

# Quality Review Report 2009-2010

**Abraham Lincoln**

**High School K410  
2800 Ocean Parkway  
Brooklyn  
NY 11235**

**Principal: Ari Hoogenboom**

**Dates of review: May 10 - 12, 2010**

**Lead Reviewer: Linda Waite**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Abraham Lincoln is a high school with 2,558 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 36% Black, 21% Hispanic, 26% White, and 17% Asian students. The student body includes 18.7% English language learners and 11.3% special education students. Boys account for 56% of the students enrolled and girls account for 44%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2008 - 2009 was 87.9%.

### Overall Evaluation

#### **This school is Proficient.**

Abraham Lincoln High School is a large comprehensive high school that was redesigned into smaller learning communities as part of the principal's vision to meet the academic and personal needs of its students. The school environment is safe, warm, and welcoming with student work and achievements decorating halls and bulletin boards. It is not uncommon to hear administrators and teachers greet students by their first names and offer words of encouragement. As a result, students feel valued and enjoy coming to school. The school offers a broad curriculum and recently added Virtual Enterprise to its many offerings. Students recently competed in the Virtual Enterprise Competition winning first and fifth place honors and recognition for its well crafted web-site. However, curriculum is not consistently rigorous in all content areas; this is especially true of the Special Education curriculum. The principal and cabinet recognize this and work cohesively to address curricula and instructional issues on a regular basis.

School leaders effectively use a variety of school-wide data that is shared with the School Leadership Team for their recommendations. Although the team meets on a regular basis, there is no formal structure in place to review goals and action plans for progress and make revisions when necessary. Teacher teams, from each of the learning communities, analyze a wide variety of formative and summative assessments to develop a clear picture of group needs, identify instructional strategies, and share best practices necessary to improve student performance and progress. However, not all teachers are setting interim-goals and bench marks, nor are they using a uniform tracking tool to measure student progress. While most teachers are using data to group students, few teachers are using data to differentiate instruction. Scheduled classroom inter-visitations by teachers, both within and outside their community, result in reflection, revision of instructional practices and professional growth that is beginning to have a positive impact on students' learning outcomes.

Wise budgetary and organizational decisions such as utilizing a school-based option, provides additional learning time to promote adult and student growth. The school's purchase of an on-line grading system that allows parents to monitor real time attendance, homework, and test scores coupled with the purchase of voice mail accounts for teachers results in better communication with families. The school provides a myriad of school-based and community partnerships that provide academic, health and social-emotional supports for students and their families.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school is a safe place where students engage in learning and appreciate the support they receive for their personal and academic development.
  - The Learning Environment Survey is responsible for the school's focus on safety and respect. Deans visit classes to discuss behavioral expectations and consequences while teachers receive professional development on classroom management, and respect. As a result, teachers and students are more respectful of one another, in-class incidents have decreased and classroom environments are conducive to learning.
  - The school's creation of seven Small Learning Communities, each overseen by a core of carefully selected school leaders and teachers, promotes personalization through warm, caring, supportive relationships that foster student learning. Additionally, students take advantage of lunch time tutoring by peers, as well as teachers serving as senior buddies which impacts positively on their academic achievement. School leaders celebrate student successes at fall and spring award ceremonies. Consequently, students are motivated to achieve and succeed.
- Teacher teams collaborate consistently to examine student work, plan together, and inter-visit classrooms to share ideas and best practices that impact positively on learning.
  - Teacher teams meet regularly to review various assessments and identify strengths, weaknesses, and patterns. Teams use protocols to evaluate assignments, student work, and identify instructional strategies. Furthermore, teachers participate in scheduled inter-visitations. As a result, teachers feel more confident about sharing and revising practices, and students are improving necessary vocabulary, organizational and writing skills.
- Very extensive networks of specialized support personnel ensure that the academic and personal needs of students are addressed in order to promote student achievement.
  - After every marking period, directors from each of the seven academies schedule individual student conferences which allow students to have one-on-one contact with a counselor, social worker, or teacher who knows them well. Consequently, students feel well supported and contract to attend academic intervention services necessary to pass courses and regents exams.
  - Lincoln's partnerships with Good Shepherd Services, Jewish Board of Family Services, Coney Island Hospital, Health Corp and YABC provide student and family counseling, after-school tutoring, health awareness and additional learning time resulting in improved attendance, scholarship, and high school completion rates.

- School leaders and faculty make informed and effective budgetary and organizational decisions across all aspects of the school to support student and adult learning.
  - The principal's decision to utilize a school-based option creates common planning time for tenth grade teachers and allows them to participate in Academy meetings twice a week. Additionally, the budget supports the United Federation of Teachers Resource Center that operates within the school. As a result, teachers engage in professional learning and share best practices that impact on improving students' learning outcomes.
  - The budget also supports three-term integrated math classes, a double period self-contained Living Environment class that stresses content and test-taking skills, and a support class for students who fail the English language arts exam. As a result, more students are earning credits and 18 out of 23 students in the lowest third who previously failed the ELA regents received a 65% or higher on the January exam.
- The principal and cabinet work cohesively to review the quality of curricular, instructional and organizational decisions and make adjustments to meet students' learning needs.
  - The assistant principals' review of written curriculum and instruction on a regular basis is responsible for the school's decision to partner with the Association of Supervisors and Curriculum Development to provide on-going professional development on curriculum- mapping, backward design, and differentiation. As a result, twenty-five teachers are developing curriculum maps in various content areas that address the differentiated needs of students.
- Administrators and faculty use a wide range of assessment data to organize and analyze trends in student performance to make school wide decisions.
  - The school's analysis of scholarship and Regents data results in a variety of intervention programs such as Saturday Academy and credit recovery. The school's four year graduation rate has increased by 13.6% and the significant increase in the weighted graduation rate indicates that more students are earning Regents and advanced Regents diplomas.
  - The school's focus on attendance data and utilization of unified support personnel including; attendance teacher, guidance counselor, and aide is responsible for a consistent three-year increase in tenth, eleventh, and special education attendance rates.

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

- Promote consistency in differentiated instruction based on data so that lesson planning reflects purposeful grouping, students are challenged, and tasks are leveled to maximize learning for all students.
  - Many teachers utilize data to establish groups based on performance, skill, or learning style; however, this is not yet an embedded practice. Presently, differentiation is not the norm in most classes. As a result, students are often unchallenged and individual learning needs are not being addressed.

- Ensure that classroom teachers and teams are utilizing data to set long and short-term learning goals that are measurable, time-based, and are shared with students and parents in order to promote ownership.
  - Presently, many teachers have students review report cards to set marking period goals such as grades, attendance, and study habits. Since these are not targeted learning goals, they do not focus on needed skills to improve learning outcomes for students. Consequently, acceleration of learning is impeded and not all students meet with the level of success possible.
  - Teacher teams utilize Regents data to set goals for groups of students who failed Regents with a score of 55% - 64% in January. Teams also look at student work to identify underlying reasons for error. However, teams do not use this information to set differentiated interim-goals and benchmarks. Therefore, all students' specific learning needs are not clearly identified, nor are all teachers revising their instructional strategies to meet the learning needs of all of their students.
- Utilize a uniform tracking tool to monitor students' performance and progress over time to evaluate and modify instructional practices necessary to promote academic growth.
  - Teachers use various methods of monitoring student progress including roll books, index cards, class rosters and electronic grade books; however, there is no uniformity. Consequently, it is difficult to monitor student performance and progress trends over time.
  - Variations in the methods teachers use to monitor students' progress hamper their ability to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional strategies on student performance and progress. This results in some students not demonstrating sufficient academic growths as evidenced by the progress report.
- Formalize structures for monitoring goals and action plans in a timely matter so that school-wide, class, and student goals can be adjusted to maximize achievement.
  - The school collects and analyzes data to establish the Comprehensive Educational Plan which focus on improvement. While the team meets on a monthly basis, there is no formal structure in place for the team including parents and students to monitor goals and evaluate progress. As a result, necessary adjustments are not made in a timely manner thus limiting achievement.
  - Some teachers, especially the 9<sup>th</sup> grade Academy teachers, set targeted, measurable, interim-goals for their students which they record and review periodically to measure individual academic progress. However, this is not an embedded practice and does not take place on regular basis at all grade levels.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2009-2010

School name: Abraham Lincoln High School	△	▷	✓	+
Overall QR Score			X	
<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>	△	▷	✓	+
1.1 Design engaging, rigorous and coherent curricula, including the Arts, for a variety of learners and aligned to key State standards?			X	
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?		X		
1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet student learning needs?				X
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?				X
Overall score for Quality Statement 1			X	
<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>	△	▷	✓	+
2.1 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the school level?			X	
2.2 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the team and classroom level?			X	
2.3 Use or develop tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize and analyze student performance trends?			X	
2.4 Engage in an open exchange of information with students and families regarding students' learning needs and outcomes?			X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 2			X	

<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>