



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Annotated Report Template

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Young Women's Leadership School

Middle-High School 282

2060 Lafayette Avenue

Bronx

NY 10473

Principal: Arnette Crocker

Dates of review: May 29 – 30, 2008

Lead Reviewer: Mak Mitchell

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Young Women's Leadership School, Bronx Campus is a middle-high school with 287 students from grade 7 through grade 10. The school population comprises 51% Black, 46% Hispanic, 1% White and 2% Asian. The student body includes 1% English language learners and 6% special education students. Girls account for 100%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 91%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 57% eligibility.

The school is in its fourth year and is housed entirely in trailers on a small site adjacent to a large elementary school. The school has no cafeteria, gym, science or technology labs. The principal has made arrangements to utilize the cafeteria and science labs in nearby schools, and the students are transported by bus to a contracted gym provider. The parents and principal have been successful in securing an improved space for next year, but it will necessitate the phase out of grades 7 and 8 since the new space can only accommodate a four-year high school.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal has built a school culture designed to develop strong well-articulated female leaders who succeed in college and beyond.
- All stakeholders consistently reinforce high expectations for student performance and behavior.
- Teachers have successfully started to prioritize a written curriculum by aligning curriculum maps with data from periodic assessments.
- The teachers model a diagnostic process that is influencing a school-wide approach in detailing the next learning steps of all students.
- Underperforming students benefit from a coherent alignment of performance data, individual goals and customized instruction.
- Parents are mutual partners in the design and delivery of the learning plans of their scholars.
- The principal has established effective communication strategies with parents for attendance, discipline and consultative conferences.
- The advisory system offers an essential blend of adult mentoring, academic rigor and personal growth experiences.
- The school has established multiple partners in engaging enrichment activities for developing future leaders.

What the school needs to improve

- Create an accessible data system that constantly updates student progress on prioritized skills and content at the student, classroom and school level.
- Publically involve all stakeholders in setting whole school goals, accurately aligned to student achievement targets, and to enable the next stage of improvement planning.
- Use comparisons of past and present student performance to drive curricular changes, establish pacing calendars and individualize student assignments.
- Expand common planning time and prioritize the work of teacher teams for routine curriculum adjustment, lessons, assessments and assignments.
- Use student performance data more explicitly in the classroom to drive curriculum, assessment and instructional decisions.
- Increase the frequency of each student's written profile to assist both themselves and parents to better understand their progress and goals for improvement.

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 is a proficient school.

Under the leadership of a skilled principal, this school has continued to build the culture of a young women's leadership academy, while making improvements in the use of data and delivery of instruction. The school's restricted space situation has become even more difficult since last year, and the principal's desire to create a more common planning schedule should become possible with the move to a new facility this summer. Despite these current drawbacks, attendance continues to exceed the City average. Students, teachers and parents comment on the strength of the bonds uniting this small community of female scholars. Parents are integrated into the decision-making affecting their daughters and they are pleased with the rigor and expectations of the college bound curriculum.

The principal has made good use of a group of external consultants to create a necessary foundation for the achievement of school-wide goals. Most promising is the emerging design of a data framework that will inform teacher's instructional plans on a daily basis with data on every student. This framework is designed as the basis for informed teacher judgment to group students, differentiate and create targeted classroom interventions. A consultant coaches teachers on strategies to accelerate student progress in math, a primary goal for improvement for this school. The school's inquiry team has modeled a detailed diagnosis of twenty struggling students with some success. They are beginning to share their process school-wide to influence the progress of the entire student population.

Currently the majority of students are not achieving a year's progress each school year. The teachers have augmented their curriculum maps and have done some preliminary work towards differentiating their instruction, but these efforts are not sufficiently informed by student performance data. Currently, teachers create baseline tests for students as they enter each course. Students benefit from these diagnostics as they enter a grade but interim assessments and pacing calendars to accelerate learning are not yet available.

Detailed student data is not easily accessible to teachers. In addition, teachers do not have adequate time to create accountable professional collaborations, share their products, examine student work and reinforce common expectations. With the relief to the schedule that the move to the new building will provide, teachers plan to form work teams and develop a group of emerging grade level leaders. The principal is eager to align goals even more intentionally next year and to create an improved coherent common planning schedule.

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

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 student's progress over time.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The school pays particular attention to entry data on students and teacher-designed baseline tests and students performing at the low borders of their range of expectations. Teachers initially assess students within each course and begin to create a profile of their learning needs. As the year progresses, they use Acuity periodic assessments in English and math once every six weeks to adjust the curriculum and to re-teach concepts that the student has not yet attained. Student grades are augmented with teacher narratives that address student achievement and work habits. Students understand their own learning plans through syllabi and monthly calendars provided by teachers in each course.

The application of each student's data to every classroom lesson is not consistently applied across all students, but struggling students receive greater focus. Teachers have used their inquiry team to address the needs of the bottom third of students with more detailed diagnostics and case analyses. Special education students and English language learners also benefit from this more careful scrutiny to their data and learning plans. The staff has created a useful intervention tool, especially effective in linking student needs, goals and action plans for special education students.

Data is derived from different bases at various times during the year but teachers cannot access that data directly. Some of the data is applied at the grade and classroom level, but not the individual student level. Past performance comparisons among students, classrooms, grades and subject areas are not discernable in the school's current data analysis. The principal has worked with a consultant to create a data framework designed to capture all formative and summative assessments for all students.

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 proficient.

Faculty use data from State assessments, Acuity periodic assessments, teacher-made baseline tests and formative data on student performance derived from the classroom. Some of this analysis results in course and grade level adjustments in teaching and learning. The impact of this diagnosis on individual students in daily classes is still sporadic, although there are some good examples of teacher-designed lessons. Teachers have limited common planning time to collaborate in work teams. A structure of grade level leaders is emerging to facilitate such teams but they have not yet set student achievement targets by grade and subject area.

With the exception of special education students and the students selected by the inquiry team, the majority have a general idea about the content of each course they are enrolled in, but they are not specifically aware of their next learning steps and do not proceed independently on these steps when they accomplish work early. There was no

evidence of students keeping track of their own skill-based critical learning path. Parents are invited to give input into the learning plans set for their daughters at parent teacher conferences and they receive grade reports six times per year.

Ambitious learning goals are set at every level of this school, but they are not aligned to an overarching set of publically held, school-wide goals so that everyone understands performance expectations. The principal has a solid set of professional goals, teachers and students have goals but they are not necessarily aligned to school-wide goals with specific time frames. Students write their goals in their advisory sessions with their mentoring adult as partner. They meet four times per week in this advisory and they report back on their goals progress every quarter. Teachers review their professional goals as part of their annual evaluation process with the principal, but interim student learning targets are not included.

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 learning for student learning.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The school has adopted a college bound liberal arts curriculum with an emphasis on math, technology and leadership. Teachers have been adding to their significant work on curriculum maps for each course and they are aligning their instruction accordingly. They have set a goal to differentiate instruction and they are doing this primarily through data of individual learning styles that they have surveyed on each student. In some classes teachers vary assignments by student performance, but they do not consistently align class work based on differentiated content and the skill achievement of students. Toward this end, the principal has led the design of a data framework due to be implemented in the fall. It is designed to foster precision teaching to individual students missing identified skills.

At present, teachers design lessons that are content rich, engaging and applied to the real world in ways that motivate student learning. They are planning on accelerating this learning through the data-driven framework they are currently designing. This is critical since the average gain in progress for students in math and English language arts last school year did not equal one year of growth. Technology equipment has just been ordered and in the new school space they should be able to fully implement its use. The administration has established a safe, caring campus with high expectations for attendance and discipline. There is mutual respect between teachers and students that is evidenced in all interactions. The principal has aligned expenditures for training and materials directly to student achievement goals including hiring a consultant to work with teachers on math and to coach teachers on differentiating instruction.

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 proficient.

The principal has conducted a professional needs assessment of the teaching staff which resulted in the forming of the best possible common planning schedule for them to

engage in professional development, the sharing of ideas and critiquing each other's best practice. Administration engages in a learning walk once per month and classroom visitations organized by teachers to share best practices. A consultant group works with new teachers, coaching them instructionally and training them in classroom management and data use. Teacher evaluation is a non-judgmental narrative followed by principal recommendations that are not always linked to evidence arising in the narrative. Team learning is not currently gauged in these evaluations, but it is scheduled to be added. The school has instituted management procedures to create positive conditions of learning such as clear attendance, punctuality, safety, discipline and tutoring protocols.

The school has an advisory class that routinely meets with an adult mentor. Developmental youth issues, leadership and academic self-discipline are the primary topics. Students value this experience and parents feel it offers students a way to become transparent about their issues within the presence of a responsible adult. Guidance counselors have taken students on college visits. The partnerships with arts and political organizations have served to integrate arts and leadership development within the school day.

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 principal has a clear vision for the school with goals to establish good data systems to accelerate student learning. The school's achievement profile shows a lack of student progress that is partially based on a goal structure that lacks timeframes, alignment and public ownership. All stakeholders develop annual goals and conduct interim progress checks: students in their advisories, teachers in their grade team meetings, the principal in her own performance review, the parents in the school leadership team and parent teacher association and the inquiry team in their meetings. However, these do not have a systemic framework fostered by the principal so that all stakeholder goals are aligned with a few actionable school goals. The outcomes of periodic assessments in English language arts and math are just beginning to enter classroom practice in this school. The classroom grouping decisions vary and are not typically driven by periodic assessments, but rather are derived from teacher observation and student work. The recently designed data framework will make information more accessible to all teachers and will become the source for the work of teacher planning teams. The work of the inquiry team is just evolving into a model for data use that can be shared with the entire teaching staff. The school tracks student credits towards graduation but interim measures are missing. Measureable course targets for student achievement are not aligned with graduation targets. Struggling students do not have explicit elongated timeframes, although teachers believe that they set the same learning goals for these students, but expect that they will need more time to achieve them. While teachers each hold a picture in their minds of the graduating student, regular written profiles to assist students and their parents are lacking.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Young Women's Leadership School	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 student's 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?			X		
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		

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