



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

**Bronx Coalition Community School For
Technology**

High School 680

**1300 Boynton Avenue
Bronx
NY 10472**

Principal: Gloria McDuffie

Dates of review: October 24 - 25, 2006

Reviewer: Cheryl Baker

Content of the report

Part 1: The School Context

Information about the school

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

What the school needs to improve

Part 3: Main Findings

Overall evaluation

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

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Bronx Coalition Community School for Technology, High School 680, is a grade 9 through 12 school with a population of 524, an increase of approximately 50 students from the 2005-2006 enrollment. Enrollment since 2003 has increased by nearly 150 students. Data from the 2004-2005 annual school report indicates that the school is over capacity. Black students represent 32% of the population, Hispanics 54%, Whites and others make up approximately 4%. English language learners make up approximately 11% of the population and just over 10% are students under special education management. Males represent approximately 65% of the school population. The school receives Title I funding.

Students at Bronx have shown growth in English language arts and mathematics scores on Regents tests from 2003 to 2005. However students performed below those in similar schools and City schools. Similarly, the school's cohort graduation rate and Scholastic Aptitude Test scores rank below similar and City schools. Compared to similar and City schools, fewer students (just over 27 %) planned to continue studies after high school.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Hallways present a bright; attractive setting that welcomes visitors to the school.
- Parents are supported by an active parent coordinator who is devising instructional and enrichment programs for their benefit.
- The administration encourages the display of student academic and artistic work.
- The school successfully portrays its identity within the context of a shared campus.
- Administrators present friendly, supportive attitudes towards students.
- Teachers and support staff express willingness to work with the administration to improve the school.
- The school is straightforward in identifying its needs.

Areas for Improvement

- Elevate academic achievement, attendance and graduation to a level of urgency among students, staff, parents and support personnel.
- Set and communicate measurable short and long term goals for academic achievement, measure their attainment through the routine use of objective data, and adjust interventions and programs to produce success.
- Provide training in the analysis of all available data to gain a deeper understanding of the knowledge and performance of all students, classrooms, grade levels, academic subject areas, ethnic groups and require that administrators, teachers and other service providers habitually use the available data to make decisions.
- Collaborate with all stakeholders to formulate mechanisms for supporting teachers in learning new instructional techniques, including the use of instructional technology.
- Empower staff and students to join in goal setting and decision making that addresses the need to bring greater organization, structure and vision to the school and fosters actions that allow the school to honor its mission as a school of technology.
- Take the necessary measures to address student behavior that disrupts learning in the classroom and creates potentially unsafe conditions in the hallways and between the populations of the building's schools.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is an undeveloped school, with some areas of proficiency.

The school is led by a new principal who began in September of 2005. After a period of adjustment in administrative and disciplinary personnel, the principal is supported by an experienced assistant principal who began her work at the school in August of 2006.

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 undeveloped.

The school does not have practices in place with respect to gathering and using data to understand what each student knows and is able to do; nor does it regularly monitor every student's progress over time. School leaders are beginning to understand the need to use the available data to gain an overall understanding of the progress of the school and its students.

School leaders and teachers administer the required assessments to special categories of students but do not display a deep understanding of the potential of information beyond diagnosis and program placement. Test scores and other data are not routinely analyzed for differences among ethnic, racial, income, gender or other sub-groups. The school is just beginning to use Princeton Review results to help teachers to identify the learning levels of students in their classrooms.

The school does compare its performance on State and City tests with other schools in the building. Comparisons across classrooms, grade levels and academic subject areas are not routine. Specific actions resulting from the review of data are not apparent.

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 undeveloped.

The school as a whole is at the beginning stage of regularly using data to understand each student's next learning step and to set high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating learning. While the process of developing the comprehensive education plan through the collaboration of parents, teachers and school administrators offers the potential to set very public goals for learning, at Bronx Tech the plan is based on needs identified at the departmental level, rather than on available data regarding student

achievement, attendance, graduation rates and other categories of performance. Parent and student participation in the planning process remains a goal. The plan and the goals contained therein, do not appear to be a force in school improvement. For special populations such as English language learners (ELL) and students under special education management, individual plans and interventions are formulated by teams of specialists and monitored according to regulations. Instruction takes place in separate special education or English language learner classrooms.

For at-risk students, the school provides counseling through the guidance department. This is supplemented by outside agencies that staff full time advisory positions. Students not in special education and ELL settings are instructed in heterogeneous classrooms. Opportunity for Regents testing is available as are advanced placement courses, implying high expectations for students' achievement in those settings. Less obvious were achievement expectations for others. Parents are invited to learn about their student's progress at parent nights that occur at the end of the marking periods and at any time they may have a concern about their child.

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 undeveloped.

The school's curriculum and the materials that support it reflect an historical alignment with State standards and the competencies measured on the Regents examinations. Some texts are worn and outdated. Evidence of collaboration among teachers to update the curriculum is not apparent, beyond the mention of some content-based meetings that took place in the 2005-2006 school year.

The 2004-2005 annual school report describes the Bronx Coalition Community School for Technology as being 'dedicated to using technology to support and enhance academic achievement of all students' and claims that 'Our State-of-the-art technology program is one of the best in the City.' Students express disappointment that these statements do not accurately reflect the technology offerings at the school. Teachers do not routinely integrate technology into their instruction. The three technology labs, while current, do not always function to capacity and the promise of special academic programs in technology has not been met.

Teachers are encouraged to differentiate their instruction and introductory professional development on this topic took place in 2005-2006. However the use of these student-centered techniques has not resulted in consistency of practice in all classrooms meaning that instruction does not meet the specific needs of each student. With respect to accountability for student performance, the administration has not set specific expectations for student improvement at the class or grade level although they are developing an awareness of the potential of the data in the scholarship report and the marks analysis to achieve this goal.

To date, the use of student data to drive budgetary decisions remains a goal and staffing decisions are based on vacancies rather than the analysis of data to determine the areas of greatest need. Students whose performance indicates a need for extra help are

scheduled into extended day and Saturday programs.

Attendance rates, while increasing to 84% for the first month of the 2006-2007 school year, remain below the City-wide expectation of 95%. Vigilance with respect to reaching out to students not attending school is increasing as is awareness of the need for the flawless recording and reporting of enrollment and absenteeism.

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 undeveloped.

Teachers are hired based on the areas of vacancy, their licensure and interest in working with the school's population. Commitment and capacity to use data to analyze progress, revise plans, or compare outcomes across classrooms and schools is not part of the current hiring criteria, nor has it been identified as a professional development topic for teachers or administrators.

Professional development topics for 2006-2007 have not been identified. The newly-formed cabinet has not addressed professional development needs, nor has there been a thorough analysis of student performance data for the purpose of identifying staff training needs. During 2005-2006, learning walks did take place alongside informed decisions about training needs. This activity has not taken place during the current school year and the principal and her assistant reported visiting six classrooms between them since the beginning of the current school year. Teachers do not have the opportunity to engage in peer observations.

The current principal is gaining the support of the staff who recognize the need to work together to improve the school. Students, teachers and parents communicate the need to address the student behavior in the classrooms and hallways that disrupts teaching and learning and raises concerns for safety. The same constituents express concern about changes in student's schedules, transcript and absence errors and inconsistent enforcement of the dress code.

In addition to mandated extended day activities, students are supported in their learning through an after school program with entrance criteria linked to their needs for remediation or enrichment. Enrollment figures indicate that nearly one quarter of the student body has been enlisted. However, participation in the first two months of the 2006-2007 school year numbers approximately 30.

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 undeveloped.

The school has built-in structures for reporting student progress through report cards and parent-teacher conferences. The school looks at the progress of students on State and City tests. The school has also begun to develop expectations for utilizing measures of

student knowledge in mathematics and English language arts through the Princeton review results.

The school is moving towards using information contained in the available data to devise plans with measures of progress aimed at driving student achievement. As yet, the school has not formalized the practice of comparing student progress within and across classrooms. Nor has the school formalized the use of periodic assessments as a routine mechanism for measuring incremental progress and adjusting instruction for individual students or groups of students.

Finally, the potential of the school to honor its mission as a school of technology remains to be met.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Bronx Coalition Community School For Technology (HS 680)	∅	✓	+
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.	Ø	✓	+
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.	Ø	✓	+
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.	Ø	✓	+
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		