



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Brooklyn College Academy

Middle - High School 555

**2900 Bedford Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11212**

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Brooklyn College Academy is a middle-high school with 597 students from grade 7 through grade 12. The school population comprises 83% Black, 9.2% Hispanic, 3.2% White, and 1.7% Asian students. The student body includes no English language learners and 1.0% special education students. Boys account for 35% of the students enrolled and girls account for 65%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 92.6%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 58% eligibility.

Brooklyn College Academy is an Early College High School. This allows the school to offer its students the opportunity to earn up to 24 college credits while still in high school. The school is split between two sites. Grades 11 and 12 are housed on the Brooklyn College campus. There is a close relationship between the school and the college and college professors teach some classes of the school's students. Grades 7 through 10 are housed at an annex site more than three miles away. The distance between the two sites makes interaction between the students more difficult. The school is not funded for two sites.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal and the school community have very high expectations of their students and work very effectively to enable them to succeed at college and in life.
- Teachers work closely together to set goals for student improvement and to plan and share strategies to reach those goals.
- Students are keen to achieve well, are purposeful about their studies and take increasing responsibility through the grades for their own learning.
- Members of staff know all the students individually and there is a high level of mutual trust, respect and affection.
- The school climate is one in which innovative ideas are welcome and teachers are encouraged and feel safe to develop new approaches to instruction.
- Members of staff are open to new ideas and are keen to continue to develop as practitioners in order to help students raise their levels of achievement.
- Guidance counselors play a key role in supporting the work of the school in furthering students' personal and academic achievement.
- The school's collaboration with Brooklyn College School of Education provides challenge for high achieving students through participation in college classes.
- Systems and procedures are clear and consistently implemented so behavior is well managed and attendance rates are high.
- The inquiry team has become a steering committee which is successfully planning, implementing and evaluating strategies for data-driven school improvement.

What the school needs to improve

- Refine the collection, analysis and presentation of data to make it easier for teachers and students to use to inform their understanding of both progress and next steps.
- Evaluate the impact on student achievement of the initiative on differentiated instruction to identify and further develop the best practices.
- Develop professional development planning so that priorities are clearly linked with improvement goals, including measurable goals for teacher growth.
- Find ways to increase access to sports and other extra-curricular activities for students in Brooklyn College Academy annex.

Part 3: Main Findings

Progress made since the last review

The school has made good progress in addressing the issues identified in the previous Quality Review report

Overall Evaluation

This school is well developed.

Brooklyn College Academy is a small school where members of staff and students know one another very well and work together with mutual respect and liking. The school expects every student to qualify for and enter college and uses a range of effective strategies to ensure they maintain high levels of achievement throughout their time in the school. These include opportunities for lower grade students to obtain Regents earlier than usual and for students to take college classes.

The school collects a wide range of data and maintains a detailed and up-to-date knowledge of every student's progress. This year teachers have been responsible for updating their student data at least monthly, and have been using the information to inform plans and interventions. Guidance counselors work closely with teachers to promote student success, effectively using data to monitor and support students' personal and academic progress. The data-led work of the inquiry team is beginning to inform all aspects of the school's instructional planning and evaluation. Strategies to raise the achievement of the identified cohort in English language arts and math are being carefully reviewed and the team is looking for ways to extend the successful approaches across the school. The school does not at present, however, collate all the available information into a simple user-friendly electronic database that teachers and students can easily access.

Members of staff collaborate well and enjoy working together to develop instructional strategies and share good practice. They are strongly supported by a range of well-designed professional development opportunities. There is not, however, a clearly defined professional development plan that aligns programs around data-led priorities. Teachers are very focused on helping students make rapid progress, and are keen to improve their own practice, although there are at present no measurable goals against which to measure their professional growth. They are increasingly using differentiated instruction strategies to capture students' interest and engagement and address their different learning styles. As a result, students generally enjoy their lessons and work hard. Students also value the enrichment opportunities offered through classes in art, music and sport. Facilities at the annex are restricted, however, so students on that site have limited access to sports and other extra-curricular activities.

Since the last review the school has introduced data books which are used by all teachers to monitor student progress and inform planning. More meetings are now scheduled for staff to share good practice, and the school is implementing a program of intervisitation. In addition, teachers now make clear the connections between their lessons and the State standards.

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 the student's progress over time.

This area of the school's work is well developed.

The administration and guidance counselors gather a considerable amount of data using various systems including ATS, HSST, Acuity and ARIS. They use the data to provide them with detailed understanding of every student's performance and progress. Faculty members also now have well informed knowledge of their students' progress from their data books which they update monthly with information from classroom tests, class work, projects and attendance. Teachers' use of the data has developed rapidly and it is becoming part of everyday practice. However, collecting and recording the data is very time-consuming as the school does not yet have in place a whole-school system to simplify the collection, manipulation and analysis of all the information.

The school is partnered with a District 75 school and 25 of that school's students learn alongside Brooklyn College Academy students. The school also has a small population of special education students. The relevant data is carefully scrutinized to ensure that the correct support and services are being provided. Another group of interest consists of grade 7 and 8 students identified by the data as being at risk of failing to reach the required standards in English language arts and math. The inquiry team has been carefully tracking their progress and evaluating the effectiveness of strategies used to improve their progress.

The school maintains historic records including data on graduation and scholarship rates, attendance, and safety and security which it uses regularly to identify trends and patterns. It also carefully compares itself against that of other high performing schools to measure its success in accelerating students' progress.

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use data to understand each student's next learning steps and to set suitably high goals for accelerating each student's learning.

This area of the school's work is well developed.

Teachers work very closely together, both formally and informally and across both sites, to set goals for students, plan instruction to meet the goals and to compare and review strategies. Detailed analysis of data informs next steps. Students are strongly encouraged to take responsibility for their own development through the use of learning targets which show clearly what they have to do to improve and enable them to monitor their own progress towards meeting the targets. Guidance counselors also carefully monitor students' progress and use the data to inform decisions about interventions and additional services. These can include tutoring and opportunities to take college classes in the lower grades for higher achieving students, as well as support for those improving more slowly.

The school's goals to enable students to achieve as highly as possible are well known and understood by all members of the school community. They are closely connected to

the school's explicit and constantly articulated expectations that all students will graduate with college credits and will go on to be successful at college. The school climate reinforces these expectations, with its strong emphasis on collaboration, purposeful study and student responsibility for their own behavior and learning. The school also keeps parents well informed about their children's development and seeks to involve them as much as possible in supporting their children's learning.

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instructional Strategy to Goals: The school aligns its academic work, strategic decisions and resources, and effectively engages students around its plans and goals for accelerating student learning.

This area of the school's work is well developed.

Although the school must ensure students have a good knowledge of Regents subject content, it is free to deliver this how it wishes. It always looks for academic rigor, and indicators show that it has been successful in accelerating student learning by bringing Regents into lower grades. The curriculum is further enriched by the college element and by a range of activities including art, music and some sports. Older students have access to facilities on the college campus. However, opportunities for students in grade 7 through grade 10 to participate in more sports and other extra-curricular activities are limited by lack of suitable space at the annex.

Teachers are strongly committed to making their lessons interesting and engaging in order to promote learning. This year they have been working enthusiastically to develop skills in differentiating instruction to better match students' learning styles and meet differing needs. Students appreciate their teachers' efforts and one commented that teachers "are not on your back, but they are pushing you to succeed". They recognized that teachers used different methods and, as one student explained, altered lesson plans to meet needs as they got to know the students. Students enjoy their lessons and work hard to achieve well. They understood that the school wanted them to "become a well-rounded person" as well as to "gain as much knowledge as you can ". They have a serious attitude towards their studies and become increasingly responsible for their own learning as they mature. Once they move to the college campus they are expected to manage their schedule and work in the same way as a full-time college student, which helps them develop the work habits and time management skills college demands.

Members of staff know students well individually and students feel safe and well cared for. There is a high level of mutual trust and respect, and relationships between all members of the school community are courteous and kind. This helps create a climate in which, as one student put it, "it is cool to be smart".

Quality Statement 4 - Align Capacity Building to Goals: The development of leadership, teachers and other staff capacity is aligned to the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.

This area of the school's work is well developed.

The climate in the school is such that teachers feel safe to take risks and try new ideas to improve their instruction. They are eager to improve their practice and are open to new approaches. Though the school's professional development planning is not always

explicitly linked with its improvement goals, professional development is well focused and engaging. Teachers participate enthusiastically because they believe that the programs will support their efforts to improve student progress. Teachers collaborate closely to exchange information and strategies, meeting informally as well as in scheduled time to plan instruction and to share good practice. Guidance counselors strongly support teachers' work with students. They know the students very well, closely monitor their academic and personal development, and provide help and advice throughout the students' time in the school.

The school runs very smoothly across both sites. Systems and procedures are efficient and consistently implemented. As a result the school has one of the highest rates of high school attendance in the City. Behavior is similarly well managed and the already low number of student suspensions is continuing to decrease.

The school benefits from a number of partnerships with outside organizations. The relationship with Brooklyn College School of Education is particularly valuable, providing opportunities for the school's students to experience college classes, and for older students to get an insight into college life from within the safe environment of school.

Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The school establishes yearly goals for student progress, but revisits these regularly during the year. The clear six-weekly interim goals are that each student should be at passing level. The frequent periodic assessments identify anyone at risk of falling short and trigger immediate interventions or modifications to instructional plans.

Professional development addresses areas identified by the school and teachers or those emerging from the data. The school encourages teachers to continue to develop professionally but there is no formal structure to define long-term goals or to evaluate professional growth against interim goals.

The inquiry team has developed into an effective whole-school steering committee. It has become adept at analyzing and utilizing data to measure the effectiveness of plans and interventions, and is successfully planning and implementing strategies for school improvement. Feedback from the team helps inform strategic decisions to improve student outcomes. The data indicated that grade 7 and 8 English language arts and math scores were lower than in previous years so the decision was made to split the classes to make them smaller and to hire additional teachers. More recent assessments show that students' levels of achievement have risen in response to this and other interventions.

The school has already established very high standards for its students. The principal, strongly supported by the whole school community, has a very clear vision for the future of the school. Together they are striving to make it one of the best schools in New York City. They have the determination and the capacity to continue to improve.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Brooklyn College Academy	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
Quality Score				X	

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

To what extent do school leaders and faculty provide . . .	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
1.1 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of each student, classroom, grade level?			X		
1.2 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of special education students?				X	
1.3 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of English language learners?	*	*	*	*	*
1.4 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of ethnic groups, gender groups and all other categories of interest to the school?				X	
1.5 a measurement of performance and progress based on the school's own past performance, and among students, classrooms, grades and subject areas?				X	
1.6 a measurement of performance and progress based on comparisons with similar schools?				X	
1.7 training, management systems and structures that support teachers in the use of school data to inform planning and instruction and to track the progress of students?			X		
Overall score for Quality Statement 1				X	

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use data to understand each student's next learning steps and to set suitably high goals for accelerating each students learning.

To what extent do school leaders and faculty . . .	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
2.1 engage in collaborative processes to set demanding, objectively measurable goals for improvement, and to develop plans and timeframes for reaching those goals?				X	
2.2 focus 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 identify and improve the performance and progress of those students in greatest need of improvement?				X	
2.4 share whole school goals with all members of the school community to rigorously improve the performance and progress of students?				X	
2.5 convey consistently high expectations to students and their parents/caregivers?				X	
2.6 regularly provide students and their parents/caregivers with information about the goals set for each student, and about each student's progress and performance, and how they can improve?				X	
2.7 invite and enable parents/caregivers to provide useful information to teachers and the school about the learning needs and capacities of their children?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 2				X	

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instructional Strategy to Goals: The school aligns its academic work, strategic decisions and resources, and effectively engages students around its plans and goals for accelerating student learning.

To what extent does the school . . .	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
3.1 select core curricular approaches that facilitate and provide meaningful interim data about progress towards goals and focus on raising the achievement of students?				X	
3.2 provide a broad and engaging curriculum, including the arts, to enhance learning both within and outside the school day?			X		
3.3 hold teachers accountable for the progress and learning of the students in their charge, for making instruction interesting and compelling, and for creating a positive safe and inclusive learning environment?				X	
3.4 ensure that teachers use school, class and student data to plan for and provide differentiated instruction that meets the specific needs of all the students in their charge?			X		
3.5 make budgeting, staffing and scheduling decisions strategically, based on data, to meet the school's academic goals for all students?				X	
3.6 ensure that there is an environment of mutual trust and respect between all staff and students to support personal and academic development?				X	
3.7 ensure that there are effective and consistently applied procedures to encourage and monitor student attendance?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 3				X	

*This sup-population is not represented in the school.

Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building to Goals: The development of leadership, teachers and other staff capacity is aligned to the school’s collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.					
To what extent does the school . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
4.1 use frequent observations of classroom teaching by the principal and other available information to develop a differentiated strategy for improving the quality of each teacher’s instruction?			X		
4.2 make professional development decisions strategically, based on data, to help meet the improvement goals of students and teachers?			X		
4.3 provide frequent opportunities for teachers to observe each other’s classroom instruction and to meet together in teams to plan, share effective practices, and evaluate one another’s instruction in an open and reflective professional environment?				X	
4.4 develop effective procedures for the induction and support of teachers who are new to the profession or the school?				X	
4.5 align youth development, guidance/advising and other student support services around stated academic and personal development goals?				X	
4.6 consistently implement clear procedures that enable the school to run smoothly and encourage effective student learning?				X	
4.7 create effective partnerships with outside entities that support the academic and personal growth of the students?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 4					X

Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for evaluating each student’s progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.					
To what extent do . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
5.1 the school’s plans for improving student outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?				X	
5.2 the school’s plans for improving teacher outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?		X			
5.3 teachers and faculty use periodic assessments and other diagnostic tools to measure the effectiveness of plans and interventions for individual and groups of students in key areas?				X	
5.4 teachers and faculty use the information generated by periodic assessments and other progress measures and comparisons to revise plans immediately in order to reach stated goals?				X	
5.5 school leaders track the outcomes of periodic assessments and other diagnostic measures and use the results to makes strategic decisions to modify practices to improve student outcomes?				X	
5.6 school leaders and staff use each plan’s interim and final outcomes to drive the next stage of goal setting and improvement planning?				X	
5.7 the principal and school community have a clear vision for the future development of the school and implement procedures and systems to effect change?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 5					X

◇	Outstanding
+	Well Developed
✓	Proficient
➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features
Δ	Underdeveloped

- The school currently has no English language learners enrolled.