



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

High School of Fashion Industries

High School M600

**225 West 24th Street
Manhattan
NY 10011**

Principal: Daryl Blank

**Date of review: April 30, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Mark Ossenheimer**

The School Context

The High School of Fashion Industries is a high school with 1,744 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 37% Black, 54% Hispanic, 4% White, and 5% Asian students. The student body includes 2% English language learners and 14% special education students. Boys account for 7% of the students enrolled and girls account for 93%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 92.0%.

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	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 Framework for Teaching, aligned to the curricula, engaging, and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products	Focus	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	Additional Findings	Well Developed

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

School leaders and staff effectively communicate high expectations connected to a path of college and career readiness, partner with families, and provide clear feedback and guidance supports for students.

Impact

The culture for learning communicates a unified set of high expectations and provides supports to achieve those expectations so that students are prepared for the next level.

Supporting Evidence

- The High School of Fashion Industries (HSFI) is a Career and Technical Education (CTE) school where all students choose a major in Fashion Design, Merchandising, Visual Display, and/or Graphics and Illustration, in addition to taking core academic subjects. As students move from ninth through twelfth grade, they take an increasing number of classes within their major. Approximately one-third of all graduates continue to pursue these majors after graduation, moving on to colleges like Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) and Parsons. Industry partners provide feedback on curriculum and sponsor real world connections for students by supporting internships, mentoring, work-place visits, an annual fashion show, and art/photography show held at the International Center for Photography.
- The school has established a Student Success Center staffed with a college counselor and student youth leaders who are trained through the Hudson Guild. The youth leaders are trained in the college process and are employed as college advisors to their peers at the school. All grade 11 and 12 students take a credit bearing College Preparation course focused on college access skills and behaviors. HFSI employs alumni who are currently attending college as College Bridge Coaches who support and mentor targeted students through their senior year and the summer before starting college.
- Upper grade students provide peer mentoring for target grade 9 students, based on data indicating they may have a difficult transition to high school. Effective academic and behaviors are recognized and rewarded through a comprehensive Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS) that communicates the school expectations through Safety, Ownership, Achievement, Respect and Responsibility, (SOARR), which had input from parents and students in its development and implementation. Targeted students also receive direct adult mentoring from staff who meet frequently with students to goal set, problem-solve, and develop student ownership of their educational experience.
- Parents stated they are fully incorporated into their children's education at HSFI. One parent stated "the school does the work with us" when referring to attending workshops on the college application process and FAFSA where guidance staff worked alongside parents in completing forms together.. Parents are kept informed of their children's progress through the online grade system and a weekly newsletter specifically for parents. A specific Assistant Principal for Parent Engagement continually works with parents on deepening the partnership between the school and families.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

Across classrooms, teaching strategies consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula so that learners are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks. Student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

Impact

Teacher pedagogy across the majority of classrooms is engaging and meets the needs of learners resulting in meaningful work products where students are able to demonstrate their thinking. However there are pockets where teachers miss opportunities to provide students with needed scaffolds or extensions.

Supporting Evidence

- A Common Core Algebra class incorporated student choice in selecting an appropriate-level worksheet for an independent/group work activity based on their performance during the whole class activity preceding it. All three worksheets engaged students in comparing quadratic and square root functions graphically and algebraically, but varied in their level of scaffolds. For example, a high level worksheet asked students to create their own word problems based on a set of criteria, a mid-level worksheet had word problems followed by a list of steps for students, and a lower-level worksheet had word problems that had a list of steps and key vocabulary defined within those steps for students. An integrated classroom teaching (ICT) Living Environment class also incorporated choice in the mode of a peppered moth lab on the concepts of variation and adaptation providing an entry point based on learning style. Students could conduct trials using a computer simulation or a paper and pen tactile simulation. However, some students struggled with understanding the purpose of the lab in relation to the class objective and relied on the teacher for support instead of having the needed scaffold to engage independently.
- A computer illustration class engaged students in a performance-based task of using Adobe Illustrator in identifying and illustrating various necklines in relation to the color wheel. All students were engaged in coordinating necklines with the appropriate design categories and worked independently to digitize the illustrations. However, some students finished the task before others and the only extension offered was to help another student rather than an additional task designed to further their skill set in design or the computer software.
- Students in an Algebra II Trigonometry class were engaged with group work in solving navigation and surveying problems using the laws of sine and cosine. Group structures ensured members were collaborating in the problem-solving process resulting in high levels of student-to-student discussion using math vocabulary and allowing students to demonstrate their thinking. Students in a grade 9 ICT English language arts class were grouped according to performance levels and provided with leveled graphic organizers to engage students in finding text-based evidence for characterization in *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*. While the task provided entry points to the text-based task, there were not supports or roles for students within the groups resulting in an uneven level of students demonstrating their thinking within certain groups.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

Curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and content standards across subject areas strategically integrating the instructional shifts. Rigorous habits are emphasized in curricula and academic tasks.

Impact

The school's curricular decisions promote college and career readiness for all students, and ensure students must demonstrate their thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- A review of English language arts, algebra, and geometry curricula, demonstrate integration of the Common Core Learning Standards and performance based tasks utilizing Engage New York, with adaptations of tasks to align with school goals and student needs. In addition to the addition of Common Core Standards into the Career and Technical Education courses, the school has conducted a review of the CTE curricula with an Advisory Board of industry professionals to revise and embed current career content and skills. For example, there has been an increase in emphasis on the technical creation of "tech packs" that designers send to production facilities overseas in the development of product samples.
- HSFI has developed a monthly sequence of Common Core literacy standards for the grade 9/10 band and the grade 11/12 band that teachers implement across subjects through monthly performance tasks. The focus of the skills this year is to build effective arguments in writing and presentations using evidence and counter-claim. The monthly skills build over time. For example, the October skills for the grade 11/12 band are summarizing and paraphrasing, and the November band continues those skills and adds using paraphrased evidence and crediting sources. Tasks vary across subject areas, but all address the monthly focus. For example, the March task for Living Environment was an essay using a *New York Times* article and an excerpt from the novel *Oryx and Cake* to answer the question "Is biotechnology more beneficial or dangerous?" A March Fashion Design task used non-fiction text for students to write an essay answering the question "Who bears responsibility for ensuring goods are ethically manufactured?"
- Tasks are planned to ensure all students demonstrate higher order thinking skills. For example, a task from Global History in which students were asked the question "Is Latin America truly democratic?" was structured with tiered primary sources, student choice of documents with everyone attempting a challenge level document, and a demonstration of understanding by incorporating a drawing, a prediction, and a personal or historical connection for each primary source. A grade 10 Fashion Design course final project incorporated all learned skills by students completing a sample, single garment, so that each student's design and technical skills were demonstrated in a unique piece.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use assessments and rubrics aligned with the school’s curricula. The school uses common assessments to determine student progress towards goals across subject areas.

Impact

The schools assessment practices provide actionable feedback to teachers and students regarding progress, and results are used to adjust curricula and instruction.

Supporting Evidence

- Each subject area has developed common rubrics to assess the monthly Common Core task on argumentative writing. A review of rubrics for the March tasks across subjects indicates that the science department across Living Environment, Chemistry, and Physics all use a Common Core aligned rubric that addresses seven traits or indicators. The Career and Technical Education courses also use a common rubric aligned to Common Core that combines the same indicators used by the science department into six indicators.
- The school used assessment results from the NY State Common Core ELA Regents and the Measures of Student Learning (MOSL) performance-based assessments to develop the school wide focus of argumentative writing that has been incorporated across all subject areas. The consistent implementation of the monthly tasks and assessments resulted in an increase in the January pass rate of the ELA Regents exam.
- The ELA teachers asked students in an action research project about the quality of the feedback they were receiving from the Literary Analysis Rubric used across classes. The results from that project led the teachers to revise the rubric to make feedback more actionable and understandable for students. For example, the original rubric for a 1-point response under the analysis indicator had the criteria “Analysis is underdeveloped or confusing.” The revised rubric shifted to “You’ve made a good start at analysis, but some ideas are confusing. Look at the text again and explain in more detail.”
- Teachers across classrooms use assessment data to determine student-learning groups for instruction. For example, both a grade 9 and grade 12 ELA classes grouped students according to reading levels. The grade 9 class had students engage in finding text-based evidence recording their work on leveled graphic organizers. The grade 12 class engaged in reading non-fiction articles regarding different aspects of “hard-boiled” detective fiction such as “Gangsters, Racketeers, and Bootleggers” and “The Urban Environment.” The articles varied in challenge level and length for the groups. Students in an algebra class were grouped heterogeneously for instruction based on an in-class assessment from the week prior.

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 inquiry-based structured professional collaborations. Teacher teams systemically analyze classroom practice, assessment data and student work for students they share. Distributed leadership structures are embedded across the school.

Impact

The school's professional collaboration results in school-wide instructional coherence, shared improvements in teacher practice, and increased student achievement for all learners. Leadership structures ensure teachers play an integral role in key decisions that affect student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers collaborate in department grade-level Focus Groups, comprised of those who teach the same course typically for the same grade such as grade 11 English language arts, or Common Core Geometry. In an observed ELA focus group, teachers assessed student work from a target group using the ELA Common Core rubric that teachers had revised as part of the ELA action research project, enabling actionable feedback to students. By using actual student work from a target group, teachers were analyzing the effectiveness of the new rubric to increase student achievement as well as norming teacher scoring and creating greater instructional coherence.
- A review of Focus Group agendas and minutes across subject areas demonstrates that teachers have developed targeted groups of students who are tracked over time in relation to instructional strategies and class assessments. For example, a math agenda from April examines the progress of these students from the mid-unit to end-unit assessments and for teachers to identify the specific strategies and practices that led to increased student achievement, as well as additional scaffolds and practices to be implemented in the next unit for the target group of students.
- Teachers collaborate on the school's instructional goal of Common Core argumentative writing on interdisciplinary professional learning communities (PLC). Teacher who share the same students across subjects meet monthly to examine student work products from the monthly Common Core performance tasks that embed the school-wide Common Core monthly skills. A review of minutes from April PLC meetings demonstrates that teachers examine student work using a protocol to determine impact of common approaches across departments that emphasize the targeted skill and determine next steps. For example, one PLC developed sentence starters and outline tools that were used across departments and another PLC decided to implement more self- and peer-assessment in classrooms to support the quality of use of claim and counter-claim in student writing.
- Teachers lead the 27 Focus Groups and PLCs, placing a large percentage of teachers in leadership positions. Teacher leaders meet monthly with administration to share best practices, discuss the work of their teams, and develop common next steps or problem-solve leadership dilemmas.