



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

Pan American International High School at Monroe

High School X388

**1300 Boynton Ave
Bronx
NY 10472**

Principal: Bridgit Bye

**Date of review: May 18, 2016
Lead Reviewer: Daisy Concepción**

The School Context

Pan American International High School at Monroe is a high school with 440 students from grade 9 through grade 12. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 0% Asian, 0% Black, 100% Hispanic, and 0% White students. The student body includes 91% English Language Learners and 2% 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 88.8%.

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 | Celebration | Well Developed |
| 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 | Well Developed |
| 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 | Well Developed |
| 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 | 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 | Well Developed |

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:

1.1 Curriculum

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and strategically integrate the instructional shifts. Rigorous habits and higher-order skills are emphasized in curricula and academic tasks.

Impact

Curriculum is common core aligned and promotes career and college readiness by emphasizing language acquisition and rigorous habits so that all learners demonstrate their thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- Curricula units are developed thematically and are multidisciplinary. Unit plans are project based and strategically develop language and academic vocabulary across all grades and content areas. In one thematic, multidisciplinary unit, students study angles and velocity in Trigonometry while they study Copernicus and his idea of trajectory design in Physics and build and test balloon missiles. Concurrently, students are studying the rise of religion and social powers during the Middle Ages. In social studies students study Feudalism and how the distribution of power affects people's lives. In English class students are reading Macbeth to study personal power and connect it to the themes learned in social studies. This theme connects to art, and students study the idea that power belonged to those who could read and write and research and create illuminated manuscripts. Concepts and timelines in each of these units mutually reinforce each other and develop intentional connections to create a deeper understanding. With a focus on language syntax, they build a domain-specific academic vocabulary word bank that is consistent across all contents so that students have an opportunity to use it continuously.
- Lesson plans have a clear structure that outlines a daily content, language and skill objective. Lesson plans highlight key vocabulary and require students to keep a journal around a question related to the unit. Lessons follow the workshop model and identify a clear mini-lesson while providing group practice as well as independent work. Ideas are developed throughout the unit by an individualized student activity guide. These activity guides are a collection of leveled scaffolds with various types of graphic organizer as well as multiple Lexile reading levels. Graphic organizers include focus questions, standards, note catchers and vocabulary, writing prompts and discussion stems that a student will need throughout the unit. Newcomer's guides have a lower cognitive demand with high emphasis on language development to accelerate language acquisition. Some activity guides have informational paragraphs and multiple supports for students who have come to the country with interrupted formal education and need more scaffolds. Activity guides are available in both English and Spanish and are designed to gradually intensify in both demand of language use as well as cognitive demand in order to ensure that students will be able to demonstrate mastery on the end of unit exam.
- Performance tasks require students to engage in higher order thinking. In an Algebra 2 unit on data and statistics, students use multiple sources of information to construct an argument with valid reasoning to support how an insurance adjuster uses the concepts of mean and standard deviation. In a Physics unit, students study the law of conservation of energy and its real life applications by using various formulas to express the conversion of kinetic to potential energy, including angles, velocity, and weight.

Area of Focus

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| Quality Indicator: | 4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development | Rating: | Well Developed |
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Findings

The vast majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations that promote the achievement of school goals. Teacher teams systematically analyze assessment data and student work for students they share.

Impact

Teams continue to analyze teacher and student work as well as assessment data resulting in school-wide coherence leading to ongoing improvement in teacher practice and mastery of goals for students.

Supporting Evidence

- Across all teams, teachers use a lesson-planning template which concentrates on the schoolwide focus of crafting language outcomes. This highlights the Common Core shift of using academic language in both written and oral form. Language outcomes are embedded in all school rubrics and are key to the design of all units, lessons, and activity guides. Guided by school coaches, teachers dedicate much of their professional time to drafting, editing, and finalizing unit activity guides to meet the varied linguistic and academic needs of students. Feedback to teachers on their activity guide is ongoing throughout the process. As a result, there is schoolwide coherence in both instruction and assessment with regard to vocabulary use. New teachers in particular stated that this focus has strengthened their understanding of how the function of language is tied to linguistic scaffolds.
- Teacher teams meet weekly and use a work-share protocol which allows them look at their colleagues' work in order to analyze student work to identify areas of instructional focus. Teachers track and monitor pre- and post-assessments for each unit as both a benchmark and a measure of student progress to make curricular adjustments. Additionally, teachers collect and share interim assessment data, such as end-of-unit essays, and track student progress using vertically aligned performance-based assessment rubrics. Results from portfolios are analyzed to show trends and areas for work on interdisciplinary units. A review of assessment shows 80% of students, including students with Individualized Educational Plans, in grade 9 and 10 demonstrated mastery in the achievement of English outcomes from January to May. At a teacher team meeting, new teachers shared that this ongoing practice supports student achievement while the school continues to extend the arc of mastery to all students.
- In a teacher team meeting using the work-share protocol, a teacher presented a student PowerPoint project focusing on the language skill of paraphrasing. He also shared a presentation rubric he had created for this project. The school coach suggested that rather than create a rubric, he should align his project to the existing end-of-unit assessments and rubrics. The team added that that this would result in instructional coherence, as it would ensure that students received additional practice on the skills that they would need for their final assessment. Additionally, they explained that by doing this the students would receive meaningful feedback from a rubric that will inform their final grade. This type of streamlined work has resulted in the school exceeding the closing the achievement gap metric for English Language Learners for the 2014-15 year.

Additional Findings

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| Quality Indicator: | 1.2 Pedagogy | Rating: | Well Developed |
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Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best. Across the vast majority of classrooms, scaffolds in English and native language strategically provide multiple entry points and high-quality supports and extensions.

Impact

Students exhibit high levels of thinking and discussion and take ownership of their learning across all classrooms and content areas.

Supporting Evidence

- The widely held belief that with tailored supports students can learn a new language, academic skills, and content simultaneously was observed in all classrooms visited. Ninety-eight percent of the students at this school are English Language Learners, and 33 percent of these are students with interrupted formal education (SIFE). Team discussions revolve around assessing student skills, learning gaps in knowledge and social emotional issues, with a focus on how to provide rigorous experiences in literacy and numeracy using native language and grade level supports to ensure graduate and are prepared for college. This belief was evidenced in a grade 9 math class during which a student with only one year of formal instruction and an individualized educational plan, engaged in a class discussion in Spanish justifying the strategy he used to solve an algebra problem before graphing it.
- Student activity guides contain all the differentiated material for each level of learners for the arc of the unit. Companion activity guides are available in three levels specifically designed to meet all students' needs. Beginning guides focus on developing language and building background knowledge. For example, a beginner activity guide includes supports such as glossaries, pictures, and organizers. An advanced activity guide on hurricanes and statistics requires students to create formulas for calculating insurance refunds using actuarial tables, a real world application of the measures of central tendency. Texts and supplemental reading materials in all guides run the range of low to high Lexile reading levels and include native language supports. As all units span three levels, there are high quality extensions available by content, cognitive level, language and proficiency level.
- In a grade 9 and 10 social studies class, students worked on describing historical pictures of the philosophers of the French Revolution. As this class included SIFE students, special scaffolds, such as sentence starters, were provided to allow them to access the task. Their activity guide asked them to use the picture supports to describe the philosophers' beliefs systems in this time period. Students had to summarize the philosophers' ideas and explain how the ideas were related to the Enlightenment period. As the teacher listened in to student conversation, she moved several students from a less English proficient group to a more proficient group. Students worked collaboratively to create a large poster that contained the pictures supports and a summary of their answers. These posters were hung on the wall and students engaged in a gallery walk to collect the notes they needed to plan their final essay for the unit.

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| Quality Indicator: | 3.4 High Expectations | Rating: | Well Developed |
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Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations for professionalism and instruction to the entire staff. School leaders and staff effectively communicate expectations connected to a path to college and career.

Impact

Clearly communicated high expectations and supports have resulted in a culture of mutual accountability. Successful partnership with parents support all students' progress towards a path to career and college readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- Common Core Learning Standards, instructional shifts and school goals are supported through frequent new teacher meetings. Instructional coaches facilitate meetings and provide extensive professional development. This year, school coaches, in collaboration with coaches from the Internationals Network, have conducted an in-depth, six-part cycle of professional learning on scaffolding instruction. In a teacher meeting, teachers spoke about how the series structure has given them time to reflect on their learning and enabled them to apply their new learning it to upcoming units. They also shared that this professional development provided them with clear expectations for instruction while supporting them to meet school goals. They also shared that while frequent observations hold them accountable to these expectations, learning together and understanding how each one contributes to the sum total of this work has resulted in a culture of mutual accountability.
- Parents stated that they receive personalized support and communication about their student's progress through multiple, detailed, end-of-unit progress reports and conferences with teachers. Parents are well informed about their student's progress towards graduation through transcript reviews, the school's series of integrated performance assessments, and individual academic conferences. They shared that teachers call them frequently. Some parents indicated that because they do not have computers at home, the phone calls are a more personal approach that allows them to ask questions and make arrangements for tutoring if the student needs more support. Parents shared that there have been workshops on college preparation and financial aid led by the college coordinator. While initially concerned about the level of preparation for college, given that many students had large gaps in formal education, parents realized that the individualized support students receive before, during, and after school have helped close the education gap and made attending college an attainable goal. Some parents shared college acceptance letters and were proud that their students will be the first in their family to attend college.
- Parents shared that that the English as a Second Language (ESL) Program for parents has made them partners in their students' learning. Parents stated that, as newly arrived immigrants, the ESL program has given them the social English they need to navigate their neighborhood and communicate with their school. However, the big benefit has been being able to talk about school at home. One parent stated that she looks forward to learning academic English from her daughter at the end of the day. Parents all shared that they spend many evenings at home practicing English with their children and reviewing the day's lesson. One parent shared that this allows her to understand her son's academic work saying, "If he can explain it to me at home, then I know that he truly learned it!"

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| Quality Indicator: | 2.2 Assessment | Rating: | Well Developed |
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Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms teachers use rubrics aligned with the school’s curricula and offer a clear portrait of student mastery. The school uses common assessments to create a clear picture of student progress toward goals across grades and subject.

Impact

Students receive meaningful, rubric based feedback aligned to the school’s portrait of mastery. Common assessments allow for instructional adjustments so that all students, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities demonstrate mastery.

Supporting Evidence

- A review of student portfolios revealed that teachers use rubric based feedback throughout the development of the various performance tasks assigned. Google Docs reflect that feedback is content based and individual to each student. In a reflective, senior essay, a student wrote generically about his challenge of being held accountable to an end of year presentation that required a fair amount of academic English while being a newly arrived immigrant. The student wrote, “This was not a group project, which was difficult for me because I was a new student, I did not speak English.” The teacher feedback was “Explain more about the challenge this presented and give examples on how you overcame this challenge. Use those details to better explain what you learned.” This personalized feedback aligned to the rubric criteria and pushed the student toward mastery on the rubric.
- The school has a system of interconnected assessments, rubrics and performance based presentations that run across the four years of high school. Each unit terminates in an end-of-unit project that requires students to demonstrate mastery of skills and concepts. All of the end-of-unit skills all come to bear in the end-of-year performance based presentation. For example, students in grade 9 and 10 use the content knowledge and skill learned in the five units over the school year on the culminating presentation. These teacher-designed assessments are aligned to the Performance Based Assessment Task (PBAT) that students must take in grade 11 and 12 in order to graduate. Students are measured throughout the year with a series of rubrics that measure content knowledge, skill and language acquisition for each unit. If a student does not achieve a certain level of proficiency, he will not proceed to the next unit and will receive individualized tutoring to ensure that he will be prepared to demonstrate mastery at the end of year project. The teachers and staff use Google Docs to share documents that reflect that during the school year, students self-assess their progress towards mastery and receive peer feedback as well as teacher feedback. The PBATs, presentations, and rubrics are aligned to the Internationals Network for Public Schools.
- A review of assessment data comparing results from January to May reveals that 88% of grade 11 students, including students with individual education programs, demonstrated mastery of English outcomes. Mastery percentages for grade 11 across subjects were 86% in social studies, 85% in Living Environment and 92% in math. The results for the same period combined for grade 9 and 10 show 81% mastery in social studies, 81% in Spanish, 71% in Physics, and 89% in Math.