

# Quality Review Report

## 2016-2017

**John Bowne High School**

**High school 25Q425**

**63-25 Main St.  
Queens  
NY 11367**

**Principal: Howard Kwait**

**Dates of Review:  
February 14, 2017 - February 15, 2017**

**Lead Reviewer: Joan Prince**

## The Quality Review Report

The Quality Review is a two-day school visit by an experienced educator. During the review, the reviewer visits classrooms, talks with parents, students, teachers, and school leaders and uses a rubric to evaluate how well the school is organized to support student achievement.

The Quality Review Report provides a rating for all ten indicators of the Quality Review Rubric in three categories: Instructional Core, School Culture, and Systems for Improvement. One indicator is identified as the **Area of Celebration** to highlight an area in which the school does well to support student learning and achievement. One indicator is identified as the **Area of Focus** to highlight an area the school should work on to support student learning and achievement. The remaining indicators are identified as **Additional Finding**. This report presents written findings, impact, and site-specific supporting evidence for six indicators.

## Information about the School

John Bowne High School serves students in grade 9 through grade 12. You will find information about this school, including enrollment, attendance, student demographics, and data regarding academic performance, at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/report/default.htm>.

## School Quality Ratings

Instructional Core		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	Area	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	<b>Additional Finding</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 Framework for Teaching, aligned to the curricula, engaging, and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products	<b>Area of Focus</b>	<b>Proficient</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 Finding</b>	<b>Proficient</b>

## School Quality Ratings continued

<b>School Culture</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Rating</b>
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults	<b>Additional Finding</b>	<b>Proficient</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>Area of Celebration</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
<b>Systems for Improvement</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Rating</b>
1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet student learning needs, as evidenced by meaningful student work products	<b>Additional Finding</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
3.1 Establish a coherent vision of school improvement that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are tracked for progress and are understood and supported by the entire school community	<b>Additional Finding</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
4.1 Observe teachers using the Danielson Framework for Teaching along with the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection	<b>Additional Finding</b>	<b>Well Developed</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>Additional Finding</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
5.1 Evaluate the quality of school- level decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school, with particular attention to the CCLS	<b>Additional Finding</b>	<b>Proficient</b>

## Area of Celebration

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>3.4 High Expectations</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
---------------------------	------------------------------	----------------	-----------------------

### Findings

A culture for learning shared by faculty, staff, families, and students has been established that communicates and embeds high expectations founded on professionalism, instruction, and communication, as stated in the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. The school offers ongoing and detailed supports that prepare students and their families for a path of career and college readiness.

### Impact

All members of the school community clearly articulate that the school's expectations are high and consistently result in a culture of accountability among teachers, students and families. There is a belief among all constituencies that students will achieve high levels of success in careers and/or colleges.

### Supporting Evidence

- Teachers are guided and supervised by school leaders who provide extensive professional development opportunities to enhance pedagogical practices. Teachers receive actionable feedback on their use of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* on observation reports. Observations also reflect whether students are having more responsibilities for their own learning. Students describe their high-level goals during lessons, learning how to share thinking and engage in inquiry with their peers. Teachers establish a culture for learning that communicates a unified set of high expectations for all students, providing clear, focused, and effective academic feedback and guidance advisement supports. Rubrics are attached to all student work and contain actionable feedback. Students are aware of what they need to improve. At the student meeting each student spoke about the college trajectory grade tracking sheet and what was needed to enter a career or college. Two students participated in a summer bridge program in STEM fields and one senior student spoke about all the work he did on his college essay with assistance from teachers and counselors.
- The school provides relevant and engaging curricula within five separate programs: Focus on Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM), agriculture, law, academy of creative arts, and Junior ROTC. These divide the large student body into smaller nurturing environments. The school has a .8 teaching position for peer mediation, and students have been trained to become peer mediators as a preventative approach to reduce physical altercations. In addition, a morning recreation program from 7:00-7:40 in the gymnasium is well attended. The impact of this program has been a decrease in lateness and suspensions. Attendance for first period at 7:45 has increased, and overall attendance rates have had steady growth from 82.5 percent to 87 percent.
- Parents and family members interviewed were enthusiastic about the school, noting the consistent communication, the guidance office, and the administration, which includes a principal and eleven assistant principals. Expectations are communicated to all families through targeted family meetings and workshops. Families of students with disabilities and ENL parents have dedicated orientations and the opportunity to engage in academic instruction with their children on Saturdays. As a result, there has been an increase in parental involvement and student accountability, as recorded on Skedula/Pupil Path. College applications have risen because of college readiness initiatives with support from counselors who follow students through all four years in the school and from the college counselors.

## Area of Focus

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>1.2 Pedagogy</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
---------------------------	---------------------	----------------	-------------------

### Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices reflect a coherent set of beliefs, informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, that effective instruction yields high quality student work. Teaching strategies provide multiple entry points and high quality supports and extensions into the curricula for all students.

### Impact

The challenging tasks and supports that are provided to all learners, including students with disabilities and English language Learners (ELLs), enable students to demonstrate higher order thinking in their work.

### Supporting Evidence

- Based on interim assessment data, students in all grades demonstrate competency in literacy by completing tasks focusing on both fiction and non-fiction reading, writing, speaking, and listening assignments in units of study aligned with the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). School leaders and faculty review student work products to inform instruction and develop supports and extension for all learners, including ELLs and students with disabilities. There is use of scaffolding to meet the learning needs of all students, including subgroups. In an English Language Arts class of mixed grades with ELLs, the students were writing using sentence starters and checklists. There was consistent use of multiple entry points, with sharing out between pairs and among the whole group. There was a streamlined process of differentiation, with students working at different levels, seeking information and expressing opinions, so that academic tasks challenged all learners. There were extensions to push thinking and broaden students' learning experiences, and questioning and routines were in place in all classes visited. Teachers asked higher-level questions and addressed the content understanding involved, along with attention to specific language function for ELLS and students with disabilities.
- Across most classes visited, students were engaged in text-based discussions or solving multi-step math problems. Students were sharing explanations using reasoning and evidence. In many classes, there were differentiated supports and multiple entry points that actively engaged all learners as well as guided small group work with peer-to-peer discussions. Most lesson templates reflect moving students into the center of the learning experience by moving instruction from being predominately teacher-centered to now offering increased collaborative learning opportunities for students. In a grade eleven class on analyzing authors' use of claims on fantasy sports and gambling, students had assigned partners and discussed relevant evidence to support their claims. Accountability sheets for discussions and students monitoring one another to ensure that protocol is followed was used along with accountable talk rubrics and a rubric for self-assessment. In professional development sessions, increasing rigor in the classroom is emphasized through the use of Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and Webb's Depth of Knowledge questioning and training.
- In all classrooms visited, students participated in class discussions by responding to both teacher and student generated questions. Students not only answered questions but asked questions and extended their own thinking and that of their peers by providing examples from the text or from discussions to support their contributions. Teachers asked open-ended questions to push student thinking and facilitated peer-to-peer responses, giving students an opportunity to deepen their thinking by questioning each other during think/pair/shares as well as in whole class discussions. In a grade eleven ICT class the teacher discussed pathos vs. logos and generated questions on the topic "How do animal rights activists behave?"

## Additional Finding

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>1.1 Curriculum</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
---------------------------	-----------------------	----------------	-------------------

### Findings

School leaders and faculty engage in a rigorous process of curriculum development aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Planning and revising to ensure access to curricula and cognitive engagement exists for all students, including students with disabilities and ELLs.

### Impact

The school is continuously working to deepen its commitment to coherence of curricula across grades and content areas within differing school programs. There are rigorous academic tasks embedded into units of study, and students demonstrate higher order thinking skills.

### Supporting Evidence

- Purposeful lesson planning, incorporating the instructional shifts and key standards to build coherence, are embedded into all subject curricula, including physical education classes which devotes one day a week to writing about health issues and sports. A schoolwide study of *Making Thinking Visible* by Ron Ritchart is used as a protocol to address gaps in the instructional program and ensure inclusion of the instructional shifts. Close reading and annotation are used across content areas to build upon academic vocabulary. Writing across all disciplines is balanced with informational texts and literature, including non-fiction articles to enhance units of study. There is consistent review of student writing samples to assess for college and career readiness. *Pre-teaching Vocabulary in Seven Steps* is used to assist all struggling learners. The grade 11 teacher team meeting looked at students' argumentative writing assignments. It was determined that student voice was missing in most work, and next steps incorporated planning for this to be included in units of study. Math teachers using modifications to the NYC curriculum from the Los Angeles Unified School District have focused on understanding concepts rather than how to get an answer.
- Content area documents highlight the strategic integration of the instructional shifts. Social studies and science documents evidenced a focus on text and writing from primary sources. One modification to the curriculum added analysis of political cartoons due to the rise of cartoons on the history Regents exams. Students are self-and peer assessing to better understand this particular skill which uses inferencing techniques. Teachers stated that everyone teaches reading and writing. There are higher order thinking prompts embedded in all curriculum units, and teachers stated that they reference their Depth of Knowledge questioning wheel and the Hess Cognitive Matrix when planning tasks. Grade and course level teacher teams analyze student work and data from teacher's conferencing notes to inform curricula decisions. In a grade 11 integrated co-teaching (ICT) class, students were reading an article on tigers. They were engaged and on task, and the work was differentiated so struggling learners were supported by peers and the teacher. Students were asked to focus on the textural evidence in the article and use annotation methods to determine facts. The article followed the curriculum unit focusing on ethos, logos, and pathos. The agriculture program follows an academic curriculum but also includes learning about diverse careers in agriculture. Students were seen taking care of livestock (taking the pulse of a horse), growing crops and gardens, experimenting with plants, aquaculture, and biotechnology, and learning about entrepreneurship.
- Lunchtime, early morning, and after school tutoring is available, and, in an effort to promote college and career readiness, students are learning how to use their time efficiently, supported by skills embedded into lesson planning. Through flexible grouping and individualized instruction, tasks are scaffolded so all students can create arguments using text-based evidence across all subject areas. Students were able to utilize academic vocabulary to explain thinking during group or partner discussions. The principal has stated that the quality of student writing has improved across all grades, as evidenced by a 17 percent improvement on midterm and semester final grades.

## Additional Finding

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>2.2 Assessment</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
---------------------------	-----------------------	----------------	-------------------

### Findings

Assessments, including common assessments and ongoing checks for understanding, are aligned to the school's curricula and used strategically to drive instruction, make adjustments, and push student to think critically.

### Impact

Teachers assess student learning effectively leading to targeted interventions, varied scaffolds, and shared instructional planning to meet all student learning needs.

### Supporting Evidence

- John Bowne is an exceedingly large school, and opportunities to standardize assessment practices have been maximized. There is a schoolwide grading policy, and common assessments are used across subject areas. The school has aligned all assessments to data from Regents exam results. There is a data team that looks at each test section separately. For example, across grades in English teachers created an item skills data sheet aligned to Regents multiple-choice questions. Analysis showed the three questions with the lowest scores and the percentage of students who answered incorrectly. In addition, teachers use data from the New York State standardized exams, pre-teaching assessments, and classroom assignments to group students and plan for instructional needs. Performance tasks contain rubrics aligned with the school's curricula and are embedded in teaching practice. Rubrics and feedback forms that highlight student strengths and areas of focus are seen across a majority of classrooms. Actionable feedback on student work emphasizes strengths and weaknesses and student next steps. Teachers stated that they make ongoing adjustments to embed appropriate assessment into lessons, using their conferencing notes, concept maps, pre-assessments, and exit slips to determine and meet the needs of all students.
- Assessment data and item skills analysis provide teachers with information needed to revise curriculum and instruction. The principal stated that revisions in pacing, the wording of assessment questions, and the focus of curriculum concepts have been the result of inquiry findings. In most classrooms students were self-assessing by using rubrics and, when asked, were familiar with the expectations of the project/task. Teachers monitor for understanding during the lesson and provide focused feedback. Students stated in their meeting that they knew what rubrics were and why they were important. Peer editing and feedback as well as self-reflection help students take ownership of their learning; these were all evident in classrooms. As a result of checking for understanding and actionable feedback, students are achieving at higher levels. Quick writes and multiple-choice questions are used as exit tickets to provide teachers with further information which they can use for subsequent lesson redirection.
- Embedded in each unit of study are multiple opportunities for informal assessments, such as exit slips, conferencing notes, and peer or self-assessments. Student conferences, family communication, and the individualized education program process are employed so that each student is known well and support structures are in place for advancing to the next level. Purposeful prompts, such as consistent use of academic vocabulary and coherence in understanding math concepts, are used to make teaching decisions, and teachers stated they often decide to reteach the prior assignment so that all students have a clear understanding of the content. The use of Webb's *Depth of Knowledge* techniques helps develop intellectual ability and skills needed for students to become critical thinkers who raise questions, assess relevant information, and communicate effectively.

## Additional Finding

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
---------------------------	--	----------------	-----------------------

### Findings

School leaders, teacher leaders, and instructional coaches support the development of all teachers, including those new to the profession, with effective feedback that includes next steps. This feedback accurately captures strengths and challenges using the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* to articulate clear expectations for teacher practice and set goals for managing professional development.

### Impact

Accountable talk at teacher team meetings, with self and peer reflection, includes a focus on instructional intervisitation to support teacher development and practice. There is improvement in the quality of student work products.

### Supporting Evidence

- The teacher observation system fosters ongoing pedagogical conversations between administrators and teachers, teachers and their peers, and between members of the administration, all concerned with giving feedback and next steps. The schoolwide goal, as stated in the Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP), is to focus on individual student needs supported by targeted collaborative professional development for faculty. All observations are followed by face-to-face verbal post-conferences, providing feedback in a risk-free environment. School leaders share low inference notes with teachers, including those new to the profession, fostering teacher reflection on practice and plans for next steps.
- It was stated at a teacher team meeting that “during the teacher intervisitation, goals are to improve pedagogy within a culture of respect and continuous improvement using warm and cool feedback.” Recommendations by teacher leaders are aligned to instructional goals and the Danielson *Framework*. Administration uses an inquiry approach to monitor the impact of professional development on teacher performance and designs learning cycles along with teachers, aligned to student performance data. Coaching supports provide common lesson strategies and follow through on expectations for teachers. Teachers who are experts provide mini-workshop models in different subject areas emphasizing engagement and differentiation. All teachers who have English Language Learners in their classes are given professional learning opportunities conducted by the ENL Assistant Principal and have an ENL buddy teacher. Teachers at both question and answer meetings stated that they are encouraged to visit classes where their colleagues use effective differentiation and questioning techniques to help them make greater use of these techniques with their own students. Often the administration will make recommendations for teachers to visit to see best practices. At other times, visitation is established by teacher leaders of each program/subject area.
- Vertical alignment of skills and concepts has been created by teacher teams relating to the instructional focus. Positive impact has been shown through enhanced organizational practices, such as optimized staff time for grade level teachers to make adjustments to instruction. New teachers have mentors and are also part of a calendared visitation program to observe best practices. The principal has created a Critical Friend Groups of assistant principals that meet at least once a month to discuss lessons observed as a way of norming and assessing the quality of teacher pedagogy across disciplines. This observation data is used to help inform upcoming professional development across content areas.

## Additional Finding

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
---------------------------	---	----------------	-----------------------

### Findings

All teachers are engaged in inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations. Distributed leadership structures provide a means for teachers to have input on key decisions about curricula and instructional practice.

### Impact

Informed by the implementation of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, the work of teacher teams and distributed leadership have resulted in schoolwide instructional coherence, improved pedagogy, and improved student learning outcomes.

### Supporting Evidence

- The impact of teacher team work is evidenced in trends in observations showing that student work and performance is increasing. For instance, performance tasks as culminating projects have asked students to demonstrate more challenging skills and extensive content. These results have spiraled back into finals and or other benchmark assessments, which are again analyzed for impact. Teacher teams work independently without the assistance of school leaders, setting agendas and determining the strategies to unpack at their meetings. New teachers have mentors to assist them in all areas. Teams use data from the NYS assessments and meet to discuss problems of practice that result from data. Grade level content teams develop tasks, rubrics, and common assessments based on the Common Core Learning Standards. As a result, curricular modifications for the ENL classes included adding content specific vocabulary and using scales to teach adverbs of frequency. The impact of this work revealed 59 percent of ELLs were able to determine when numbers were unreal on the algebra final, which was a 30 percent increase. Teachers revise plans and address multiple entry points, including supports for all students. Teacher leaders facilitate professional development sessions, and teacher teams create their own schedules that include meetings, instructional rounds for observing one another, and opportunities for warm and cool feedback to each other after visitations and at meetings.
- Teachers were engaged in conversations that were data-driven in the observed teacher team meeting. Tools used in the meeting included a meeting protocol, a template for tracking and analyzing data, and protocols for looking at student work. The teachers discussed engagement and multiple entry points and planned next steps to support students needing more scaffolding. At the two question and answer meetings with teachers, focusing on learning from their intervisitations, teachers stated that increased student outcomes are evidenced by the percentage of students preparing to graduate on time this coming June. Teachers stated that the impact of teacher team work has been greater use of scaffolding for all learners, resulting in enhanced student engagement. Teachers record meeting notes and are provided with weekly opportunities for vertical team collaboration to discuss outcomes. Shared leadership focuses on the goal of improved student outcomes, as seen in meeting agendas, and has resulted in schoolwide instructional coherence.
- Teachers report that decision-making is shared and that distributive leadership structures have formed organically as a result of high expectations for students and the culture of professionalism. Teams work both horizontally and vertically, looking at student work protocols to develop and strengthen teacher mastery. Leadership structures are evident in lead teacher and model teacher positions. Teachers are given the opportunity to observe the practice of a peer, usually a model teacher, through intervisitation and then to collaboratively reflect on best practices.