

# Quality Review Report 2009-2010

**The Bay Academy for the Arts and Sciences**

**Intermediate School 98  
1401 Emmons Avenue  
Brooklyn  
NY 11235**

**Principal: Maria Timo**

**Dates of review: May 10 - 11, 2010**

**Lead Reviewer: Isabel DiMola**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

The Bay Academy for Arts and Sciences is a middle school with 1,096 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 10% Black, 9% Hispanic, 56% White, and 24% Asian students. The student body includes 1% English language learners and 4% special education students. Boys account for 45% of the students enrolled and girls account for 55%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2008 - 2009 was 95.3%.

### Overall Evaluation

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

The new principal has energized the school by building a culture where the deep analysis of data is the cornerstone to all instructional and organizational decisions. Thorough data collection from a variety of sources including ARIS, Acuity, and formative and summative assessments, allows school leaders and teachers to have a clear understanding of school trends. The school is purposeful in its response to outcomes, effectively monitoring and revising instructional decisions. The overall needs of students drive the use of resources. Investments in several online instructional tools supplement instruction, resulting in students making progress throughout the school year. Programming decisions are revised continually throughout the school year, ensuring that students receive optimal classroom time to build skills. Goal setting on the classroom level is expected but not yet consistent across all grades and subject areas. This leads to pockets of inconsistency in the monitoring of student progress.

School-wide professional development supports teacher ability in using data to understand student needs and to plan instruction. This results in effective classroom differentiation of instruction that targets the needs of individual and groups of students. Flexible grouping, as well as tiered questioning and scaffolding assignments, allows students to gain access to material while building skills and engaging in rigorous instruction that strengthens their ability to think critically. Although instruction is in alignment to standards, the school does not yet have deep curriculum mapping in place to focus on key content strands across all subject areas. This leads to some inconsistency and incoherence in instruction. Teacher teams engage in meaningful inquiry work with monitoring by a core inquiry team. Faculty participates on the core team allowing for the building of professional capacity across the school. Teachers receive excellent support and the principal uses formal structures to supervise pedagogic growth. New teachers have mentors. There are opportunities to share best practices, inter-visit colleagues classrooms and study research based instructional methodologies. Teacher supervision varies by grade and department, as the formalized structures used by the principal to monitor teacher growth are not embedded practices of all supervisors. As a result, there are inconsistencies in how teachers receive guidance in reaching their professional goals.

Parents and students are aware of the school's high expectations. Parents are valued members of the school community and have a strong voice in decision-making and goal setting. As one parent commented, "it is just amazing, the high level of caring about students and parents, unlike any other school." School leaders are accessible to parents and hold monthly breakfasts to build a partnership between the school and families.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- Leaders make effective organizational decisions that align with school instructional goals and support efforts toward improved student learning.
  - Strategic programming decisions ensure that students receive instruction that elevates outcomes. Data study revealed a need for differentiated interventions for grade 6 students. A resultant reprogramming provided an additional weekly period of instruction in English language arts and math with students grouped homogeneously, allowing for targeted instruction that yielded progress across the grade for all groups of students.
  - Student outcomes indicated that high achieving students were not making yearly progress in English language arts. Therefore, the use of an online instructional tool provides students with daily differentiated, multi-leveled instruction that directly relates to their individual skills needs. A continual stream of data informs instructional decisions leading to exceptional student progress.
- Thorough analysis of a range of data by administrators and teachers provides a clear understanding of school needs and leverage points for improvement.
  - School leaders are purposeful in collecting and analyzing school, class, and student data at strategic points throughout the school year. Sophisticated organization systems including Edline, an online record-keeping program that organizes data from many sources, including Automate the School, ARIS, and Acuity, allow for thorough analysis and superior recognition of trends in student performance and tracking of progress, providing ongoing understanding of areas of need throughout the school.
  - The consistent collection and analysis of formative and summative assessments, including teacher created assessments, Acuity predictives, and daily results from a computerized reading program, result in a thorough understanding of student and groups of students' progress at regular intervals throughout the school year. Instruction and intervention services are coherent and target student and groups of student needs. This results in significant student progress across the school.
- School leaders have consistent methods of evaluating the effectiveness of professional collaborations and structures to build teacher capacity.
  - A core inquiry team comprised of teachers, supervisors, and coaches engages in ongoing evaluation of the work done by grade and subject inquiry teams. By acting as liaisons to teacher teams, core team members build the teams' capacity as instructional leaders. They communicate school-wide findings and support team practice. Thorough analysis of targeted student progress by the core team leads to deep understanding of the impact particular strategies are having on targeted groups' performance. Members of the core team present successful strategies to the faculty. As a result, there is instructional and curricular coherence across the school that corresponds to improving student outcomes and progress for groups of students.

- Differentiated instruction provides access to the curriculum for all learners leading to high levels of student engagement and improving student performance.
  - Highly effective differentiated practices demonstrate teachers' ability to use data to plan lessons that provide access and engagement for all students. Instruction encompasses flexible grouping that aligns to the outcomes of daily assessments. Online tools and programs supplement instruction to provide students with greater support at appropriate levels. One student notes, "It helps me learn and I feel like I'm accomplishing something." Consequently, all students are progressing toward reaching learning targets.
  - Instruction promotes high-level thinking by giving students activities that require analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of content material. Individual lessons across all subject areas provide opportunities for rigorous participation. By reflecting upon their learning and demonstrating understandings through choices of projects and activities, students are highly engaged and aware of their progress.
- School leaders and faculty have high expectations for students and actively engage parents to be partners in their children's education.
  - Parents are involved in school decision making and goal setting through participation on the school leadership team, where they have a strong voice in setting goals, and participating in modifying the Comprehensive Educational Plan. Monthly breakfasts with the principal allows parents to voice concerns and give input into school events. Parents are partners with the school in ensuring the highest level of education for students.
  - Newsletters, parent meetings, individual conferences, and online venues communicate high expectations. Sophisticated use of Edline, an online tool that allows parents to monitor student data including attendance, homework, and assessment results on a weekly basis keeps parents continually informed. This provides for ongoing knowledge and understanding of academic performance, allowing for effective participation by parents in guiding and monitoring their children's academic pursuits.
- School leaders and teachers continually monitor and revise instructional decisions, resulting in coherence and improving progress across the school.
  - Regular cabinet meetings attended by administrators and teacher leaders are dedicated to analyzing student data to understand the impact instructional decisions are having on outcomes. Thorough disaggregating of data allows for deep understanding of student performance trends and modifying instructional practice when necessary. For example, the programming of grade 8 students for an additional period of English language arts in response to data showing vocabulary deficits as hindering progress of all groupings. The additional period, together with implementing an on-line vocabulary program that target student needs, has resulted in progress toward reaching learning targets.
- Differentiated professional development supports teacher growth and aligns to school goals so that instructional practice is coherent across the school.
  - Teachers engage in ongoing opportunities to develop their skills in using data to differentiate instruction to meet student needs. Workshops in using ARIS, Acuity, and other assessments allow teachers to understand student performance and implement instruction that aligns with student needs. Teachers demonstrate

superior ability to plan data-driven instruction that leads to high levels of student performance and instructional coherence across the school.

- School leaders collaborate with faculty to enhance professional learning. This is extremely evident in the support of new teachers who with their mentors participate in intervisitations of colleagues' classrooms to support their pedagogic growth. School leaders provide forums for focused professional discussions on best practices, effective methods of evaluating student work, and research-based methodologies ensuring that new teachers have the tools to provide rigorous, engaging instruction that aligns to student and school needs.

### **What the school needs to improve**

- Develop comprehensive curriculum maps across all subject areas to provide instruction that focuses on key standards addressing student needs.
  - Instruction is highly rigorous and differentiated based upon formative and summative assessments. The practice of curriculum mapping to articulate key content strands is not thoroughly developed in all subject areas. This results in pockets of inconsistency in the implementation of skills-focused instruction in some classes.
- Systematize goal-setting structures to ensure that measurable interim and long-term goals are set and measured consistently across all classes and subject areas.
  - Although teachers are acutely aware of student levels, the practice of setting formal goals for students and groups of students that have interim benchmarks to measure progress is not consistent across the school. As a result, there is some incoherence in monitoring the progress and outcomes for some students and classes.
- Develop supervisory capacity to ensure that teacher observation and the analysis of learning outcomes are effective in building instructional coherence across the school.
  - Supervision of teachers by the principal allows teachers to build pedagogic practice that aligns to individual needs and making progress toward reaching school goals. However, this practice is not consistent with all supervisors resulting in uneven supervision to ensure that all teachers are progressing in reaching professional goals.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2009-2010

<b>School name: The Bay Academy for the Arts and Sciences</b>	<b>Δ</b>	<b>▶</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>+</b>
<b>Overall QR Score</b>				<b>X</b>
<b>Quality Statement 1 – Instructional and Organizational Coherence: The school has a coherent strategy to support student learning that aligns curriculum, instruction and organizational decisions.</b>				
<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</i>	<b>Δ</b>	<b>▶</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>+</b>
1.1 Design engaging, rigorous and coherent curricula, including the Arts, for a variety of learners and aligned to key State standards?			<b>X</b>	
1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best, and ensure that it is: aligned to the curriculum, engaging, and differentiated to enable all students to produce meaningful work products?				<b>X</b>
1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet student learning needs?				<b>X</b>
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?				<b>X</b>
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>				<b>X</b>
<b>Quality Statement 2 – Gather and Analyze Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, analyze and share information on student learning outcomes to understand school and student progress over time.</b>				
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	<b>Δ</b>	<b>▶</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>+</b>
2.1 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the school level?				<b>X</b>
2.2 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the team and classroom level?				<b>X</b>
2.3 Use or develop tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize and analyze student performance trends?				<b>X</b>
2.4 Engage in an open exchange of information with students and families regarding students' learning needs and outcomes?				<b>X</b>
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>				<b>X</b>

<b>Quality Statement 3 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently engage the school community and use data to set and track suitably high goals for accelerating student learning.</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	△	➤	✓	+			
3.1 Establish a coherent vision of future development that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are understood and supported by the entire school community?			X				
3.2 Use collaborative and data informed processes to set measurable and differentiated learning goals for student subgroups, and students in need of additional support?			X				
3.3 Ensure the achievement of learning goals by tracking progress at the school, teacher team and classroom level?				X			
3.4 Communicate high expectations to students and families, engage them in decision-making, and promote active involvement in the school community?				X			
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>			X				
<b>Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school’s goals and student learning and emotional needs.</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	△	➤	✓	+			
4.1 Use the observation of classroom teaching and the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection, with a special focus on new teachers?			X				
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning?				X			
4.3 Provide professional development that promotes independent and shared reflection, opportunities for leadership growth, and enables teachers to continuously evaluate and revise their classroom practices to improve learning outcomes?				X			
4.4 Integrate child/youth development, support services and partnerships with families and outside organizations with the school-wide goals to accelerate the academic and personal growth of students?				X			
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>				X			
<b>Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for monitoring and evaluating progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	△	➤	✓	+			
5.1 Evaluate the quality of curricular, instructional and organizational decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school?				X			
5.2 Evaluate systems for assessing students, organizing data, and sharing information with student and families, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school?			X				
5.3 Establish and sustain a transparent, collaborative system for measuring progress towards interim and long term goals and making adjustments during the year and over time?				X			
5.4 Use data to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of structured professional collaboration, capacity building and leadership development strategies?				X			
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>				X			
<b>Quality Review Scoring Key</b>							
△	<b>Underdeveloped</b>	➤	<b>Underdeveloped with Proficient Features</b>	✓	<b>Proficient</b>	+	<b>Well Developed</b>