

Quality Review Report

2008-2009

Academy of Hospitality & Tourism

High School 408

**911 Flatbush Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11226**

Principal: Adam Breier

Dates of review: March 5-6, 2009

Lead Reviewer: Ainslie Cumberbatch

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Academy of Hospitality & Tourism is a high school with 269 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 82% Black, 16% Hispanic, 1% White, 1% Asian and .37% American Indian students. The student body includes 5% English language learners and 8% special education students. Boys account for 45% of the students enrolled and girls account for 55%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2007 - 2008 was 86.1%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 62% eligibility. The school is in its third year of operation. It shares some facilities, such as the gymnasium, pool, cafeteria and library, with four other schools accommodated within the building.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

The school, in its three years of existence, has strived to solidify a reputation of excellence within the community. School staff publicly share that they expect all students to do well and encourage students to excel in every area. Parents support the school mission to graduate all students in its first cohort and emphasize college as their first option after high school. Students, staff and parents recognize the strong leadership qualities of the principal and assistant principal and support them in their efforts to build a school of excellence.

The school has made a good effort towards improving their progress report data by implementing a number of effective initiatives for the current cohort of students through monitoring and evaluation of their work. The school uses an effective system to collect and analyze data, including a program called the "Student Tracker". The program monitors student credit accumulation and Regents exam progress. Even though the school analyzes data well and sets goals for students, it does not establish clear interim benchmarks to monitor progress and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies used. Not all teachers use the data to plan lessons that energize and enrich students' experiences.

The school maintains a solid partnership with New Visions, which affords the school a host of resources and has partnerships with other organizations that provide students with access to corporate connections and avenues for community outreach. The National Academy Foundation (NAF) supports the school's career and technical education program well and helps to develop the organizational capacity of the school and links to internships for students.

School improvement since the last Quality Review includes a closer look at data related to gender and ethnic groups and more concentrated professional development on the use of assessment data to differentiate instruction. However, classroom observations do not always facilitate the development of more differentiated strategies to support teacher growth.

The school's inquiry team meets weekly and is focusing on improving student literacy. They implement effective change strategies geared toward raising the reading level of students in the target population by two levels, as measured by Performance Series.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school generates frequent data, tracking credit accumulation, Regents pass rates and results from periodic assessments.
- Staff exhibit high levels of commitment to their students and are eager to seek out new ways of helping them to achieve.
- The school administration maintains a strong organizational structure that actively promotes students' progress and achievements.
- The inquiry and intervention teams develop strategies to address whole-school development and academic success.
- Parents, faculty and students share the principal's clear vision and work together to bring about improvement and change.
- The school has developed strong partnerships, which provide students with high-quality internships and important industry connections.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that teachers implement the good practices that result in high student engagement and achievement across all classrooms.
- Extend the use of classroom observations to include the development of more differentiated strategies to support teacher growth.
- Expand student goal setting to all content areas and establish clear, interim benchmarks to monitor and evaluate effectiveness.
- Enhance student academic experiences by providing more professional development to teachers in the area of technology integration.

Part 3: Main Findings

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

Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, generate and analyze information on student learning outcomes and use it to understand what each student knows and can do and to monitor the student's progress over time.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The school collects a great deal of data weekly through three school improvement teams, consisting of the differentiated instruction team, the data team and the environment team. The school frequently tracks scholarship information for each student related to credit accumulation and Regents performance using a data set provided by New Visions. Teachers use an internal tracking system developed by the principal to disaggregate data by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) subgroups and gender. Subsequently, the school is able to identify students in need of support and provide targeted intervention services. However, this data is only analyzed three to four times a year limiting its effectiveness. Historical data on student achievement is available to teachers via a student tracking system, which contains information on each student's grades. The school reviews students' academic progress in all subject areas, by gender, ethnicity and NCLB subgroups within each cohort, at monthly department and faculty conferences. School staff use this information to create action plans that focus on teacher practice and impact positively on student achievement.

Teachers use a worksheet, that allows students to capture their progress over time, as a tool for discussion around goal setting and modification of the curriculum. For example, the humanities department reviews "Writing Frames" for each part of the English Language Arts Regents Exam and the thematic section of both the US and Global Regents Exams to identify ways to enable students to successfully complete the tasks. However, the practice does not exist in every core subject area to the same degree and isn't sufficiently embedded into educational opportunities within the classroom. As a result students sometimes experience less success in these areas. The school's advisory program includes a review of student transcripts, graduation requirements and conferencing with an advisor regarding academic progress after the distribution of each report card. Students complete reflection sheets that inform goal setting and parent discussions. Parents receive progress reports between each marking period but do not routinely engage in dialogue with teachers at the end of each unit.

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.

A culture of high expectations exists at the school. The principal works well with the leaders of the three school improvement teams to communicate his vision across the school community and to develop action plans in their respective areas. As a result, teachers, parents and students comfortably state that they are part of a planning team

that addresses, among other things, the Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP), curriculum development and goal setting. Teachers value the opportunity to work in teams and collaborate with AUSSIE consultants, staff from New Visions and informally with peers from other schools. They start the school year with a review of the School Quality Review, the New Visions Data Snapshot and in-house data in order to create an action plan for the use of data school wide. Students participate in meaningful goal-setting experiences in advisory and subject area classes. The school sets realistic goals based on the students' academic history and course content thereby increasing the chance of their success. School leadership team meetings serve as a launching point for collaborative work toward the "needs assessment" and "action plan" sections of the CEP. The parent association leadership attends "engagement learning institutes" conducted by New Visions to build their capacity to increase parent involvement and works hard to recruit additional active parent members.

To inform all constituencies of student progress, the school conducts a semi-annual share fair. Students, parents, teachers and administrators use a rubric to assess the work observed and provide feedback. Consequently, the school community shares a common understanding of student needs, possible learning goals and next steps in terms of support services, instructional delivery and professional development. However, teachers do not engage in regular review of student goals at the end of each unit to identify specific skill deficits, thereby limiting student progress. Students are scheduled for a common lunch period that facilitates common planning time for teachers and team meetings. Staff meet to discuss individual and group progress, review performance and attendance data, and assess intervention strategies. Teachers' state, "We feel empowered" in relation to trying new strategies and offering ideas regarding instructional initiatives to the principal. The school's focus on college preparation is intertwined with its focus on internships and career development as the school prepares for its first graduating class next year.

Parents share that they feel welcome at the school and informed about the progress of their children. However, they do not feel sufficiently included in student goal setting and are not clear on specific timelines for student improvement. They would like to see greater emphasis placed on college advisement as the school moves into its fourth year. Data on student suspensions reveal a high number of principal's suspensions compared to last year, proportionate to the growth of the school. At present, systems are in place to monitor student behavior and enhance school culture that result in positive school tone. Student attendance rate year-to-date is below last year's average but significant plans exist to address this issue.

Quality Statement 3 – Develop Coherent Instructional and Organizational Strategies: The school uses rigorous curricula, teaching and organizational decision making to engage students and faculty in meeting all students' learning goals.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The principal continuously evaluates the instructional program and aligns student needs to budgetary decisions. Teachers state that professional development is encouraged and that they feel supported by the administration. The principal "recognizes staff achievements". The current response of staff reflects a more meaningful relationship between teachers and the school administration than the one noted in the previous Learning Environment Survey. The school's organizational structure and scheduling reflect thoughtful planning related to common planning time and opportunities for in-house professional development. For example, as a result of team planning teachers

formed a buddy system of intervisitations, specifically to search out promising practices embedded within their colleagues' lessons. Teachers are relatively comfortable with the data provided to them. In some classes, teachers group for instruction, offer choice within assignments and allow for various ways of completing assigned tasks. However, the adaptation of approaches and resources to meet the needs of all students is not prevalent in every classroom. In some instances group work exists in name only.

The school's curriculum offering is complicated by its need to offer courses in its business sequence. Therefore, the school struggles to deliver the mandated curriculum to all students on a grade at the same time. Some classes such as art are built into the daily program for some students, but offered as an overtime activity for teachers after their regular workday. The school makes up for this by offering an impressive range of courses and programs supported by NAF. These include, Business for Hospitality & Tourism, Sports, Entertainment and Event Management, Culinary Arts, College Now and job shadowing experiences in the corporate sector. These opportunities successfully broaden students' horizons and raise their aspirations by providing non-traditional experiences that extend beyond the school and borough. Some teachers use creative strategies to enhance teaching and learning. However, not all teachers use data consistently to differentiate instruction effectively. Instructional strategies that allow for a variety of learning experiences to engage all students rigorously across all lessons are not consistent throughout the school. Students remark that they like the courses and teachers, but would like to see more interesting activities offered throughout the day. They report that, "Some classes are great and we do lots of different activities and in others they talk too much." Students express concern over their general safety on the campus, though not in their classrooms and feel that additional security staff is needed. They cite issues with the security scanning set up and describe it as contributing to student lateness. Some students do not feel connected to an adult in the school.

Quality Statement 4 - Align Capacity Building to Goals: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school's goals for accelerating student learning.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

Teachers generate goals for the school year with the principal that inform ongoing professional development for staff. Staff revise these goals during the year as needed. The school has one brand new teacher who receives in-house mentoring. However, the mentor is licensed in a different subject area. The new teacher's schedule allows for intervisitations and additional mentor support provided by New Visions. Teachers of English, social studies, math and science receive support from AUSSIE consultants. At present, there are no scheduled intervisitations with other small schools across the campus to support a professional dialogue in a content area that would lead to improved teaching. Teachers state that they value the opportunities provided for them to attend workshops outside of the building, but that they would like to see a campus-wide teacher center that promotes quality teaching and learning across all schools.

The school's inquiry team works with 27 students. Each team member works with a group of students focusing on improving literacy. Each group is reading a different book and is implementing the change strategy through the text. For example, one group is focusing on developing the skill of identifying and using quotes. Initial reports show that the change strategy is working and the students are making gains. There is a strong focus on students' personal growth that is evident in discussions that take place at teacher meetings and in advisory sessions. The school has a strong partnership with New Visions and uses the organization's resources to impact instruction and youth

development at the school. In addition, the school partners with NAF to facilitate the development of a school-based advisory board and establish corporate connections.

The school does not have consistent practices across all classrooms and grade levels. For example, the use of technology is sporadic across the grades. The principal and assistant principal conduct observations weekly and provide feedback. They are invited into classrooms informally as well. However, teachers remark that, in general, feedback from observations is thoughtful, but this feedback does not consistently reflect the school goals or provide information on effective teaching strategies.

Students describe their principal as, "strict but friendly at times". Parents like the fact that "the school makes accommodations to ensure that students get what they need". They describe the principal as a "good communicator".

Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for monitoring and 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 plan of action and community buy-in as he works toward his first graduating class. He strategizes monthly with team members as they assess the school's progress. Each teacher sets goals with the principal at the beginning of the school year relative to the classes that they teach. However, these goals are only revisited at the end of each semester. As such, the process does not significantly impact student outcomes. Parents support the principal's vision for students of college readiness and describe him as "concerned about the students' academic program". Students state that they like the principal's focus on college, while teachers remark that the principal "truly cares about the education of students". The data team works with school staff to review scholarship data, disaggregating it by gender and cohort. The school has made significant progress in preparing students for the school's first administration of the English language arts Regents exam. Fifty-two of the 77 students taking the exam passed. However, the school recognizes that daily instruction in every classroom must capture student interest and energize them.

Teachers set goals with students and work to fulfill the principal's requirement that they address at least two learning styles in every lesson in an attempt to differentiate instruction. Differentiation of instruction to accommodate the needs of every student is not yet threaded throughout the school. Currently, student goal setting does not exist in physical education and art. There is an absence of clear and interim benchmarks to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of goals set. Consequently, the school does not always make timely modifications to school plans. Staff engage in a gallery walk of student data at the beginning of the school year and review scholarship and progress reports at monthly department and faculty conferences. The principal strives to make educationally sound decisions that translate into positive organizational practices. For instance, in order to support teacher-led efforts to institute a "buddy system" he redesigned the Circular 6 time to be devoted to intervisitations. The school's self-evaluation paints an accurate picture of the school's efforts to address the needs of its various constituencies.

School Quality Criteria 2008-2009

School name: Academy of Hospitality & Tourism	△	▷	✓	+
Overall QR Score			X	
Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, generate and analyze information on student learning outcomes and use it to understand what each student knows and can do, and to monitor the student’s progress over time.				
<i>To what extent do school leaders and faculty regularly...</i>	△	▷	✓	+
1.1 collect and analyze actionable information, including assessment results and attendance data, to provide a complete view of the learning outcomes and needs of individual students and groupings of students?			X	
1.2 focus analysis on the learning outcomes and needs of all sub-groups of students?			X	
1.3 engage in an open exchange of information with students and families about students’ learning needs and outcomes, including assessment results and attendance data?			X	
1.4 design or adapt tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize and analyze student performance, identify trends and inform instructional and organizational decisions, and to enable students and their families to assess and track each student’s progress?			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 student’s learning.				
<i>To what extent do school leaders and faculty...</i>	△	▷	✓	+
2.1 use collaborative and data-informed processes to set measurable, actionable and differentiated learning goals in core subjects for individual students and groupings of students and develop differentiated plans and timeframes for reaching these goals?			X	
2.2 use collaborative and data-informed processes to develop the school’s Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP)?			X	
2.3 ensure that the achievement of learning goals, and the implementation of plans and timeframes for reaching these goals, is the central focus of school leaders, faculty, students and families?			X	
2.4 communicate high expectations to all students and families, and involve students in developing their learning goals and plans and in taking their next learning steps?			X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 2			X	

DEFINITIONS

“**Analyze**” or “**analysis**” includes, but is not limited to, comparisons of:

- the current and past outcomes of . . . individual students, administrative groupings and sub-groups of students and the school itself in core subjects;
- the outcomes of different classrooms and sub-groups in the same grades and core subjects; and
- the school’s Progress Report and other outcomes to those of peer/other schools

“**Assessment results**” include student outcomes on summative assessments (e.g., state ELA, math, science and social studies tests, NYSESLAT, Regents Exams, and Performance Based Assessment Tasks) and formative assessments aligned to the school’s curriculum (including Periodic, DYQ, and teacher-developed Classroom Assessments).

“**Core subjects**” are ELA, math, science, social studies/history, the arts, foreign language, and physical education/health.

“**Data-informed processes**” include analysis of Progress Report, Quality Review, Learning Environment Survey, Inquiry Team findings, assessment results and attendance data

“**Groupings of students**” include classrooms, grade levels and high school cohorts.

“**Organizational decisions or strategies**” refer to a school’s use of budget and resources, staffing, planning, scheduling, grade structure, departments and teacher teams and other aspects of the school’s structure and organization that can affect student outcomes.

“**Sub-groups of students**” include special education students, English Language Learners, the other NCLB sub-groups, boys, girls, and other groups significant to the school.

Quality Statement 3 – Develop Coherent Instructional and Organizational Strategies: The school uses rigorous curricula, teaching and organizational decision making to engage students and faculty in meeting all students’ learning goals.

To what extent do ...	Δ	➤	✓	+
3.1 school leaders and faculty deliver challenging and engaging curricula in core subjects, including the arts, that are aligned to state standards?			X	
3.2 teachers plan and teach lessons that are differentiated to meet the needs of individual students and student groupings and are designed to enable all students to reach their learning goals?			X	
3.3 school leaders make strategic organizational decisions to support a coherent and rigorous instructional approach that enables students to reach their learning goals?			X	
3.4 school leaders maintain a culture of mutual trust and respect and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?			X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 3				

Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building to Goals: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school’s goals for accelerating student learning.

To what extent do school leaders...	Δ	➤	✓	+
4.1 use their own observation of classroom teaching and the analysis of student outcomes to implement an explicit, differentiated strategy to improve each teacher’s instruction, with a special focus on new teachers?		X		
4.2 encourage teachers to take part in Inquiry Teams and other structured professional collaborations (informed by the examination of student work, assessment outcomes and their own peer observations) and share in the instructional leadership of the school with the goal of improved student learning?			X	
4.3 provide professional development that encourages teachers to continuously evaluate and revise their classroom practices to improve student outcomes?			X	
4.4 utilize youth development, support services and partnerships with families and outside organizations to accelerate the academic and personal growth of students?			X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 4				

Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for monitoring and 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 and its strategies for improving each teacher’s instructional practices include measurable interim goals and suitable time frames for evaluating success and making adjustments during the year?		X		
5.2 school leaders and faculty use interim checkpoints and data to inform lessons, improve curriculum, differentiate instruction and revise student learning plans throughout the year?			X	
5.3 school leaders use data to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of and modify organizational decisions, structured professional collaborations and teacher improvement strategies?			X	
5.4 school leaders and the school community have a clear vision for the future development of the school and implement procedures and systems to support academic, personal and professional growth?			X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 5				

Quality Review Scoring Key							
Δ	Underdeveloped	➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features	✓	Proficient	+	Well Developed