



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Brooklyn Collegiate

Middle/ High School 493

**2021 Bergen Street
Brooklyn
NY 11233**

Principal: Amote Sias

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Reviewer: Chrissie Pittman

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Brooklyn Collegiate is located in the Ocean Hill Brownsville Community in Brooklyn. It shares a building complex with another school. The school opened in September 2004 starting with students in grades 6 and 9; it is now expanded to include students from grade 6 through to grade 11. There are 429 students enrolled in the school. The ethnic composition of the school is 83% Black students, 14% Hispanic and 3% Asian. The proportion of students receiving special education needs support is 8%. There are very few students who are English language learners (1%). Attendance levels (92.1%) are broadly in line with City and similar schools. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal has a clear vision for the school and is well respected by students and staff.
- The standards achieved by students show an improving trend of performance.
- Relationships between students and staff are positive, which is a result of the good support and help that students receive.
- Students enjoy school and respond well to the high expectations held of them.
- A strong collaborative ethos is being developed amongst the staff.
- The school has good partnerships with the community and other support agencies to enhance its instructional programs.
- The school uses resources well to develop extended day intervention services for students who are at risk of not earning credit or passing the Regents exams.
- The curriculum is supplemented by excellent enrichment activities which enhance the learning experiences of students.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop teacher competencies in analyzing and using data and use this in planning the curriculum.
- Ensure that differentiated instruction is consistently applied across classrooms and grade levels.
- Further develop strategic planning cover a longer period with timescales to evaluate how the goals will be achieved.
- Continue to develop strategies for improving the gathering of data to monitor student progress.
- Continue to build the capacity of the school through focused professional development to meet the learning needs of students.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school.

The principal has a clear vision for this new and developing school. She has worked energetically and purposefully to promote its goals and values. In that context, a supportive community has been created which emphasizes respect for the individual. The curriculum is uniquely structured to meet specific age-related needs. There is an improving consistency in the school's work to improve achievement, particularly in the areas of mathematics and English language and arts. Staff are working collaboratively to achieve the aim of developing coherence in teaching throughout the school. In the lessons where the work is geared to students' level of ability, and where there are a sufficient range of activities, students are fully involved in their lessons. The school is monitoring the progress of individual students proficiently and has a good overview of trends in performance through successive classes and grades.

Parents are appreciative of the commitment staff make to support the education of their children. Partnerships within the community are broadening the learning experience of students. The school has established a secure basis for its continuing development.

How well the school meets New York City's evaluation criteria

Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor student progress over time.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The school has access to a significant range of objective data which it is able to analyze on a student, classroom and grade basis. The efficiency of its data analysis and application to students' progress is reflected in significantly improved achievement of students at levels 3 and 4 in both English language and arts and mathematics. The level of progress is higher than similar schools and significantly greater than City schools. The outcomes of external assessments are periodically updated so that the school has an appropriate overview of the performance of specific classes and students.

Given the high proportion of African American students, ethnicity issues in relation to progress can be dealt with as a homogeneous group. In this context the achievement of black boys has been a specific focus for the school. The school is addressing this issue by creating single sex advisory groups to collect relevant data about attitudes and identify strategies for improvement. The number of students who are English language learners or who are special educational students is relatively small and in consequence the monitoring of their performance and progress is secure because of its individual need basis. Data is effectively collected through conferencing activities, tests and interviews with parents. A particular focus of the school has been to improve the literacy skills of grade 9 students who are performing at level 1 and 2 in English. The analysis of standardized test scores and a literacy assessment indicated weaknesses in writing and comprehension. The

school has appropriately created support classes for these low-achieving students based upon this data. A structured literacy program (Read 180) has proved to be successful in raising basic competencies. Teachers are able to effectively identify strengths and weaknesses through a systematic skills analysis in order to focus their interventions.

As a recently established school Brooklyn Collegiate does not have a significant amount of comparative data to draw upon but there has been a definite trend of improvement during the period of its existence. This was recognized by the school receiving an award for the rate of improvement which had been shown in students' achievement. The school appropriately reflects on its Regents data to focus upon areas for improvement and identify specific strengths such as in English and mathematics. In a similar vein the school is rigorous in its analysis of its performance in comparison with similar schools.

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use available data to understand each student's next learning step. Through collaborative planning and student and parent engagement, they set high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating each student's learning.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The school has effectively implemented a range of collaborative meetings to promote planning for short-term and long-term goals which are reflected in a detailed Comprehensive Education Plan. An aspect which is missing from this process is the setting of more precise timeframes for progressing the various stages of the planning cycle. Faculty and grade team meetings provide an appropriate context for broader discussions about the curriculum and how to meet the specific requirements of students within grade levels. A particular strategy the school has adopted is that of the balanced interactive learning model based upon a literacy core curriculum. For example, this includes providing supporting interim assessments, literacy pacing calendars and classroom libraries. These developments are having a clear impact on students' achievement as can be seen in the improved grade level performances in English. The data on students' progress is being systematically analyzed to identify possible trends and resulting interventions which might have wider application for the school. Based upon a review of portfolios, the unit tests, observations and items skills' analysis the school has identified issues for improvement which are relevant across the grades. These include being able to make inferences, drawing conclusions and using figurative language. The literacy skills of low-achieving students in grade 9, for example, are an area of focus for improvement which is being addressed through the range of intervention strategies.

The school's high expectations are effectively communicated through a variety of means. The school has extensive documentation which clearly articulates its aims and objectives. Regular parental and student conferencing are used well to promote an effective exchange of information. For example, the school has developed classroom rubrics to heighten student/parent awareness of classroom standards based work and the evaluative grading system. This work enables students and parents to identify with the school's goals and objectives. The impact of these strategies is promoting a cohesive community which is focused towards the needs of the students.

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instruction: The school aligns its instructional activity and resources, and student engagement around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.

This area of the school’s work is proficient.

The curriculum is appropriately aligned with mandated requirements. Students in grades 6-11 follow a rigorous interdisciplinary curriculum whose foundation is based on themes provided by the Springboard curriculum, particularly in mathematics and English. For example, the English curriculum covers a wide spectrum of literary genres which are aligned with the social studies curriculum in order to make learning more authentic and holistic. This approach has effectively enabled the school to collect and analyze more integrated data about student performance. The thematic context also enables close ties to be established across the curriculum the curriculum. The extracurricular programme is particularly strong.

The principal has established clear guidelines on teacher accountability. The responsibilities of staff in relation to improving teaching and student outcomes are clearly identified, particularly in relation to how data is used as a basis for improving instruction. However, assessment data is not consistently used to underpin the differentiation of activities to meet the range of abilities in some classrooms. Expertise which exists within the school is increasingly being shared to good effect through professional development activities. Grade team meetings also formally record discussions about multiple forms of assessment and the implications this has for instruction planning.

Budget decisions are appropriately driven by the needs of students. For example, all English language learners’ classrooms have been provided with leveled classroom libraries to motivate and interest students. The relatively low teacher student ratio means that students are afforded more individual attention which is being reflected in improved student achievement. Scheduling decisions also reflect student requirements. For example, high school students who have scored level 1 and 2 in mathematics have been allocated a double blocked period of time, with the same teacher, to provide extra continuity so as to improve performance.

Students are known well. This produces a ‘family’ community which elicits a strong identification with the school and its objectives. Students are actively involved in their lessons and enjoy their experiences at the school. For example, the technical elective in aeronautical engineering successfully interests and motivates the students following this course. Students value the support, care and concern which are shown to them by all members of staff and there is mutual respect between students and staff. Attendance is given a high priority and sound procedures are in place. The high attendance levels also reflect students’ commitment to the school.

Quality Statement 4 - Build and Align Capacity: The development of instructional leadership, staff, and capacity are aligned around the school’s collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.

This area of the school’s work is proficient.

The principal has clear criteria for selection of staff. Prospective new staff are required to take a model lesson, identify specific curriculum issues of interest and be confident in the use of data to inform instruction. Currently the school has a shortage of expertise in foreign language teaching. Staff work collaboratively and are open to professional development. The staff has been given appropriate guidance, through its professional

development programs, on how to collect evidence in relation to guided reading and how to assess writing tasks through the development of rubrics. The ability to use data to compare outcomes across classrooms and within grade levels is, however, variable. The collaboration between staff is seen in the effective planning which takes place in grade and whole faculty meetings. The support for each other is reflected in the sharing of ideas on the teaching of cross curricular themes such as in English and social studies. There is a comprehensive schedule for lesson observations and this is systematically followed by the principal. Where the observations have taken place the outcomes are very effectively shared with staff. This is an important element of her considered strategy for improving instruction. There are good opportunities provided for team teaching.

The principal is respected by staff, parents, and students. They recognize the commitment she has made to the successful initial development of the school. Management systems to sustain these improvements are well integrated and robust enough to promote efficient data collection. The school is well ordered and efficient administration enables the school to run smoothly.

The school works hard at developing its community relationships. A number of effective partnerships have been established including Sport and Arts Foundation which promotes activities to enrich the creative and healthy living experience of students. Good links have been established with Brooklyn library to gain access to a range of books and authors.

Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has built-in structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year, recognizing weaknesses in its improvement plans and teaching practices, and flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerated learning.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The school effectively evaluates its long-term and short term goals in relation to students' needs and progress. At a variety of levels the school uses data to evaluate and analyze its ability to achieve stated goals. These include regular Princeton review, regional practice tests, State examinations and Regents examinations. All of these data sources impact upon the progress report. The leadership team has a regular schedule of meetings to identify ongoing issues connected with student progress. For example, the outcomes of reviews of students' achievement and in particular the effectiveness of teachers become the focus of intervention strategies or support. The mid-year interviews with teachers are also used as opportunities to measure the effectiveness of the school's work. For example, The integration of team teaching has required some adjustment to the teaching strategies of staff. The regular reporting cycles provide effective evidence for decisions about interventions strategies. For example, an analysis identified that students needed practice in using correct mathematical language while answering questions.

The use of data as a diagnostic tool to evaluate the progress of specific groups is well-established, particularly for identifying the needs of English language learners. The school has shown its ability to be adaptable in its curriculum planning by the implementation of thematic approaches in social studies. Staff have a clear perception of the goals and core purposes which drive the school's work. This is shown in the support staff give each other, and their involvement with extended day activities and the extracurricular program. All of these professional activities indicate a strong commitment to the specific needs of all students. The school has a good capacity to continue to build upon its achievements.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Brooklyn Collegiate (MS/HS 493)	∅	✓	+
Quality Score		X	

Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor student progress over time.	∅	✓	+
1.1 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • each student, classroom, grade level, 		X	
1.2 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ethnic groups, English language learners, special education students* 		X	
1.3 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all other categories of interest to the school* 		X	
1.4 Performance and progress are measured based on comparisons with similar schools, with the school's own past performance, and among students, classrooms, grade levels, academic subject areas, ethnic groups, and other groupings of interest within the school.		X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 1		X	

* These criteria are partially aspirational as of now because schools do not have routine access to all of this data. The NYC DOE plans to provide schools with enhanced access to the necessary data in 2007.

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use available data to understand each student's next learning step. Through collaborative planning and student and parent engagement, they set high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating each student's learning.	∅	✓	+
2.1 Using data, school leaders and faculty engage in a collaborative process to set demanding, objectively measurable goals for immediate and long-range improvement, and to develop plans and timeframes for reaching those goals.		X	
2.2 Goals and plans focus on the school as a whole and on each student, classroom, grade level, academic subject, and group of students whose performance or progress has been identified by the school as a particular focus area.		X	
2.3 Particular attention is given to improving the performance and progress of students in greatest need of improvement.		X	
2.4 High expectations are conveyed to students and parents/caregivers. Students and their parents/caregivers are regularly invited to provide information about each student's performance and how to improve. This information is central to setting challenging goals and developing, evaluating, and revising plans.		X	
2.5 Goals and plans for improving student performance and progress drive the activity of all members of the school community: leaders, staff, students, parents, and other partners.		X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 2		X	

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instruction: The school aligns its instructional activity, resources, and student engagement around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.	∅	✓	+
3.1 The school selects the curriculum based on how well it aligns with or implements the mandated curriculum and on the curriculum's capacity to generate meaningful interim data about progress towards goals and to support the school's high expectations and improvement plans.		X	
3.2 Teachers are accountable for improving instruction and student outcomes. They plan and differentiate their instruction based on the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.		X	
3.3 Budgeting decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.		X	
3.4 Staffing decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.		X	
3.5 Scheduling decisions about the use of teacher and student time are guided by the needs that emerge from examining student data and by the focused plan the school develops to improve student outcomes.		X	
3.6 Instructional programs actively engage students.		X	
3.7 Staff know and respect students and respond to their academic needs, as well as their personal needs that affect academic performance. Each student knows and trusts an adult on the staff who is concerned about him or her.		X	
3.8 Student attendance and engagement are high priorities. High rates and patterns of absences trigger immediate intervention.		X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 3		X	
Quality Statement 4 – Build and Align Capacity: The development of instructional leadership, staff, and capacity are aligned around the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.	∅	✓	+
4.1 Leaders, faculty, and staff are selected based on their high expectations for student performance and progress and based on their commitment and capacity to use data, compare outcomes within and across classrooms and schools and develop and revise plans and methods to improve performance and progress.		X	
4.2 Professional development decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes. Professional development is designed to help leaders, faculty, and staff use data, self- and peer-assessments, and collaboration with peers to achieve goals for improved school and student outcomes. Professional development and self- and peer-evaluation are aligned and overlap.		X	
4.3 The principal frequently observes classroom teaching and has a considered strategy for improving the quality of each teacher's instruction. Teachers frequently observe and support each other's classroom instruction with the goal of improving student outcomes.			X
4.4 Planning, evaluation of results, and revision of plans takes place in teams. Leaders and faculty inform each other of their goals and results, candidly evaluate themselves and each other, and use what is learned to drive improvement.		X	
4.5 The principal is respected and has capacity to effect change.		X	
4.6 The school runs smoothly. Procedures are clear, communicated to all, and are generally followed.		X	
4.7 The school aligns youth development and support services around stated academic goals. Partnerships with outside bodies are routinely used to achieve academic goals.		X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 4		X	
Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has built-in structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year, recognizing weaknesses in its improvement plans and teaching practices, and flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.	∅	✓	+
5.1 All school plans and other interventions include frequent interim goals and diagnostic assessments of progress designed to reveal in objectively measurable ways whether the plan is being effectively implemented and reaching stated goals.		X	
5.2 Comparisons of student progress within and across classrooms and schools are used in making interim diagnostic assessments and measuring the progress of plans and interventions.		X	
5.3 Information generated by periodic assessments and diagnostic measures of progress and comparisons is used to revise plans immediately in order to reach stated goals. Interim and final goals are modified when data objectively demonstrate that revision is required.		X	
5.4 Each plan's interim and final outcomes drive successive phases of goal setting and improvement planning, and each successive phase is characterized by agile and flexible realignment of practices and resources to improve student academic outcomes.		X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 5		X	