Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Mott Hall Bronx High School

High School X252

1595 Bathgate Avenue
Bronx
NY 10457

Principal: Kathryn Malloy

Date of review: May 15, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Carron Staple

The School Context

Mott Hall Bronx High School is a high school with 402 students from grades 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 22% Black, 76% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 11% English language learners and 24% special education students. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-14 was 84.9%.

School Quality Criteria

Instructional Core

To what extent does the school regularly...	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 Framework for Teaching, 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.	**Focus**	**Proficient**

School Culture

To what extent does the school...	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

To what extent does the school...	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**	**Proficient**

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed

Findings

High expectations are communicated to staff verbally and in writing, via the use of the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Administrators and teaching staff consistently communicate with students and their families to support student progress and expectations connected to college and career readiness.

Impact

School leaders provide instructional support and professional learning opportunities to staff, as well as have a system of accountability for those high expectations. The consistent communication and collaboration among school staff, students, and families fosters high expectations for all, and provides ongoing feedback to help families understand student progress.

Supporting Evidence

- Engaging staff in post-classroom observation debriefs that tie actionable feedback aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching focus areas, student achievement with deadlines, support, training, and assessment, communicates high expectations for practice and follow-up. Weekly professional development support and daily teacher team meetings create a culture of mutual accountability that strengthens school initiatives, communication, and overall school culture.

- The school has established partnerships with families to support progress towards college and career readiness. With the support of the College Bound Initiative (CBI), students have access to a full-time college counselor who works with grade teams and student advisories to foster expectations across all grades. Every student and family has college access, outreach, materials and a curriculum that addresses college expectations. At curriculum night the principal, teachers, and guidance staff provide information to parents about how the school prepares students for college and the methods and strategies used to support students. This informational night sets the foundation of the various collaborations that will occur throughout the year and expectations of the school community. On senior night parents come together to discuss pathways to college and learn about the entire college application process, including financial aid, and the guidance team's one-to-one planning conferences to support each senior.

- Parents specifically spoke about the constant feedback received from the school to inform them of their children's progress toward graduation, through several sources such as Pupil Path, an online grading system, monthly conferences and meetings, phone calls, letters, and the open-door availability policy. Parents spoke positively about the school's administrators, teachers, and support staff, as they were very clear about how the school is preparing their children for college and beyond, citing the International Baccalaureate (IB) course work and the depth of writing assignments in which students are required to show mastery and understanding. There was unanimous agreement from students that the school is like an extended family where they are known and supported by every adult. They talked about numerous celebrations including "Mott Holla Day", where students and staff members participate in awards and performances and wear shirts in their grade team's color. Students reported that teachers require them to complete rigorous work and this makes them feel confident that they are being prepared for college.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient

Findings
The school uses common assessments to determine student progress toward goals across grades and subjects. Across classrooms, all teachers use checks for understanding and some utilize student self-assessment.

Impact
Assessment results are used to effectively adjust curricula and instruction to meet the needs of all learners.

Supporting Evidence
- Teacher teams continually revise assessments that are aligned with Common Core Learning Standards and support the achievement of the school's instructional goals of quality on-demand writing across content areas and increased math talk in classrooms. For example, the entire school staff scored and analyzed the MOSL test, which resulted in creating coherent rubrics across the English and Social Studies departments for argumentative writing. Additionally, math teachers are doing inquiry around students' math responses.

- The principal discussed the assessment cycle in which teachers are expected to use data from collaboratively developed assessments to identify students' learning needs and inform next instructional steps. Through this process, all teacher teams across content and grade levels are able to analyze student outcomes and implement revisions in instructional strategies. Minutes of team meetings show analysis of assessment data and follow up interventions such as re-grouping, after-school tutoring, and Regents tutorials.

- The formative assessment process across classrooms shows evidence of teachers regularly checking for understanding. Day-to-day assessment is in the form of do-now assignments, using rubrics, class discussions, student presentations and exit tickets as well as teacher check-ins with individuals and groups. For example, in a chemistry class the teacher noticed after doing table check-ins that students had difficulty responding to the "do now' question. She immediately responded by saying, "I am noticing that people are struggling with deatmosphere, what's one way we can remember it?" The question promoted students to talk about the connection of gravity to deatmosphere and quickly they became engaged and back on task. These assessments help provide immediate important information to the teachers enabling them to make effective and timely adjustments on the spot and for future lessons to ensure all students' learning needs are met. However, self-assessment practices observed were scattered, thus hindering some students' self-accountability.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient

Findings

Curricula across grades and subject are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Curricular and instructional refinements are made using student work and data.

Impact

The school's purposeful curriculum decisions build coherence and promote cognitive engagement and college and career readiness for a variety of learners, including English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders ensure curriculum is aligned to the CCLS and instructional shifts. A crosswalk between the International Baccalaureate and common core learning standards has provided the school with a strong lens to articulate a common set of expectations of how curricula must cognitively engage the needs of all learners. For example, every learner must support their claims using evidence, and share their evidence collaboratively with their peers to cognitively push their thinking as it relates to the task and objectives.

- The school consulted with Dr. Marie Alcock to ensure curriculum maps were aligned to Common Core and also introduced a software platform-Atlas Rubicon, to store all curriculum work. Existing units, including the International Baccalaureate and state standards were re-mapped using the platform, which allowed teachers to refine and create yearlong contexts.

- A review of teacher lesson plans shows evidence that teachers are planning summative tasks that provide students with opportunities to show mastery of skills. Specifically, lesson plans revealed that in-class tasks emphasize higher-order thinking skills such as developing logical arguments, analyzing information from a variety of sources, developing claims and counter-claims, citing textual evidence, and applying concepts in real world situations. In a grade 10 Geometry Regents class, students were purposefully given a wrong answer to a geometry problem. They had to explain their conceptual understanding of the task and what went wrong in the process of solving it. This metacognitive task aligns to instructional shifts and allows students to share their process and understanding as they support their peers who may have made the same errors.

Quality Indicator:	**1.2 Pedagogy**	**Rating:**	**Proficient**

Findings

Teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reveal a set of beliefs about how students learn best.

Impact

Across most classrooms, all students, including ELLs and students with disabilities, are exposed to multiple teaching strategies and formative assessments resulting in higher-levels of engagement.

Supporting Evidence

- Teaching practices provide multiple entry points, supports and extensions including: discussion protocols, jigsaw, blended learning, literature circles, Socratic seminar and the OPVL protocol in which students must determine the origin, purpose, values and limitations of a source. The Big Brain Protocol is used in every classroom as it speaks to the school's non-negotiable requirement that every student must engage in daily collaborations as student facilitators. This protocol requires students to keep asking a series of questions that lead groups of their peers to answering a question.

- Across a number of classrooms observed, teachers use the workshop model approach, providing students with a structured do now, a mini- lesson, as well as guided independent or group practice. For example, in a 10th grade English language arts (ELA) class, students used an annotation and discussion protocol to support their claim for an upcoming Socratic seminar. The teacher initiated a group "whip around" whereby all students could share out their thoughts about the character Sebastian. They needed to say whether or not they believed he was being characterized as a boy with a crush or with a deep love. Students facilitated the table discussions to delve into how the character was being portrayed.

- Teachers provide multiple entry points for English language learners and students with disabilities, as observed in an integrated co-teaching class (ICT). Students had to take a position about a question and cite evidence based on multiple reading sources they were provided. The teachers modeled the expectation for the students, supported them in completing their evidence trackers and then facilitated the dialogue. The students initially struggled with the debate portion, but were greatly supported by an English language learner, a special education and a general education teacher who encouraged them to use their evidence tracker sheets to defend their arguments.

Quality Indicator:	4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development	Rating:	Proficient

Findings

The majority of teachers engage in structured, inquiry-based content area professional collaborations and systematically analyze student data to inform their instruction and improve their practice.

Impact

Professional collaborations promote the implementation of Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts, and encourage alignment of practice to the school's instructional goals resulting in school-wide coherence and improved student outcomes.

Supporting Evidence

- There are three structures in which teachers engage in inquiry-based professional collaborations: differentiated professional development teams, grade teams and content teams. The principal reported that anecdotal evidence from these teacher teams has shown a decisive shift in instructional culture, and that teacher analysis of student work and outcomes informs their planning, instruction and professional development. Specifically, all team work is documented and tracked in Google docs, and professional development is informed by the data submitted.

- A review of agendas and minutes shows evidence that teachers meet daily to work on curriculum, unit and lesson planning, develop assessments, analyze assessment data for all students across all grades, including ELLs and SWDs, review student work products and provide feedback to improve instructional practice, thereby strengthening the instructional capacity of teachers. For example, after analyzing the ELA regents' data, teachers determined that more instructional time needed to be spent supporting students with citing textual evidence to support claims and defend arguments.

- In a professional development teacher team, teachers analyzed student work based on a task in which students had to analyze an excerpt from Malcolm X's "God's Judgment" speech. Students used the OPVL (Origin, Purpose, Values, Limitations) protocol to compare and contrast perspectives and cite evidence. Teachers discussed where students were lacking in their writing and the misconceptions evidenced in their work. They discussed the instructional steps they would take to support the students' understanding of the texts and instructional next steps for supporting students with how to cite text-based evidence.