



Charter School Annual Site Visit Report
Charter Schools Office
2010-2011

CONEY ISLAND PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOL
ANNUAL SITE VISIT REPORT

APRIL 2011

Part 1: Executive Summary

School Overview and History:

Coney Island Preparatory Charter School is a middle/high school serving approximately 180 students from grade 5 through grade 6 in the 2010-2011 school year.¹ The school opened in 2009 with grade 5. It has plans to grow to serve students grades 5 through 12.² It is currently housed in a private facility in District 21.³

The school population comprises 41.8% Black, 26% Hispanic, 18.1% White, and 13.6% Asian students. 76.3% of students are designated as Title I.⁴ The student body includes 7.9% English language learners and 24.1% special education students.

The school is in its second year and has not yet earned a Progress Report grade or state/federal accountability designation.⁵ The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 96.0%.⁶ The school reported 105 out of school suspensions and 8 in-school suspensions during the 2010-2011 school year.

Annual Review Process Overview:

The NYC DOE Charter Schools Office conducts an annual site visit of New York City Department of Education authorized charter schools in order to assess three primary questions: is the school an academic success; is the school a viable organization; and is the school in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The visits are conducted by representatives of the New York City Department of Education Charter Schools Office and last the duration of one school day. The annual site visit begins with a meeting with the principal and school leadership team. Subsequently, the reviewers visit classrooms and hold brief meetings with available administrators, teachers, and students. Areas of evaluation include, but are not limited to: academic goals and mission; curriculum and instruction; school culture and learning environment; assessment utilization; parent engagement; government structures and organizational design; community support; special populations; and safety and security.

The following experts participated in the review of this school:

- Sonia Park, Senior Director, NYC DOE CSO
- Bert Wyman, Analyst, NYC DOE CSO

¹ NYC DOE ATS system

² NYC DOE ATS system and charter agreement

³ NYC DOE Location Code Generating System database

⁴ Demographic Data drawn from NYC DOE ATS System; Title I percentage from 2008 NY State Report Cards

⁵ New York State Education Department - www.nysed.gov

Part 2: Findings

What the School does well:

- The school has established a strong school culture that promotes student progress and reinforces a positive learning environment for students.
 - During the observation, students behaved in a respectful manner. All students wore appropriate uniforms as per school policy. No significant behavioral problems were observed.
 - Overall, students were observed to be on-task and engaged in instruction.
 - Staff interviewed stated strong support of school's behavior management system's ability to foster an environment where students felt comfortable and focused in classrooms

- There is evidence of a consistent approach to instruction and planning throughout the school.
 - Teachers utilize a common language during instruction and standard behavioral visuals are referenced in all classrooms.
 - During pre-opening orientation, staff reported collaborating on setting common instructional goals and reviewing teacher-evaluation rubrics.
 - Teachers meet weekly in content teams to review curriculum and student progress.
 - On staff days following the administration of interim assessments, teachers collaboratively review data to inform decisions on classroom and small group instruction.
 - Teachers interviewed stated they submitted lesson plans weekly to school leadership and received "helpful and constructive" feedback.

- The school employs a rigorous assessment system to monitor student progress.
 - The school administers teacher-generated interim assessments quarterly. Data is utilized to inform classroom, sub-group and individual instruction. Teachers must complete reports for areas of poor student performance in which they identify problems and generate corrective action plans.
 - The school's Student Supports Coordinator has implemented quarterly writing assessments to monitor student progress on the A-Z leveled library system.
 - All students take the NWEA assessment every fall and spring.
 - The school is planning to utilize Achievement Network assessments next school year.

- The school is committed to providing appropriate services for all members of its student population.
 - The school has enrolled a higher percentage of students with IEPs (24.1%) than the district average (14.6%).⁷
 - The school provides small group tutoring for students seven times per week.
 - For high-achieving students, the school provides enrichment classes as well as challenging academic instruction. For instance, in one class, sixth grade students had begun seventh grade work.

⁷ NYC DOE ATS system; data pulled on June 30, 2011

Areas for growth:

- The school should continue to refine its data usage to better inform instructional decisions.
 - Teachers interviewed stated that the majority of data used to make adjustments to curricula and weekly lesson plans is derived from interim assessments given quarterly. The school is encouraged to consider assessments which capture weekly and daily student lesson comprehension in order to better gauge student understanding..
 - One teacher stated that student data collected from other staff members was often difficult to review. The school is encouraged to streamline student data access to improve collaboration between staff members and content teams.
 - Interviewed teachers indicated there was not a common method to analyze and integrate data into lesson planning. The school is encouraged to use its professional development to improve data usage among staff.

- The school should continue to develop communication pathways between School leadership and staff.
 - One teacher stated that staff members are not always notified of scheduled academic and community events.
 - Several teachers interviewed stated that the school leadership's goals for specific students were not clearly disseminated to staff. The school is encouraged to consider different strategies for communicating expectations and announcements to school staff.
 - One teacher stated writing standards were not effectively established from school leadership and thus varied from class to class. The school is encouraged to utilize its professional development to clarify expectations of students' written work.

- The school should continue to refine its outreach strategies for recruitment of ELL students and document its efforts for ongoing monitoring of effectiveness in reaching comparable percentages with CSD 21.
 - The school's student population currently includes 7.9% ELL students, which is lower than the district average of 16.9%.¹

Part 3: Framing Questions

FRAMING QUESTIONS:

Throughout the Renewal Process and the life of each school's charter, the NYCDOE Charter Schools Office uses the following framing questions to monitor Charter School success:

1. Has the School Been an Academic Success?
2. Has the School Been a Viable Organization?
3. Has the School Been in Compliance with All Applicable Laws and Regulations?

Annual Site Visit Rubric:

1. Has the School Been an Academic Success?
 - Academic Goals and Mission
 - School components and curriculum align together and holistically support the mission
 - School has high academic expectations and employs strategies for the full range of students served by the school, including those at risk and those with special needs
 - Curriculum and Instruction
 - The educational plan is flexible and is adjusted to meet the performance levels and learning needs of all enrolled students
 - School implements programming to address the needs of students with disabilities and ELLs
 - Teachers demonstrate the use of differentiated instructional techniques to support the varying ways by which students learn
 - School has implemented programming for students who need remediation or acceleration
 - School Culture
 - The culture is strong, intentional, supportive and sustainable and promotes student learning
 - The school motivates all students and respects the diversity of learners and cultures in the community
 - School offers programs, activities or support services beyond academics to address students' social and emotional needs
 - School calendar and day are set to provide extra supports to ensure that students are able to meet and exceed academic goals
 - Schedule for communication to parents/students is timely and allows for due process, includes strategies to prepare students for transitions and strategies for those students who are not on schedule, presents a clear and fair system that complies with students' due process rights
 - Structures that foster the development of authentic, sustained, caring, respectful relationships among all stakeholders within school
 - Behavioral expectations and social supports that reflect the school's mission and comply with all applicable laws and regulations
 - Assessment
 - Establishes a culture of continuous improvement and accountability for student learning
 - Develops assessments that shape and inform instruction on an ongoing basis and develop data that's used to gauge student, teacher and school progress through formative and summative assessment
 - Student learning measured with multiple forms of assessments/metrics
 - Develops educational goals and performance metrics that are SMART – Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Reflect the Mission and Time-Specific
 - Develops assessments that are appropriately aligned with curriculum, instruction, and adopted standards

- Provides evidence of how data will influence instruction, professional development and curricular adjustments
 - Parent Engagement
 - Parent engagement strategies that integrate and mobilize parents within the school community as conduits for student success
 - Capacity to communicate effectively with parents and families
 - Parent engagement strategies that integrate and mobilize parents within the school community as conduits for student success
2. Is the School a Viable Organization
- Governance Structures and Organizational Design
 - School has articulated appropriate roles, responsibilities, and decision-making structure for school community members (including Board of Trustees and school leadership)
 - An accountability structure that provides effective oversight of the educational program and fiscal components of the school is in place and utilized
 - Board regularly reviews a data dashboard of student achievement and fiscal management that forms the basis for Board discussions and decisions
 - Board has diverse skill set that lends itself to strong educational / operational oversight
 - Board has an articulated process for ongoing policy development, Board member development and self-evaluation
 - Organizational charts are aligned with mission; roles and responsibilities are clearly defined
 - Board has developed essential strategic partnerships with organizations that support the mission of the school
 - Community Support
 - School Leadership demonstrated responsiveness to the unique needs and interests of the community to be served
 - School has established a presence in the community and has buy in from community members
3. Is the School in Compliance with Applicable Laws and Regulations
- Special Populations
 - Well-defined plan and sufficient capacity to service the learning needs of Special Education students, English Language Learners
 - School adequately addresses the academic and non academic needs of students in need of remediation, students with disabilities, students with interrupted formal education, and gifted students
 - There is a coherent plan for meeting the non-academic needs of students with disabilities, students with interrupted formal education, and other populations
 - School employs a process to identify students at risk of not meeting expectations and creates intervention plans and follow up
 - School demonstrates a comprehensive recruitment, enrollment and retention approach that is sensitive to the diverse needs of students
 - School admission policy and lottery preferences serve to create a student body that reflects community demographics and give a preference to community school district residents
 - Safety and Security
 - School is well maintained
 - Transitions and student gatherings are orderly and well supervised
 - Expectations for student behavior are well known and are enforced fairly
 - School is current with all safety recruitments and drills.
 - AED machines are in operation and school staff is trained in CPR