



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

**Brooklyn Comprehensive Night High School
High School 585
6565 Flatlands Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11236**

Principal: Ms Catherine Paparelli

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Reviewer: Clive Parsons

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Brooklyn Comprehensive Night School is a cycle school that serves 18 through 21 year-olds. Students enrolled must be 18 or over and have at least ten credits. Classes operate from 4:00 pm to 9:15 pm, with pre- and post- session support and enrichment. There is a Sunday school and opportunity for independent study. The school has recently relocated. This has enabled the school to have its own dedicated space, but on a site that is more difficult for students to access. The school occupies the fourth floor of a building shared with a high school that operates during the day.

Many students have jobs during the day and are themselves parents. Some are homeless and some travel many miles across the city to attend. Most have a history of poor academic performance in a traditional high school setting. For many, this is related to patterns of poor or non-attendance. Most students, over 80%, are Black and nearly 10% are Hispanic. The school does not receive Title 1 funding, but is placed in the high need group for comparison with other schools. Over 300 students are enrolled at the school. The numbers of special education students and English language learners are very low. Attendance is 48.3% which is very low compared with similar schools and the City average.

Teachers are substantially more experienced than in other schools, with most having been at the school for well over two years. There is a history of low faculty turnover. There is much educational technology within the school which provides additional access to class work and supports communication with students.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school enables over 100 students to graduate each year and has a high success rate on the Regents examinations.
- Teachers work hard to determine what students already know and then try to build steadily upon their knowledge base.
- The school provides a safe learning environment that enables students to progress socially as well as academically.
- A range of enrichment activities encourages student attendance and provides additional opportunities for them to be successful.
- The school is careful to match programs to individual student needs, with enough flexibility to modify them when circumstances change.
- Effective partnerships, with community-based organizations for example, are removing external barriers to students' progress.
- Many students show a tremendous determination to succeed.
- The introduction of student portfolios and a more rigorous make-up policy are supporting greater achievement.
- Good use is made of educational technology to support learning in some settings.
- The principal and assistant principal know the school very well and have a clear vision for its continued improvement.

What the school needs to improve

- Provide more opportunities for student-to-student and group work, including self- and peer-assessment.
- Use technology more to support learning and increase communication.
- Develop further strategies to enable students to work independently and take even greater responsibility for their own learning.
- Broaden enrichment activities in the arts, as planned, by building on the success of the dance program and previous professional development.
- Disaggregate student data more effectively to identify patterns of attendance and design strategies to improve attendance.
- Develop strategies to limit the number of students who fall back into poor and non-attendance soon after enrollment.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school.

The school managed the move from its previous location well and is beginning to stamp an identity onto its new accommodation. The school enables more than 100 students to graduate each year and has a good track record in the Regents examinations. Multiple ways for credit accumulation are offered in order to meet the diverse needs of its students and to offer ways around some of the external difficulties that they face. Care is taken to ensure that this flexibility does not contribute to low attendance.

Attendance is low. Too many students revert quickly to previous patterns and become poor or non-attendees only a few weeks after enrollment. The school does not have a clear enough understanding of why this happens and is therefore unable to take the best action to limit it. Other students face considerable difficulty in their daily lives which harms their attendance. Child care issues are the prime difficulty for some students. Nevertheless, many students fully commit themselves to the school and travel long distances to attend.

The principal is a recent appointment, having previously been assistant principal. She is bringing greater direction and rigor to many aspects of the school's work through an effective professional partnership with the assistant principal. Students find the environment more conducive to learning with smaller classes, more personalized support and a flexible response from the staff.

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.

Students have individual programs based on their previous record and the need to complete their graduation requirements as quickly as possible. The school routinely collects academic data on students' progress through their classes via frequent evaluations. Student portfolios provide evidence of short-term progress and work completion. The principal is enforcing a more rigorous make-up policy for students who miss class. This improves students' learning and ensures that the quality and value of work in portfolios meets the required standard. Attendance is monitored nightly and reports evaluated weekly and then monthly.

Computerized records enable the data collected to be analyzed. Much of the school's work rightly focuses on individual students who have very diverse needs. The school recognizes that analyzing data by class, gender or ethnicity alone might miss other more complex patterns. Disaggregating the attendance and progress data more extensively will enable it to identify any such connections, should they exist and also support the school's plan to identify strategies and incentives to improve attendance.

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.

In addition to academic and attendance data, the school also gathers a great deal of knowledge about their students and the barriers to learning that affect them. Medium- and long-term goals, such as projected graduation dates, are established on the basis of individual needs. The school has high expectations for students’ academic and personal progress and high aspirations for their futures.

In class, teachers work hard to determine what students already know and then try to build steadily upon this knowledge base. The strategies used, however, do not consistently require all students to engage with the work at all times. Teachers have very little feedback from some students. Opportunities are not consistently taken to involve students in self- and peer-assessment and, consequently, immediate classroom-based goals do not feature strongly enough to support learning. The principal has identified the need to create uniform assessment rubrics to support this.

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 school is careful to match programs to individual students’ needs. These needs vary greatly. Some students require a few credits across a number of subjects and others need many credits in a small number of subjects. Programs fit around each student’s personal situation and take full advantage of alternative routes such as Sunday school and independent study. The school is using technology well to support students and to enable them to stay involved and in contact, especially when facing difficulties in other aspects of their lives. This enables students to have access to class work over the web and to email assignments into their teachers.

Much attention is paid to improving student attendance. For example, teachers call home the day after a missed class. A range of enrichment activities is offered to students to encourage their attendance. The school provides additional opportunities for them to be successful and to improve their self-esteem in the process. It plans to extend enrichment further, by building on previous professional development for staff and the success of its dance program to broaden activity around the arts.

There is a safe learning environment that enables students to progress socially as well as academically and good use is made of educational technology to support learning in the classroom. There remains a concern, however, that for many students the classroom experience is not sufficiently different to that experienced at their previous high schools. Classroom strategies are not varied enough, particularly to help limit the number of students who fall back into poor and non-attendance soon after enrollment. Key to this is greater student engagement along with differentiating instruction, support and challenge. Current strategies do not include enough student-to-student and small group work, self- and peer-assessment, or greater use of technology such as smartboards, and fail to

support the school's aims of encouraging students to take even greater responsibility for their own learning and to work more independently.

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 school runs smoothly. Procedures are clear and generally followed. The school is looking to strengthen various aspects of communication between teachers and the administration, as well as between attendance workers and faculty. Effective partnerships, with community-based organizations are removing external barriers to students' progress. Support services are very well focused on students' success.

The principal has raised expectations for staff, as well as for students. Together with her assistant principal, she knows the school well. This sharp awareness is driven by data evaluation and direct observation of classrooms. Reflection, review and self-evaluation are becoming stronger components for staff, although some do not apply rigor to the process or evaluate themselves and their peers critically enough. The principal and assistant principal also recognize what quality learning looks like in practice and have a secure vision for the school's continued improvement. They recognize the need to identify the most effective practice and to spread this more widely through in-house and differentiated professional development.

The school has identified a number of necessary and desirable improvements. Some are necessary to become proficient in a particular aspect of its work; others will move an aspect closer to being well developed. There is a thorough understanding of which will maximize student outcomes. There is good capacity to affect this change and to develop a professional learning community, for staff as well as for students.

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.

Plans for the school's improvement, as well as for each student, have interim stages for evaluating progress. Faculty and staff committees contribute to this process, although the principal has recognized the potential for a greater contribution through feedback from students. Frequent evaluations inform decisions about students' progress, although subsequent adjustments have been highlighted by the principal as an area to make even more effective. In addition, evaluation of learning is not yet driving instruction on a day-to-day basis.

The school monitors students' broader needs carefully and tries to be flexible enough to modify programs when circumstances change. It is striving for even more flexible ways of scheduling in the future. The school is very aware of the potential to further extend the use of technology, including the development of on-line classes.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Brooklyn Comprehensive Night High School (HS 585)	∅	✓	+
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	