



**Department of
Education**

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

**Quality Review Report
Office of Accountability
2008-2009**

Quality Review Report 2008-2009

Victory Collegiate High School

High School 576

**6565 Flatlands Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11236**

Principal: Marcel Deans

Dates of review: February 24 - 25, 2009

Lead Reviewer: Linda A. Waite

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Victory Collegiate is a small high school with 160 students from grade 9 through grade 10. The school population comprises 88% Black, 9% Hispanic, 2% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 1% English language learners and 11% special education students. Boys account for 48% of the students enrolled and girls account for 52%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2007 - 2008 was 90.5%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 60% eligibility.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Victory Collegiate High School is a small high school with a 9th and 10th grade cohort of students. The faculty and parents support the principal's vision that all students should become academically college-ready. As a result, teachers work collaboratively with smaller groups of students in order to support and push them to do higher-level work. A majority of students, including the lowest third, accumulate ten or more credits in their first year. Additionally, many students pass the math Regents examination after completing a two-term or three-term course. The school provides a safe, respectful student-centered environment and parents appreciate the information they receive from the school, including ways that they can support their child's learning. However, the school does not have an adequate tracking tool for teachers, parents and students that contains the information that would help them track student performance and progress in all core subjects.

The school uses data tools including ARIS to provide academic and attendance information on each student. These, together with Acuity, Develop Your Own assessments and mock Regents examinations, help teachers set goals, measurable objectives and timeframes. The school does not yet differentiate the goals sufficiently to include more individualized action plans that meet students' learning needs. Teachers use assessment data to inform lesson plans, instruction, and provide support services. However, few teachers use this data to provide differentiated instruction.

The school uses a collaborative approach in which parents, students and teachers, as well as the principal and school leadership team, contribute and use data effectively to inform the development of the Comprehensive Educational Plan. The principal believes in shared leadership and encourages faculty members to take on additional responsibilities that foster reflection and helps bring about needed changes. This results in improved student outcomes and more parental involvement. The inquiry team uses data effectively to identify students' strengths and weaknesses, devise instructional strategies and track progress. The principal values the team's effort but realizes the need for interim checkpoints to evaluate and make revisions that will ensure greater student success.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal's vision that all students will be academically college-ready is supported by teachers, resulting in students doing higher level work.
- The school uses grade, subject and attendance data effectively to monitor the performance of all students to provide necessary support services.
- Parents speak highly of the school, the assessment information they receive and the opportunity to support their children's education.
- There is mutual respect between parents, faculty and students, resulting in students meeting high expectations and being academically successful.
- The principal encourages faculty to join the inquiry team, become directors and team leaders to make changes resulting in improved student learning.
- The principal shares data with the school leadership team to develop the Comprehensive Educational Plan that focuses on meeting learning goals.

What the school needs to improve

- Utilize assessment data in the lesson planning process to provide differentiated instruction to individual students and groups of students.
- Extend the goal setting process to include more differentiated plans to meet students' individual learning needs.
- Extend the planning process for teachers and students so that there are measurable, interim checkpoints to evaluate success and make revisions.
- Design or adapt tools so that teachers will be able to more easily analyze student performance, trends and be able to track each student's progress.

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.

Victory Collegiate High School effectively collects and uses a wide variety of data. The principal and assistant principal review math and reading levels, test data, report cards, attendance data and suspension information to create a picture of the student's learning and personal needs. The school uses 8th grade math performance levels and diagnostics to program students for a two-term or three-term integrated algebra course, resulting in more students successfully passing the Regents examination. Teachers administer various formative and summative assessments such as Acuity, Develop Your Own assessment, homework, tests, projects, and mock Regents examinations to inform their instruction and monitor student progress. All teachers maintain test data on laptops so that it is easily available for them to plan and meet each student's needs. Presently, the school does not have a tracking tool to organize and analyze performance and trends that makes it easy for teachers, students and parents to track progress in all subjects.

The school places an emphasis on sorting data by grade level, ethnicity and gender to monitor the performance and progress of sub-groups. Using this data to target support results in exemplary gains for the lowest third of students passing Regents. In addition, the school uses individual educational plans and New York State English as a Second Language Assessment data to ensure it meets instructional mandates, provides the right services, and to make test modifications. The school also reviews attendance data by grade level, gender, and program, resulting in the discovery that female 9th grade students have a slightly lower attendance rate. In response, the school is conducting small counseling groups, re-designing the 9th grade advisory curriculum to include more focus on attendance, offering incentives and recognition awards.

The school and parents use telephone, e-mails and parent conferences to engage in open communication on a regular basis to discuss students' performance, progress and attendance. There is a culture of mutual respect between parents, faculty and students, resulting in students meeting higher expectations and achieving well academically.

Every student is aware of the school motto "Destiny is not a matter of chance, it is a matter of choice; it is not a thing to be waited for, it is a thing to be achieved". As a result, students take assessment results seriously and take advantage of available services that help them achieve academically.

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.

Victory Collegiate's collaborative school culture provides many forums in which teachers and students use data to set goals. Advisory teachers, as part of the curriculum, share student attendance data and conference with students to set goals and identify the steps they will take to meet the school's attendance standard of 90%. Additionally, advisory teachers conference with students to review report grades, set goals, and reflect on how they will measure their progress and what they need to do differently so that they can attain their goal of getting better grades in the next marking period. While the school sets goals for students, action plans are not differentiated to the degree necessary to help students achieve their full potential.

Teachers utilize common planning time, "Kid Talk" and Opportunities to Learn sessions to share data and information with each other. This sharing helps in developing subject-related goals, objectives and time frames, as evidenced by several goal-setting templates. Teachers share this information with students during parent-advisor-student conferences. Students are able to articulate goals such as, "I need to improve my reading by adding more detail to my writing." The school uses an effective data-informed collaborative process involving parents, students and teachers that results in a Comprehensive Educational Plan that reflects the learning needs of students and teachers. This is leading the school towards academic and professional growth.

The school supports the goals in the Comprehensive Educational Plan through identifying specific teaching strategies, professional development and intervention services, including daily tutorials and Regents' preparation classes on Saturdays. Parents feel the school provides multiple opportunities for them to learn about their child's goals through various meetings, mailings and school activities. One parent shared, "I rate this school a 10 because it sets high standards for our children, provides us with information about what and how our children are learning, and the principal and teachers are nurturing and care about kids like a close-knit family".

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 school believes that students need to participate in a rigorous inquiry-based curriculum that prepares them for the demands of college-level work. However, the level of inquiry and rigor varies from class to class. English and integrated math and science teachers are developing curriculum maps that align with State standards. The school offers courses in English, math, social studies, science, foreign language, physical education, dance and art so that students will qualify for Regents and advanced Regents diplomas. Many Students participate in campus-wide activities such as football, basketball, baseball, and cheerleading as well as school-sponsored clubs to expand their learning outside the classroom.

Teachers use a wide variety of formative and summative assessments, including questioning, homework, class tests and projects to set goals, and identify student areas of weakness. A few teachers use data well to form learning groups, level instruction and group activities and utilize materials to meet the individual learning needs of students. However, the level of differentiation is not consistent and is not an embedded practice within the school.

The school uses data on a routine basis to make effective staffing, scheduling and budgetary decisions. The school's decisions to maintain small class sizes, increase the instructional period from 45 minutes to 60 minutes, assign English teachers one grade level to teach, and re-program Collaborative Team Teaching classes are helping students meet their learning goals. The school's wise use of the budget to purchase graphing calculators, SMART boards and online Regents' test preparation materials is leading to higher levels of student achievement.

The principal's use of information from the Learning Environment Survey is responsible for many of the decisions he makes. For example, as a direct response to comments regarding safety and respect, the principal hired an assistant principal of security. School efforts are responsible for creating an atmosphere of mutual respect and results in students and faculty wanting to come to school, meet high expectations and be successful.

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.

School leaders conduct observations on a regular basis to identify and assess student learning outcomes and teachers' needs. The school uses teacher surveys and findings from post-observation conferences, as well as input from the instructional coach, to effectively plan and differentiate workshops for teachers. The school collaborates with The Institute for Student Achievement to provide meaningful ongoing professional development that supports all teachers. The principal utilizes the coach to provide additional individual professional support to teachers who can benefit from individual attention. This helps teacher develop better practice and improves student outcomes. Professional development for new teachers addresses classroom management, lesson planning and the workshop model in order to create classroom settings that are conducive to learning. Additionally, the principal models lessons for new teachers and provides teacher-buddies to serve as mentors in order to build confidence and develop necessary teaching skills. Special education and English as a second language teachers attend outside workshops on mandates, testing modifications and teaching strategies in order to identify and meet the needs of students. As a result, more students are passing courses and state exams

Additionally, the school uses common planning time, weekly "Opportunities to Learn" sessions and inter-visitations between teachers and other schools that help teachers reflect on their own practices and to strengthen content and teaching skills. The school's focus on building capacity and developing a sense of responsibility helps improve student and school outcomes. For example, teachers participate in the school's inquiry team that meets on a weekly basis. Members assess and identify strategies such as utilizing guided questioning, note-taking, and graphic organizers to improve the essay writing of the 9th and 10th grade targeted students. School leaders also encourage teachers and support personnel to take on additional responsibilities as directors and team leaders. For example, the school's social worker serves as the Director of Community Affairs and is responsible for developing open lines of communication with parents. This allows faculty members to reflect on their work and make changes to the way they work. As a result, students are improving in their performance and there is more parent involvement.

The school effectively uses advisory classes, support staff, tutorials, after school classes and Saturday academy to support student learning. The school's partnerships with John Jay College's Upward Bound College Program, the College Now program with Brooklyn College, The Urban Environment and grade-level overnight retreats to colleges such as Harvard, Tufts and Boston College, enhance student learning.

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 school has a structure in place for improving student outcomes. Advisory teachers meet with students each marking period to monitor and revise attendance and report card grade goals. Grade team leaders consistently and regularly review teacher binders and monitor student progress to implement instructional strategies through peer critique and action planning. Additionally, the inquiry team reviews data on a consistent basis to determine if a change in practice is necessary.

The principal monitors the professional growth of teachers through the observation process and revises plans when necessary. An example of this adjustment is the school purchasing Kaplan professional development and Aussie training to meet the content needs of teachers. Teachers needing additional support benefit from the instructional coach and assistance provided by the principal. Logs of assistance document on-going support in an effort to improve professional growth.

Teachers use data from periodic assessments to help plan lessons and identify teaching strategies. English teachers and the 9th grade integrated math science teacher are developing curriculum maps with a focus on essential questions, standards, and inquiry in order to improve content and literacy development. However, they do not use checkpoints to evaluate success, revise students' learning plans or update curriculum maps. As a result, teaching is not as effective as it should be.

The school uses scheduling and staffing decisions to support and revamp decisions that enable students to reach learning goals. The formation of 10th grade after school classes and a 9th grade enrichment program is due to the principal's knowledge of his students' negative view of credit recovery as a catch phrase for failure. Teachers, parents and students share the principals' vision for the future development of the school and are able to articulate it clearly and concisely. However, the school does not yet have the rigorous systems and procedures that are needed to support students' academic, personal and professional development as the school continues to grow.

School Quality Criteria 2008-2009

School name: Victory Collegiate High School	△	➤	✓	+
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.							
<i>To what extent do ...</i>	△	▷	✓	+			
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			X				
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.							
<i>To what extent do school leaders...</i>	△	▷	✓	+			
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			X				
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.							
<i>To what extent do...</i>	△	▷	✓	+			
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			X				
Quality Review Scoring Key							
△	Underdeveloped	▷	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features	✓	Proficient	+	Well Developed