

Fact Sheet: Proposed Closure of Academy of Business and Community Development (13K336)

Overview

In a concerted effort to ensure that all students have high-quality educational programs, the Department of Education (DOE) annually reviews the performance of all schools Citywide. Over the past several years, despite the best efforts of the community and the DOE to support Academy of Business and Community Development (“ABCD”), the school has struggled to meet basic requirements for student success.

On November 7, 2011, High School Superintendent Karen Watts held a School Leadership Team and parent meeting at the school to discuss what is working at ABCD, what needs to be improved, and how the community can work together to better serve students.

Based on an extensive review of qualitative and quantitative data and community feedback, the DOE has determined that ABCD does not have the capacity to quickly improve and is proposing that the school be closed.

Proposing to close a school is the most difficult decision we make. We are proposing to close ABCD because it is the right action for current and future students in this community. If the proposal to close ABCD is approved, the school would stop serving students at the end of this school year.

We hope you share our view that we can—and must—do better for students. The DOE will continue to work closely with ABCD staff and families to ensure that all students receive the support they need to succeed.

Performance Summary

Proficiency: % of Students on Grade Level		Progress Report Grade			Quality Review
English	Math	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2010-2011
19%	26%	B	D	D	“Developing”

- The majority of Academy of Business and Community Development middle school students remain below grade level in English and Math. Last year, only 19% of students were performing on grade level in English – putting the school in the bottom third of middle schools Citywide in terms of English proficiency. Only 26% of students were performing on grade level in Math – putting the school in the bottom 13% of middle schools Citywide in terms of Math proficiency.
- ABCD is not adequately helping middle school students to make progress. ABCD is in the bottom third of middle schools Citywide in terms of learning growth in English and the bottom 5% in terms of learning growth in Math. Learning growth measures annual student growth on State ELA and Math tests relative to similar students. If those results persist, ABCD middle school students will fall further behind their peers in other schools.
- The Progress Report measures the progress and performance of students in a school as well as the school environment, compared to other schools serving similar student populations. ABCD earned a D grade on its 2010-11 annual Middle School Progress Report, including D grades for Student Progress and Student Performance, and a F grade for School Environment. The middle school was at the bottom 8% of middle schools Citywide and in District 13.
- The Quality Review uses a four-tiered rubric (well-developed, proficient, developing, underdeveloped) to measure how well a school is organized to support student achievement. ABCD was rated “Developing” on its most recent

Quality Review 2010-2011.

- While ABCD has yet to receive an overall high school Progress Report grade or have a graduating class, student high school performance to date is low. For the 2010-2011 school year, ABCD ranked in the bottom 1% of all high schools citywide in terms of student performance on Regents exams in Math and in the bottom 5% of all high schools citywide in terms of student performance on the 10-11 Regents exams in Science. Currently, only one of the 16 students in the class of 2012 is on track for graduation.
- The school's middle school attendance rate is one of the lowest among middle schools Citywide. The 2010-11 attendance rate was 86% compared to the Citywide middle school average of 92.6%, putting ABCD in the bottom 2% of New York City middle schools in terms of attendance. ABCD's high school attendance rate is also among the lowest in the city. The 2010-2011 attendance rate was 77% compared to the Citywide high school average of 86%, placing ABCD in the bottom 6% of New York City high schools in terms of attendance.
- Demand for seats at ABCD is low. District 13 middle schools admit students through the Middle School Choice process. For the 2011 school year, only 29% of fifth grade applicants ranked ABCD in their top three choices; only 5% ranked it as their first choice.
- Enrollment in the incoming sixth grade classes at ABCD has steadily declined. In the 2005-2006 school year, ABCD served 70 sixth grade students. In 2010-2011 there were only 48 sixth grade students enrolled at the school—this represents a 39% decrease in the sixth grade enrollment over the years.
- While the 2010-2011 school year marks the first year that ABCD is operating at full scale, currently there are only 110 students enrolled in grades 9-12. The number of students enrolled decreases from grade to grade; while there are 43 students currently enrolled in ninth grade, there are only 16 students in the twelfth grade.

Overview of Past Strategic Improvement Efforts at Academy of Business and Community

Staff members have worked hard to improve Academy of Business and Community but even with support the school has not produced adequate outcomes for students. To help the school's efforts to improve performance, the DOE offered numerous supports including:

Leadership Support:

- Provided extensive leadership training and mentoring for the principal and assistant principals to help them set clear goals for the school while developing the school's Comprehensive Education Plan and Language Allocation Plan.
- Coached and trained leadership on implementing plans in support of citywide instructional initiatives.
- Supported leadership and staff in generating meaningful strategies for improving the quality of classroom visitations and instructional feedback as a way to raise teacher practice and improve student outcomes.

Instructional Support:

- Supported and trained teachers in classroom engagement strategies as a way to deepen instructional expectations, student interest, and classroom rigor.
- Supported the school in assessment design, curriculum mapping, and student feedback tools aimed at meeting the necessary standards and expected student outcomes.
- Offered training for staff on successful ways to assess student progress through rigorous tasks and ways to use the information to inform and improve teacher practice.

Operational Support:

- Advised school staff on budgeting, human resources, teacher recruitment, and building management.
- Supported school staff on developing strategies and practices for improving student attendance and creating strategies for targeting attendance concerns.

- Supported school staff in Special Education compliance issues, including timely writing of Individualized Education Plans, alternative assessments, and other supports and strategies for improving instruction and plans for students with disabilities.

Student Support:

- Trained the School Based Support Team in comprehensive guidance programs and evidence-based counseling strategies targeted at developing and improving the capacity for social and emotional supports at the school level.
- Facilitated comprehensive supports to review disciplinary and procedural protocols targeted at improving the school learning environment and impacting student outcomes.
- Worked with community based organizations in order to provide enrichment and recreational activities for students, including PSAL and the NYU Liberty Partnership Program.

What would the proposal mean for current students?

If this proposal is approved, ABCD would close at the end of this school and next year and all current ABCD students would attend other schools for next year.

Grades 6 – 8

- Current eighth grade students will have the opportunity to graduate at the end of this school year and should participate in the High School Admissions Process.
- Current sixth and seventh grade students will be offered a seat in another District 13 school for September 2012.

Grades 9 – 12

- Current twelfth grade students will have the opportunity to graduate at the end of this school year.
- Current tenth and eleventh grade students on track to graduate will be offered a seat in another District 13 high school for September 2012. If there are no available seats in District 13, schools in other districts could be considered based on seat availability.
- Current first-time ninth grade students will have an opportunity to apply to a different school for tenth grade through the second round of the High School Admissions Process. To learn about schools that have tenth grade seats available through the High Schools Admissions Process, review the Directory of the New York City Public High Schools 2011-12. If you need a copy of the directory, ask your guidance counselor, visit an enrollment office or access the online version at www.nyc.gov/schools/ChoicesEnrollment/High/Directory.
- Current repeating ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade students should meet with the guidance counselor to review progress to graduation and discuss options, including applying to a Transfer High School. For information about Transfer High Schools, please visit www.goingforme.org.

Plans for a New Middle School for the District 13 Community

As we work together to create better school options for the District 13 community, we will keep in mind what has worked at ABCD and do our best to incorporate those positive elements into the plans for a replacement school. For example:

- We will work with the community to retain partnerships with community organizations that are offering valuable services to the school; and
- We will consider what elements of the school structure are working and do our best to include those features in a replacement school.

Next Steps and What You Can Expect

In January, the DOE will invite the Academy of Business and Community Development community to participate in a joint public hearing co-hosted by the DOE, the District 13 Community Education Council, and ABCD's School Leadership Team. As soon as the hearing has been scheduled, we will notify you of the date and also share with you the formal proposal to phase out ABCD. During the joint public hearing, community members, including parents and students, will be able to share their thoughts on the phase-out proposal.

The proposal to phase out ABCD will be voted on by the Panel for Educational Policy, which is composed of members appointed by Mayor Bloomberg and the five Borough Presidents, during a public meeting scheduled for **February 9, 2012**. During this meeting, the public will have another opportunity to comment on the proposal. If the PEP approves the proposal, ABCD would not accept new sixth grade students next school year.

Sharing Your Concerns and Questions

The DOE is seeking your feedback on the proposal. We will record your comments and include them in our Analysis of Public Comment, which is presented to the PEP prior to the vote on the proposal. Please submit your comments at:

Phone: 212-374-0208

Online: <http://schools.nyc.gov/community/planning/changes/brooklyn/proposal?id=87>