopted Skedula as an online platform and uniform place for students and teachers to go to for information around attendance, and student achievement data. Because it has recently been rolled out, data in Skedula is not regularly updated. The school is also developing a special education tracker to better support students with disabilities as it will assist with data collection and data analysis. This too is a tool that is not fully in the implementation phase.
- Teachers listed many ways they checked for understanding including with exit slips, opportunities for students to revise work and with class discussions. However, these practices are not yet implemented across classrooms, limiting teachers' opportunities to make effective adjustments to meet the needs of all learners and giving actionable feedback.
- Across classrooms, teaching practices inconsistently reflected the use of checks for understanding and student self-assessment. Some teachers use exit slips but this is not a common practice. There was evidence of student self-assessment in the plans revised, but not across the classrooms visited.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>3.4 High Expectations</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Developing</b>
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### Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the staff. They are developing and strengthening systems of accountability for expectations, as well as offering ongoing feedback guidance and advisement to students.

### Impact

Efforts to develop and strengthen the expectations that are connected to a path to college and career for students are beginning to enable stakeholders, including staff and families, to support student progress towards these expectations.

### Supporting Evidence

- School leaders share high expectations with the staff and students and are developing supports for all to meet those expectations. School leaders have offered professional development around how to evaluate student transcripts to support teachers with advisory expectations, on classroom displays and planning to support with the classroom environment. Five teachers are being trained in restorative justice practices in order to lead that initiative the following year. Students received a welcome letter from the school leader delineating the expectations to students and families, as well as a template to be filled out by students and parents stating students' goal for a Regents or Advanced Regents diploma. Other structures are being worked on to make the expectations clear and attainable for all. Parents could not speak to support they were receiving to get their children ready for the next level of academic success.
- The school communicates with families through phone calls, mail, meetings, email, school events and Skedula. Parents are not yet familiar with Skedula but hope to receive support with the system. One parent explained that when his child needs additional help, he is able to meet with the teacher. Additionally, teachers do share websites with families to support students' progress.
- Teachers are helping to support students in understanding the expectations and their next steps. Students spoke about the changes they have experienced at the school and explained that they have received the most supports for life after high school this year. Some spoke about the work not being as rigorous as they expected and are looking forward to the addition of Advanced Placement courses in the future. Students explained that teachers help clarify the expectations in classrooms, but they reinforce them unevenly. With additional work, the school will be able to offer ongoing and detailed feedback to students that prepare them for the next level.