



**Department of
Education**

Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Roy H. Mann

Middle School K078

**1420 East 68th Street
Brooklyn
NY 11234**

Principal: Anthony Cusumano

**Date of review: February 9, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Julia Bove**

The School Context

Roy H. Mann is a middle school with 778 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 74% Black, 9% Hispanic, 13% White, and 4% Asian students. The student body includes 6% English language learners and 18% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 94%.

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 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	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	Additional Findings	Proficient

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

School leaders and teachers ensure that curricula across subjects and grades are fully aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and fully integrate the instructional shifts. Rigorous academic tasks promote rigorous habits and higher order thinking skills that are embedded in a coherent manner for all learners.

Impact

Curricula are coherent across subjects and grades and promote college and career readiness. The cognitively engaging tasks within the curricula allow students to exercise their higher order thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- Through teacher collaboration and curriculum committees, unit plans and lesson plans are strategically planned to meet student needs and the school's instructional goals to improve student achievement. This results in teacher-created performance tasks across grades and content areas incorporating the school's instructional focus of using text-based evidence to support claims and counter-claims. Furthermore, English language arts reflect a blend of Expeditionary Learning and performance tasks in writing. In math, the units are a result of blending CMP3 with exemplars from EngageNY.
- Tasks that promote critical thinking to support the growth of rigorous habits and higher order thinking skills are incorporated into each lesson across all grades and subject areas. For example, a grade six lesson plan required students to compare the development of character traits across two texts and make connections to historical characters studied. Also, lesson plans include well planned questions that ensure that students are cognitively engaged with a text or problem to solve.
- Across all content areas, staff has created Common Core aligned, year-long curriculum maps, pacing calendars, and performance-based assessments, which are accessible to all staff via Google docs and the school website. These documents are consistently reviewed and revised by teachers and school leaders, promoting school-wide coherence and alignment across all grades and subjects.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

Across classrooms, while teaching practices reflect the use of instructional strategies such as strategic student grouping, planned levels of questioning and extensions that foster higher order thinking, student work and discussions varied across the school.

Impact

Across classrooms, there some missed opportunities for all learners to display critical thinking and rigorous participation in discussion and work products.

Supporting Evidence

- During a math lesson in grade 7, students were working in groups to solve financial literacy word problems that required them to make real world applications. The extension to learning within the lesson did not allow students to make the connection between concepts being taught and real world. This was evident in classroom observations of students working.
- Across classrooms, students are provided with discussion prompts to help facilitate group discussion; however, the practice is not yet embedded. For example, in a grade 7 science class, the discussion about electricity and how it impacts construction was teacher-centered, not allowing for student participation and ownership of the discussion.
- Teachers consistently provide multiple entry points for all learners, allowing for challenging tasks to stimulate higher order thinking skills. In one self-contained class of students with disabilities, the math teacher cognitively engaged students by distributing a variety of gym membership plans. Students were challenged to work in groups to determine the plan that would be the best price for the activities they desired. All students spoke about ratio and proportions when presenting their findings to the class.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Across classrooms, teachers in each grade and content area create and use common assessments, rubrics and tasks, and analyze the resulting data to target learning gaps. Teachers consistently use varied forms of ongoing checks for understanding along with peer and self-assessments.

Impact

Meaningful and actionable feedback on student and teacher work products allows teachers to make effective adjustments to meet all students' learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Students use peer assessments to provide feedback to their classmates. In a grade 6 English language arts class one student wrote, "You should strengthen your character so that he plays a stronger part in the climax," as feedback to a classmate. In another grade 7 class, a group of students used a rubric to score a classmate's math task. Teachers consistently used feedback templates to record individual students' performance on group academic understandings and share with students.
- Students shared work products that included rubrics and teacher feedback requiring them to add more text-based evidence in their writing. Students were able to add details and wrote more complex sentences while the teachers documented the ongoing student mastery.
- Teachers made effective adjustments to meet the students' learning needs. For example, in a grade 6 class, a teacher stopped the students as they were working on a project to clarify common misconceptions that students were displaying.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

The school has established a culture for learning that consistently and effectively communicates high expectations to staff, students and families and provides supports to achieve those expectations.

Impact

There is a culture of mutual accountability for the school's high expectations communicated to staff both verbally and in writing. The school successfully partners with families to support student progress.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders consistently communicate high expectations for all staff through weekly cabinet meetings, individual staff memos, targeted professional development, and coordinating both school-wide and individual instructional supports based on frequent cycles of observations and feedback. Furthermore, a culture of mutual accountability is evident in teacher-created professional development and lesson plans.
- The school conducts parent workshops that provide information and ample opportunity for all stakeholders to engage in meaningful discussion about college and career readiness. Topics include: "High School Classes Colleges Look For"; "Choosing the Right College"; and "Exploring Careers". A student stated that his math instruction will help him become an architect, supporting the fact that the workshops contribute to the expectations of college and career readiness.
- School leaders and staff successfully partner with families to support student progress through frequently distributed progress reports, a parent resource link on the school web site, and parent workshops. Parents also have reciprocal communication with the school via Skedula. Additionally, parents regularly communicate with teachers regarding individual student progress via text and e-mail.

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

The school engages in structured professional collaboration in teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning. Teacher teams consistently promote school goals, and analyze assessment data and student work for students they share.

Impact

Teacher team work strengthens the instructional capacity of teachers and improves progress toward goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- Bi-weekly common planning and inquiry meetings are scheduled across grades and subjects. During meetings, teachers discuss implementation and implications of Common Core Learning Standards, including next-steps for areas of improvement. For example, teacher teams discuss curriculum, student work, and assessment. They then submit a plan that diagnoses supports needed to improve student performance and progress toward student goals.
- During common planning, grade and subject teachers follow the I.S. 78 Formative Assessment Cycle to review grade and subject level assessment data to make revisions to curriculum. In addition, this work leads to a “Technique of the Week” to improve teacher practice. Techniques include “Check for Understanding”, “Circulate” and “No Opt Out.” Administrators review data on Advance to track improvement in teacher practice and determine progress and student learning outcomes.
- The school has a Professional Toolbox that is accessible to all staff via the school website. These Common Core Learning Standards resources are used during inquiry and common planning meetings to support the development of assessments, analyzing assessment data, and supporting the instructional capacity of teachers. Links within the toolbox include Engage NY Common Core Standards and Curriculum by grade, Danielson Framework for Teaching, Using Formative Assessment to Drive Instruction, Citywide Instructional Expectations, Professional Development Plan and Models for Co-Teaching.