

# Quality Review Report

## 2018-2019

**Lower East Side Preparatory High School**

**High school 01M515**

**145 Stanton Street  
Manhattan  
NY 10002**

**Principal: Rene Anaya**

**Dates of Review:  
January 10, 2019 - January 11, 2019**

**Lead Reviewer: Edward Hazen**

## 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

Lower East Side Preparatory 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	Area of Focus	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 Finding	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 Finding	Proficient

## 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>Well Developed</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>Well Developed</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>Proficient</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>
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### Findings

The school leaders and faculty consistently communicate high expectations to students and their families. A culture for learning that promotes student success and adoption of college requisite skills has been established and communicated across the school community.

### Impact

Systems of accountability for students and partnerships with families ensure that all students, including ELLs and students with disabilities and their families are aware of their progress toward meeting personal and academic goals that lead to a path to graduation and college and career readiness.

### Supporting Evidence

- School leaders have structures in place to communicate high expectations to students and their families that lead to college and career readiness for their children. Parents reported that the communication between school and home is excellent and that they consistently receive reports detailing their child's academic and language acquisition progress. Parents further reported that student progress updates from the school can be accessed through a variety of means, including an online grade reporting portal and face-to-face meetings with teachers, counselors and college advisors. Parents noted that the school has an online grade reporting system that allows students to monitor their own progress in their classes and their credit accumulation toward graduation. Students reported that in addition to using the online system, they frequently visit with their counselor or advisor to ensure that they are on a pathway to graduation.
- Students are assigned a guidance counselor and college advisor that they meet one-on-one with to set goals and expectations and to determine a pathway and timeline toward achieving them, with a focus on adopting college and career readiness skills. Advisors then partner with families to jointly support students in meeting their expectations by ensuring that English Language Learners (ELLs) are acquiring English, passing their classes, and attending school daily. Parents and students stated that their partnership with school staff has resulted in them being prepared for college and career through post-secondary planning and placement in paid learning to work internships, which limits the need to find part time employment outside of school.
- Teacher teams and staff establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations for all students and provide feedback and advisement so that students own their educational experience and are prepared for the next level. When students enroll in the school, guidance staff meets with them and their parent to establish a projected graduation date and plan backwards to systematically meet their goal. Additionally, students receive ongoing advisement through regular progress monitoring with college advisors. Because of these supports, parents reported that it has resulted in their children taking ownership of their learning and trajectory toward graduating. Likewise, students report setting personal and academic goals with school staff such as improving their SAT scores to increase their chance of being accepted into a post-secondary program of their choice. This is evidenced by an 8 percent increase in the Post-Secondary Enrollment rate for the school from 37 percent in 2017 to 45 percent in 2018.

## Area of Focus

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

The school leader and faculty ensure alignment to the Common Core Learning Standards through the implementation of the instructional shifts across grades and subjects. Rigorous academic tasks are planned to engage students in challenging tasks, leading to improved work products.

### Impact

The curricula and academic tasks build coherence across disciplines and support college and career readiness for all students. However, the vast majority of teachers have yet to strategically plan to engage, higher-level cognitive tasks for all students, including the highest-achieving students.

### Supporting Evidence

- A review of curricula across grades and subjects indicates evidence of teacher teamwork to integrate the Common Core and instructional shifts in English Language Arts (ELA), math, social studies, and science. Across disciplines and grade levels, students are required to develop arguments and counterclaims and cite sufficient supporting textual evidence to justify their position on an issue when making a claim or defending an argument. Teachers collaborate to design common units of study and plan lessons during professional learning community sessions. To this end, teachers use a common lesson plan template based on the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) model to include language objectives in lessons to ensure that ELLs receive opportunities to engage in content-area literacy. Likewise, teachers plan themed interdisciplinary units of study incorporating social studies and current events and social issues, allowing students to engage in text-based discussions and write from sources to make arguments while promoting the adoption of academic vocabulary. To foster higher levels of classroom discussion, teachers have identified prompts that encourage accountable talk and the use of academic vocabulary to make students' thinking visible, as evidenced by a review of lesson plans.
- Staff members meet weekly during "Designs for Learning" time to work in professional collaborative teams to review and revise curriculum maps, unit plans, and lesson plans to ensure accessibility for all students. Teachers analyze student work samples and assessment data, including end-of-unit tests and exit tickets to refine lesson plans and curricula to include supports such as scaffolds and differentiated tasks. The peer collaborative teacher meets with teachers and teacher teams to examine the impact of the grade-level teamwork, such as the inclusion of entry points into lessons for ELLs and students with disabilities and the use of the SIOP model when planning lessons. An English Language Arts/ELL vertical grade team was observed using the Atlas protocol to analyze work samples from struggling students to determine the supports that could be planned across subjects, such as having the student highlight key words in a passage and chunking parts of texts to assist with reading comprehension.
- A review of meeting minutes and agendas indicates that departmental team meetings focus on creating student-centered lessons that provide whole-class supports, allowing multiple access points into the lesson through differentiation of tasks for students. Teachers use data to create intervention plans for students who struggle and monitor students' progress toward meeting benchmarks to determine the effectiveness of the interventions, which often result in shifts in pedagogy and awareness of student misconceptions. Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) and English as a New Language (ENL) teacher teams meet to plan lessons based on the needs of students to ensure multiple entry points, scaffolding, and differentiation using the SIOP model. However, a review of lesson plans indicated that SIOP is not yet consistently used by all teachers to purposefully differentiate their instruction so that all students, including ELLs, are challenged at high levels.

## Additional Finding

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

Teaching strategies provide varied entry points into lessons through the use of scaffolds and supports, thereby allowing students to participate in academic tasks and discussion.

### Impact

Common teaching practices align to the schoolwide belief about how students learn best, resulting in multiple entry points into lessons for a variety of learners. As a result, most students, including ELLs and students with disabilities, must demonstrate their thinking through high levels of discourse across grades and departments.

### Supporting Evidence

- In most classrooms, teaching practices align to the school's articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best. Among these beliefs are that all lessons must be student-centered and include higher order thinking questions to generate high levels of student discourse and debate. Additionally, school leaders and faculty believe that students must be provided with scaffolds and supports so that they can actively engage in inquiry and discussion with their peers. Across the classes visited, academic tasks and supports such as graphic organizers, sentence frames and bilingual resources afforded students the opportunity to engage in collaborative group discussions, including students with disabilities, ELLs, and struggling students. For example, in a geometry class, the teacher provided students with English-Chinese student materials and students had the option of responding to teacher prompts in either language.
- To align pedagogy to the schoolwide instructional foci and promote coherence across grades and content areas, teachers have adopted common instructional strategies and discussion protocols that school leaders and faculty believe will best support students' success in class. A common belief that students must be provided with ample opportunities to write productively in all content areas has resulted in the adoption of the use of do now and on demand writing activities as a means to provide additional writing opportunities for students and assess students' level of understanding of the learning objective of the lesson. This practice was observed in most classes visited. For example, in an ENL English class, students were observed applying annotation strategies to identify text evidence that would result in a strong argument for their persuasive essay.
- Across classes, academic tasks and supports such as leveled grouping and materials, multilingual resources, graphic organizers, sentence stems, and conversation starters afford students the opportunity to engage in challenging discourse, including students with disabilities, ELLs, and struggling students. In an ENL English class, students were assigned to tiered groups based on their language progression and provided with English, Chinese and Spanish materials. Students were provided with a packet of materials that included note catchers and guided questions to ask higher order questions and make effective claims and counterclaims to write an argument on the most cost-effective form of transportation. Consequently, groups of students were heard making mid and high inference statements when debating different modes of transportation such as, a shuttle will carry more people, but will be more expensive the farther you have to travel.

## Additional Finding

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

Feedback to students based on curricula-aligned assessments results in actionable next steps for improvement. Across classes, teacher monitoring of student understanding during lessons results in instructional changes.

### Impact

Meaningful feedback on student work products is not evident across the vast majority of classes, which limits opportunities for students to improve the quality of their work products in some subjects. Across grades and disciplines, teachers' use of ongoing checks for understanding results in adjustments to instruction so that students can demonstrate their learning.

### Supporting Evidence

- Across grades and departments, teachers use common assessments and rubrics aligned to grade level curricula, the Common Core Learning Standards, and content standards. In Regents-bearing classes, teachers align rubrics to those from Regents assessments to build consistency across disciplines when assessing student writing. For example, the ELA and social studies departments use rubrics to assess students' ability to annotate texts and explain their rationales for using artifacts or textual evidence to support their arguments when writing persuasive essays. Students stated that the use of exemplars in conjunction with teacher and peer feedback has helped improve their writing in ELA and social studies, and, consequently, they feel more prepared for the constructed responses on the Regents exams. In addition, students shared examples of how teacher feedback about citing sufficient textual evidence to develop a counterclaim has resulted in their becoming more mindful of identifying strong evidence when writing argumentative essays.
- A review of student work revealed that the quality of actionable feedback that students received from teachers and peers varied across grades and classes. Students reported that the level of meaningful feedback is dependent upon the class. Most students could articulate why they scored at a specific level on the ELA or social studies rubrics and could explain how the feedback from teachers led them to improve their writing. Some students noted that rubrics in some classes do not align to Regents rubrics because they are skills-based rather than Standards-based. However, other students were not sure if the rubrics they used in other classes aligned to the Regents exam or could not identify specific next steps that would lead to reaching mastery levels in their Regents bearing classes.
- Teachers regularly administer common assessments such as baseline and end-of-unit assessments, on-demand writing assessments or exit tickets as a formative assessment to determine adjustments to instruction. All students take the January Regents assessments and subsequent item analysis data are shared with students so they can improve their scores on the June exam. The results are used as predictors of success on the June administration and to measure student progress toward individual goals and determine instructional groups. Schoolwide, a variety of assessment results are used to provide feedback to students and families, plan next steps for improvement, and make ongoing adjustments to curricula and lesson plans, such as the inclusion of scaffolds for students with disabilities and ELLs. For example, teachers identified bilingual resources, leveled materials, sentence frames, graphic organizers and accountable talk stems as scaffolded supports.

## Additional Finding

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

School leaders support the professional growth of teachers using cycles of observations. Feedback addresses strengths and challenges while including next steps for improvement.

### Impact

School leaders have an effective system to observe teachers and support their practice through follow-up professional learning opportunities, resulting in the adoption of common instructional practices that promote professional growth and reflection.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school leadership team has an effective observation cycle in place to support the professional development of teachers and provide actionable feedback on instructional practices. At the conclusion of each semester, teachers and school leaders examine Measure Of Teacher Practice (MOTP) scores to inform next steps for designing professional learning sessions for faculty. Additionally, the school participates in inter-visitations, in which the teachers visit colleagues' classrooms to share best instructional practices through informal peer-to-peer collaborations, classroom observations, and collegial feedback. Teachers report that participation in visiting classes, along with meaningful feedback on formal observations by school leaders, has resulted in strengthened pedagogical practices in domain three of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. This is reflected in Advance data ratings from the end of the 2017-2018 school year in which the school scored higher than the citywide average in all three subcomponents of this domain which focuses solely on classroom instruction; an indication that the school leaders' observation cycle is positively impacting instructional practice.
- The school's instructional goals are clearly articulated and are shared with staff at the beginning of the school year. These include providing rigorous instruction with multiple entry points and appropriate scaffolds to ensure that all students, including ELLs and students with disabilities, demonstrate increased mastery on the Regents exams. Additionally, teacher teams have identified schoolwide best practices as well as areas of need for growth which are communicated regularly to school leaders to support the planning of professional learning cycles for staff. Areas of need include differentiating instruction and the use of questioning techniques and scaffolds to provide multiple entry points into the lessons. Trends and patterns in instruction are also shared with teachers during Designs for Learning sessions. In addition, teachers have the opportunity to meet with school leaders to discuss their progress toward meeting their individual professional goals, including what additional supports each teacher might need. A review of teacher observation feedback indicates comments to teachers that clearly articulate next steps for improvement and identify supports to improve their practice. For example, the next step from an observation of a math lesson was for the teacher to include scaffolds such as manipulatives and a graphic organizer to support student mastery of the learning objective.
- School leaders have established professional learning cycles which serve to support teachers in meeting the articulated instructional foci of the school. Within each cycle, teachers, in conjunction with school leaders, identify specific learning objectives that will strengthen their ability to engage students in the close analysis of text, promote high levels of student discourse, and have students write purposefully across grades and disciplines. School leaders actively engage teachers in team work to analyze trends in instruction, student achievement data, and student work products to inform changes to pedagogy and curricula that are required in order to achieve the schoolwide goals. For instance, lessons are expected to use the SIOP model to promote student engagement in rigorous tasks for all learners.

## Additional Finding

<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 structured inquiry-based collaborations that align to the school goals and promote implementation of the instructional shifts across disciplines.

### Impact

Across grades and departments, teacher teams' use of a structured protocol to analyze data and student work products has resulted in improvements in the implementation of the Common Core and instructional shifts as well as strengthened teacher instructional capacity and improved student achievement.

### Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams use a structured protocol to review student work and analyze assessment data to make revisions to curricula that align to the schoolwide goal of creating student-centered lessons with a focus on language acquisition. Teachers collaborate to create rigorous lessons that have students engage in purposeful academic tasks and authentic discourse, emphasizing high levels of thinking to promote college and career readiness. The departmental teams engage in inquiry work to identify problems of practice and examine the impact of specific instructional strategies on improving student achievement. After changes are made to curriculum documents and lesson plans and strategies are implemented in classroom practice, the teams reconvene to assess which strategies had an impact on student learning. Teaching practices and interventions that are identified as effective in addressing a gap in achievement are then emulated across grades and disciplines. For instance, the common instructional practice of utilizing the SIOP model lesson embodies the school's vision of ensuring that the Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts are being implemented across grades and departments while allowing ELLs access to literacy in the content areas. As a result, students are better able to cite textual details to support a claim or argument and make counterclaims.
- Teachers reported that as a result of participating in Designs for Learning there has been a positive impact on their professional practice and student learning as they have time to share and discuss specific pedagogical strategies and practices that can improve student engagement. Teachers reported analyzing formal as well as informal assessments, such as exit tickets and benchmark assessments, to determine how high levels of classroom discussion informed students' stances on a topic of debate, impacting their ability to back their claims with sufficient supporting textual evidence. Teachers further noted that as teacher teams added supports for students to use academic vocabulary and accountable talk, students became more adept at participating in class discussion and debate, thereby strengthening their progress toward the schoolwide vision of increasing students' academic discourse in all classes.
- Teacher teams meet regularly to analyze assessment data from a variety of sources, including exit tickets, class participation notes, and formal and mock New York State Regents exams. School leaders and teachers also administer benchmark assessments in each content area four times per year to provide teachers and teacher teams with baseline data to inform changes to curricula and instruction and to plan supports for students they are focused on to close the achievement gap. Likewise, the data is used to create instructional groups and provide targeted interventions for struggling students. These practices have resulted in an increase in the percentage of students that are identified as college and career ready as measured by the College Readiness Index (CRI); the percentage of students identified as college ready rose from 17 percent in 2016 to 26 percent in 2018, which is 9 percent higher than comparable schools.