

# **Quality Review Report 2008-2009**

**Mott Hall Bronx High School**

**High School 252**

**1595 Bathgate Avenue  
Bronx  
NY 10457**

**Principal: David Tinagero**

**Dates of review: February 24-25, 2009**

**Lead Reviewer: Lori Bennett**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Mott Hall Bronx High School is a high school with 405 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 35% Black, 66% Hispanic, 1% White, and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 9% English language learners and 11% special education students. Boys account for 47% of the students enrolled and girls account for 53%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2007-2008 was 86.6%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 73% eligibility.

In June 2009, Mott Hall Bronx High School will graduate the first class. The school shares the building with two other schools on the Bathgate Campus.

### Overall Evaluation

#### **This school is well developed.**

The school provides access to the International Baccalaureate Diploma to eleventh and twelfth grade students and provides a full program of the mandated New York State requirements to all. Students are exposed to the AVID program, which stands for Advancement via Individual Determination, during the daily advisory period, which provides opportunities to develop personal and academic skills, and foster close relationships between students and teachers. Both programs set the tone for very high expectations for both students and teachers. The mission of the school is to raise students' aspirations to achieve the very demanding Baccalaureate diploma or certificate with ten students in the graduating class receiving the diploma.

The principal provides strong, inspirational leadership to a hard working and dedicated staff. The administrative team checks frequently that the school is achieving its goals overall and has good systems to ensure that students keep on track to make continuous gains. The school gathers, analyzes and uses data effectively to identify areas for further development and is fully aware of the progress of all students, while recognizing the need to develop systemic internal systems that will ensure consistency and quality of the curriculum, instructional practices and assessments. Students enjoy school and are exposed to a curriculum that is engaging and challenging and this further contributes to students' positive attitudes toward school. Attendance, while improving, remains a challenge for the school. Parents feel proud to be a part of the school and recognize the commitment of the staff put in to ensure they are well informed and that students succeed at high levels.

Professional development is a high priority for the school and the administration fully supports all teachers in meeting their personal development goals and in ensuring that instruction is consistently differentiated to meet the varying needs within every class. Lead teachers from each grade level work with the principal to develop assessments, refine curriculum and contribute to the overall direction of the school. This collaborative structure leads to close relationships between the administration and staff, which fosters a culture of mutual support and trust. However, the school has yet to formalize inter-visitation within and between content areas to ensure best practice is shared and reach higher levels of consistency in teaching and learning, and curriculum and assessment.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal is highly committed to maintaining a rigorous and supportive learning environment where all students are successful.
- The school's rigorous use of data to track students' progress and identify areas for further development has led to exemplary gains for many students.
- The curriculum is compelling and engaging, providing students with challenging learning opportunities and encouraging their positive attitudes toward school.
- The administrative team and lead teachers work collaboratively to support staff to continuously improve professional practice and academic outcomes for students.
- Professional development for teachers is aligned both with the needs of the school and with teachers' aspirations and goals.
- The staff, students and parents share and demonstrate high expectations for improving student achievement.
- Students are very reflective about their personal progress and are actively involved in evaluating their work, setting their own learning goals.

### What the school needs to improve

- Develop a formalized program for inter-visitation, both within and across content areas to share best practice, promote cross-curricular links and involve teachers more actively in whole-school evaluation.
- Support teachers in using data and assessments to differentiate the curriculum and instruction effectively to meet the varying needs of students.
- Continue to review and develop additional procedures to improve attendance.

## 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 well developed.**

Comprehensive data management systems represent a strong feature of the strong feature of the school's work. Administrators and faculty gather, analyze and interpret a wide range of information systematically to gain a clear picture of each student's progress and achievement. Regent's scores, credit accumulation and attendance data relating to cohorts and subgroups within the school are reviewed methodically to reveal the needs and learning outcomes of all students. The extensive use of data in all core subjects results in staff identifying students' strengths and areas for improvement. Focused instruction, based on this information has led to exemplary gains for many subgroups.

Staff design their own periodic assessments and other diagnostic measures that are standardized across grades. They use these outcomes successfully to plan the instructional program and make timely and strategic decisions to modify practices to improve student outcomes. These strategies enable teachers to gain a continuously improving understanding of all student progress. The refinement of grading and periodic assessment systems has improved the feedback provided to teachers, students and parents and resulted in continued progress of all students. Curriculum teams develop tools and systems for teachers to use in analyzing data and ways of differentiating units to meet students at their level of instruction.

The school places strong emphasis on involving students in taking responsibility for their own learning. Students utilize unit reflection logs efficiently to evaluate their work and set themselves both long and short-term learning goals. They articulate clearly their next steps in learning and investigation, and are highly reflective about their personal and academic progress.

In spite of the school's efforts, attendance remains an issue for the school. An established attendance team, consisting of one representative from each grade team, social worker and principal, meets biweekly to review data and to develop and implement strategies to improve student attendance. The information has enabled the administration to create action plans, compare the school's performance over time and develop solutions that more effectively address this issue, resulting in modest attendance gains.

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

**This area of the school’s work is well developed.**

The shared leadership process is highly effective in student goal setting, programming and class assignments. Teachers collaborate closely with leaders and other staff to identify instructional goals, create periodic assessments, reflect on and plan suitable action plans. This process is undertaken successfully in all content areas. Core teams, focused on data analysis, inquiry, and periodic assessments, have been created in response to the need to align professional development with practice and further develop teachers’ skills in devising their own assessments so they are highly focused on the learning they wish to evaluate. The periodic assessment team is investigating effective ways to incorporate student reflection as well as ways to remediate effectively based on assessment data.

The Comprehensive Educational Plan is a collaboratively developed working document and interim data is frequently used to evaluate progress towards goals in order to revise strategic plans as needed.

The principal has worked with the staff to set goals for student achievement. Teachers work in collaborative teams to set and monitor goals for their departments and to ensure that the goals match the academic and personal needs of individual students. Students are involved in the evaluation of their work and setting their own learning goals and are very reflective about their personal progress.

Both teachers and counselors keep parents well informed about their child’s progress through frequent communications. The school provides parents with a good flow of information on how well their children are progressing with four annual standards-based report cards, four progress reports and open access to teachers via telephone or e-mail as requested. This comprehensive approach results in a culture that encourages parents to participate fully in school life. The constant flow of information also ensures that high expectations are effectively communicated and shared by staff, students and their parents.

**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 well developed.**

The school has achieved the distinction of delivering an accredited International Baccalaureate program that it is refining to meet New York State standards. This program is providing a rigorous curriculum, including the arts, and an assessment system that promotes culture of rigor and excellence. In addition, a complementary program has been adopted to support students to acquire the skills and knowledge they need to graduate and succeed in college. Students are enthusiastic learners with positive attitudes toward school and are making good academic progress as a result. However, parents and students express a desire for more extensive after-school programs that include recreational activities to complement the rigorous academic program.

The school is developing teachers' skills in differentiating instruction to meet the varying needs of students more effectively. Students have opportunities to work in teams, collaborate on assignments, question and taking notes. In an IB chemistry class, for instance, students prepared self-designed labs, which included assessments and rubrics.

There is a high level of mutual trust and respect across the school. The critical friends group provides an arena for teachers to brainstorm and discuss best ways to meet students' needs resulting in effective ongoing supports and high levels of trust. Teachers take full responsibility for their students' progress and attainment of goals. They give freely of their time, before, during and after school to support students. This is valued highly by parents and is a primary reason for their positive response to the school. Students support this view. As one student said, "Our teachers are always here for us, as long as we are willing to meet them half way." This demonstrates the willingness of students to participate as partners in their own learning. The school recognizes the need to shift the balance toward giving even greater responsibility for their learning to prepare them better to enter post secondary education.

**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 well developed.**

Professional development is aligned closely to school-wide goals to improve student learning. The administrative team visits classes both formally and informally on a regular basis to observe teaching, giving useful feedback that helps teachers grow professionally. Utilizing a broad range of current performance data, the team has an excellent knowledge of the strengths and the areas of development for each teacher. This enables the administration to provide professional development, coaching or other opportunities that are targeted to the needs of individual teachers and enable them to attain their professional goals.

All staff participates in grade teams, content teams, inquiry teams and learning core teams. The high functioning inquiry team is investigating how to improve students' use of academic vocabulary across the grades. In addition, collaborative structures such as the critical friends and student support teams enhance the collaborative culture focused on developing the whole child by supporting students' academic and personal needs.

Well-respected team leaders support the relatively new staff, who are satisfied with the assistance they receive. Staff attends summer induction designed to transmit and introduce new staff to the norms and expectation of the school. However, they have recognized the need to develop a formalized program for intervisitation, both within and across content areas to share best practice and promote cross-curricular links consistently. An end-of-year retreat enables teachers to reflect on and evaluate the impact of professional development on their practice. This structure supports the establishment of school goals for all members of the community. It has been an effective in enabling new and experienced staff to work collaboratively in creating and evaluating the schools' mission and goals.

**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 well developed.**

The principal, assistant principal and lead teachers form a cohesive team. They have communicated a clear vision to continuously improve student progress that is shared by the school community. This shared confidence is driving the school forward.

The school uses data effectively to measure academic success, make timely interim adjustments to school goals and monitor student learning and achievement. It also enables the administration to make beneficial strategic adjustments to the curriculum and organization of the school. For instance, following sharp analysis of data outcomes, the school made the decision to self contain the special education class and have them taught by subject specialist. This has resulted in improved academic outcomes for this subgroup population as noted on the school's most recent Progress Report.

Teachers are highly self-evaluative, but are not yet fully involved with whole school evaluation. The staff consists of relatively new yet effective teachers who are still developing instructional skills. The school is developing structured opportunities for teachers to visit other classrooms to further share the best practice that exists within the school. Collaboratively designed periodic assessments and standards-based rubrics are used effectively to assess student achievement throughout the course of study allowing timely adjustment to be made where needed.

# School Quality Criteria 2008-2009

<b>School name: Mott Hall Bronx High School</b>	△	▷	✓	+
<b>Overall QR Score</b>				<b>X</b>
<b>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.</b>				
<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?				<b>X</b>
1.2 focus analysis on the learning outcomes and needs of all sub-groups of students?				<b>X</b>
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?			<b>X</b>	
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?				<b>X</b>
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>				<b>X</b>
<b>WD</b>				
<b>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.</b>				
<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?				<b>X</b>
2.2 use collaborative and data-informed processes to develop the school’s Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP)?				<b>X</b>
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?				<b>X</b>
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?				<b>X</b>
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>				<b>X</b>
<b>WD</b>				

## 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.

<b>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.</b>							
<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			
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>				<b>X</b>			
<b>WD</b>							
<b>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.</b>							
<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			
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>				<b>X</b>			
<b>WD</b>							
<b>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.</b>							
<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			
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>				<b>X</b>			
<b>WD</b>							
<b>Quality Review Scoring Key</b>							
△	<b>Underdeveloped</b>	➤	<b>Underdeveloped with Proficient Features</b>	✓	<b>Proficient</b>	+	<b>Well Developed</b>