



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Mott Haven Village Preparatory High School

High School 473

**701 St. Ann's Avenue
Bronx
NY 10455**

Principal: Ana Torres Maldonado

Dates of review: February 5 - 6, 2008

Lead Reviewer: Barbara Kwiecinski

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Mott Haven Village Preparatory is a high school with 329 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 34% Black, 65% Hispanic, 4% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 11% English language learners and 18% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006 - 2007 was 85%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 82% eligibility.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The College Preparation and Leadership program very effectively prepares students for college.
- The advisories are very well structured to meet students' personal and academic need.
- Students enjoy taking on extra responsibilities and the seniors are very proud of their mentor role.
- The professional development committee works strategically to support staff need resulting in a whole school community with a focus on learning.
- There is great collaboration between faculty and students resulting in students wanting to succeed and improve their performance.
- The collaborative team teaching makes a positive impact on students' progress.
- The school uses data effectively and has a very clear understanding of the performance of each student, classroom and grade.
- The effective meeting structure and common planning time result in the schools' mission and vision being put into practice every day.
- The school has many varied forms of communication with parents who speak very positively about the support their students receive from all staff.
- The principal empowers teachers who eagerly take on responsibility to find creative ways to enhance students' learning.

What the school needs to improve

- Further address differentiated instruction, and use data more effectively to inform teacher planning, so that all students' needs are met.
- Extend the tracking of the progress of different sub groups identified by the school.
- Involve students in their goal setting process and set consistently high expectations in all lessons.
- Develop creative ways to address the underperformance in some curriculum areas.

Part 3: Main Findings

Progress made since the last review

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

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Mott Haven Village Preparatory High School effectively prepares students who start from a low base point to gain college placements. The school places great emphasis on the value of each student's personal and academic development and has structures in place to give appropriate support. The school sees itself as one community, striving to ensure that all students succeed. They are conscious that support is needed after college entry and identified teachers keep in touch with students after they have graduated. Students welcome this support and say that the school provides opportunities that they would not normally receive, including overnight college tours and career exploration.

The small size of the school results in all teachers understanding the performance of students at individual level. This is evident from the weekly "Kid Talk" meeting where grade teams meet together to discuss the progress of individuals and identify appropriate interventions to support need. The inquiry team has rightly identified that results in American history are below those in other curriculum areas and as a result are targeting students who are underperforming. The performance of some groups of students is accurately identified and the differentiated structure of the advisory classes with single sex classes is giving support. At present strategic planning with quantifiable goals is not in place in order to track the effect of the interventions.

Professional development is good and the school is moving forward in the way it supports teachers to move students' progress even more rapidly.

The principal sets very high standards and is well respected by all members of the school community. She takes a holistic view on student development and the school addresses the cognitive, psychological, physical and individual needs of students. At present creative ideas of the principal to improve performance are not all underpinned with strategic plans. Strategic planning with measurable objectives was identified as an area for development in the previous report and as yet this is not in place.

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 proficient.

The small size of the school results in staff having a good understanding of the progress of all students at an individual level. The knowledge of each individual is a strength of the

school, as is the grade team meeting structure. The weekly “Kid Talk” meetings supported by a member of the administration results in the performance and progress of each student being discussed. Key people in the meetings meet with the Principal to debrief on the progress of the interventions. The cross-curricular nature of these meetings allows comparisons of students’ progress across classes and subjects. Discussions on effective strategies to improve performance also take place. Teachers make notes on a consistent pro forma. There is a clear communication link between these meetings and administration and the guidance team. This results in students being grouped in advisories according to their need. Boys who have behavioral problems are supported as a group, as are students with a particular interest in art. The school believes that these groupings are having a positive effect but aggregated data tracking, to evidence this collectively, is not in place.

The support of students with the greatest need is good and the extension of collaborative team teaching to provide a more inclusive education now results in effective partnerships. The school is aware of the differences in performance of different groups within the school, but this data is not constantly updated. Comparison to similar schools is just beginning and the school is looking forward to identifying and sharing best practice. The school has structures in place to support teachers in their use of data and is focusing on English language arts and the use of SCANTRON to enable students to be supported according to their need. This results in leveled readers being available that meet the needs and interests of both girls and boys.

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.

The school collaborates very effectively in an informal and formal way. Its small size allows for constant dialogue between staff and between staff and students. Students feel well supported, saying “student and teachers’ interaction is good – it is easy to connect”. They are aware that they need to strive for targets higher than sixty five percent on the annual high school Regents examination. The students are involved in setting goals (short and long term) with their advisors in the beginning of the school year. There is good practice in English language arts and clear rubrics that allow students to check the marking of their draft essays.

The formal weekly “Kid Talk” meetings often include the guidance counselor and the social worker. Academic reports are shared and include information on class participation and completion of homework. Teachers are supported to understand the issues related to individual education plans. This complete understanding of each student allows teachers to collaborate and ensure that appropriate interventions are in place. Parents speak very positively about the school, describing the many ways they receive communications. These include e-mails and telephone calls as well as the formal progress reports. This results in students doing well and parents recognizing the value of the advisories to support students’ personal need. They describe situations where students have been failing but through coordinated support problems have been resolved immediately. The whole school emphasis is one of a learning community where the expectation is that all students will succeed. The College Preparation Leadership Program (CPLP) is central to school life. Students are very well supported by dedicated members of staff who assist students through high school, help plan for college and promote high academic goals.

The graduation rate is high and students say the school provides opportunities that they wouldn't normally get.

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 proficient.

The school looks at individual student need and designs both its curriculum and classroom organization accordingly. Students with the greatest need benefit from the increase of collaborative team teaching classes and English language learners receive additional support in pull out classes. In a good math lesson the teachers work in partnership, adeptly identify students who need more support and through reinforcement effectively encourage them. The progress of students with individual education plans is carefully tracked as is the effectiveness of the individualized support they receive. The atmosphere within the school is very positive within the classroom and teachers always "go the extra mile" to help students understand. Students are suitably challenged in some curriculum areas. In English language arts students are able to consider whether there is ever a cause worth dying for, then relate the argument to the scenes from Macbeth. In American history students enter thought-provoking discussion and consider how Americans have redressed women's rights since the Declaration of Sentiments. However sometimes instruction is to the whole class and differentiation is by outcome only. This results in some students being insufficiently challenged and others finding the work too easy. The inquiry team identifies progress in American history as a weakness. To this end they have selected to track and support twenty 9th grade students, including those achieving at low levels but having attendance above eighty percent. Inference is identified as a literacy skill where students do not do well, as is a weakness with answering multiple choice questions. Plans are in place to translate a single area where growth is needed to inform instruction in this and other curriculum areas.

School attendance is carefully monitored but tardiness remains a problem and some students, miss the first lessons of the day. There is also a lack of urgency on the part of students in lesson transfers. The principal knows where strengths and weaknesses lie and structures are in place to support teachers in their efforts to improve this.

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.

As a response to teacher surveys, the professional development structure in the school has been adapted to relate to whole school goals. The professional development committee meets weekly to evaluate and organize staff development in a very structured way. The cross-departmental representation results in teamwork and a consistent focus on implementing literacy skills across all the curriculum content areas. The principal empowers teachers and provides teams with the opportunity to give formal presentations at professional development meetings. The English team worked together to prepare a presentation on "The seven habits of highly effective readers", in order to assist all colleagues to improve the literacy content of each curriculum area. The team takes account of the views of former students as well as those of members of staff. Note-taking

is identified as a problem area on entering college and as a consequence the school has adopted the Cornell model in order to better prepare students for their college placements.

The school is very well supported by the National Academy for Excellent Teaching and teachers worked in partnership during the summer vacation to consider how differentiation can be improved. Emphasis is also placed on different learning styles. This has resulted in some good examples of differentiated practice and students in an English language arts lesson used clear rubrics to improve their clearly marked, differentiated draft essays. However practice remains inconsistent.

Teachers are given opportunities to share each other's practice and all teachers carry out formal intervisitations twice a year. New teachers feel well supported and identify classroom observations as the most helpful tool to enable improvement and growth.

In addition to whole-school professional development, individual teacher need is met and time is now allocated for vertical group meetings where best practice within curriculum areas is shared.

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 whole school community is reflective and at the annual retreat all staff consider the successes and concerns of the school year in terms of discipline and instruction. This allows for the main areas for improvement to be collectively agreed and the foci for the next academic year to be set. This is complemented by weekly teacher meetings through vertical teams and grade teams where teachers evaluate what is working well within the classrooms. Scholarship reports are interrogated after every marking period and "next steps" are decided for each student. This results in all students being supported. Students' and teachers' views are analyzed on a bi-annual basis and the school collectively makes adjustments to support students' success. The National Academy of Excellent Teaching use the survey results to provide weekly activities that enhance teachers' pedagogical experience.

The school's small size results in innovative ideas being shared by all members of the community. Student progress is good even though plans are not formalized with measurable goals and time frames with built in evaluation points. Students move forward and the whole community live the school's mission, "it takes a village to raise a child".

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Mott Haven Village Preparatory High 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 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?				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 rigorous, 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 and tardiness?			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, and effectively address discipline related incidents?				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