

# **Quality Review Report**

## **2009-2010**

**Brooklyn Collegiate**

**High School 493**

**2021 Bergen Street**

**Brooklyn**

**NY 11233**

**Principal: Amote Sias**

**Dates of review: November 9 - 10, 2009**

**Lead Reviewer: Linda A. Waite**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Brooklyn Collegiate is a middle/high school with 612 students from grade 6 through grade 12. The school population comprises 86% Black, 10% Hispanic, less than 1% White, 2% Asian, and 1% other students. The student body includes 1% English language learners and 10% special education students. Boys account for 49% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2008 - 2009 was 90%.

### Overall Evaluation

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

Brooklyn Collegiate is a small, theme-based school that presents a clean, welcoming, caring and respectful environment. The principal is a strong, effective, instructional leader whose vision of every student graduating and becoming college bound is well communicated and supported by the school community. As a result, the school offers a broad and challenging curricula consisting of higher-level courses, including the arts, which qualify students for Regents and Advanced Regents diplomas. However, the level of rigor varies from classroom to classroom and does not always maximize learning outcomes for all students. College Now and advanced placement courses prepare students to meet the demands of college. The school's clearly defined high academic and behavioral expectations motivate students to push themselves, and to raise the bar on their learning. All teachers support student learning by using rubrics to evaluate student work, notate level of performance and provide verbal and written feedback. As a result, students are able to articulate goals, strengths, and weaknesses. However, the identification of clear next steps on student work is not yet a common practice. The school's widely held belief that it takes a village to educate a child is reflected in the school's comprehensive guidance approach. This, coupled with effective partnerships with the Sports and Arts in School Foundation and College Board, helps to accelerate the academic and personal growth of students. Consequently, there are 10% more students on the honor roll this term.

The school effectively utilizes data to drive all of its instructional and organizational decisions. The leadership team's use of data results in a well-informed Comprehensive Educational Plan that promotes student and adult learning. School leaders carefully align the budget to school-wide goals. Consequently, students benefit from double period classes, intervention services, and additional paraprofessionals, all of which support student learning, performance and progress. Leaders and faculty have an excellent understanding of student progress and performance and make effective organizational adjustments whenever necessary. Thus, various groups of students are making good academic progress. The principal and assistant principals use snapshots, formal and informal observations, and teacher surveys to develop differentiated professional development opportunities that align to school goals. Teachers utilize a school-made rubric to evaluate and reflect on their own practice. As a result, more teachers are using data to plan lessons, establish learning groups, and differentiate instruction in order to meet the needs of a variety of learners. However, this is not yet a fully embedded practice. Effective systems for school self-evaluation and modification positively impact on student learning.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school makes strategic budgetary and organizational decisions that support instructional goals and student learning outcomes.
  - School leaders use the budget wisely, thus allowing the school to provide intervention services such as Saturday Academy, PM school, and credit recovery. As a result, students earn credits and meet promotional and graduation requirements. Additionally, the school funds double-period classes, hires paraprofessionals for general education classes, and a coach to support student learning, performance and progress.
- The principal has a clear vision for the development of the school and students that is well communicated, and is understood and supported by the staff.
  - The school leadership team effectively collects and analyzes a wide variety of assessment data, including the Progress Report, Quality Review, and Learning Environment survey to establish a clear picture of school-wide needs. As a result, the Comprehensive Educational Plan contains highly focused goals and action plans that address utilizing data, differentiation and technology, which help promote student learning. Additionally, the school uses a variety of methods to share goals with the school community including on-line, mailings, PTA meetings, faculty conferences and newsletters. Thus, everyone knows, understands and supports the school's vision.
- School leaders and faculty consistently communicate high expectations to students and parents, which impacts positively on student achievement.
  - The school's excellent use of a unified approach to communicate high expectations to students and families is visible throughout the school. Bulletin boards display pictures of teachers and colleges they attended, student honor rolls, perfect attendance, exemplars of students' work and student college acceptances. These visualizations serve as constant reminders and, as a result, students are highly motivated to succeed.
  - The school disseminates a parent and student handbook that outlines attendance, behavioral and academic expectations. This, coupled with town meetings for students and workshops for parents, allows for deeper conversations about how students and families can meet goals. Teachers define clear expectations for students and their parents by distributing course expectations, contracts, and grading policies. As a result, there is a shared commitment to high expectations and achievement.
- The school effectively utilizes the observation process to develop purposeful, differentiated professional development opportunities that align to school goals.
  - Teachers attend professional development on the use of data, differentiated instruction and technology. Additionally, the school's creation of a teachers' academy offers professional development in five areas, including behavior management and organizational strategies, to

novice-level teachers. The staff developer provides individual support to a small group of teachers on a regular basis. Consequently, teachers feel well supported, and are revising their instructional practice so that students' learning outcomes are improving.

- The school utilizes common planning time so that middle- and high-school teacher teams can discuss their practice with peers, share their expertise, inter-visit, engage in guided practice, and self-reflect. For example, the middle-school teacher team practices differentiation by beginning with a literal level question to create a range of questions that involve higher order thinking skills. As a result, teachers feel more confident and utilize these strategies in planning lessons. Consequently, students engage in critical thinking and student achievement is improving. Additionally, the school's creation of a teaching rubric serves as a reflective tool for teachers to use in evaluating their practice. Teachers' instructional levels are therefore increasing and positively influencing student outcomes.
- Leaders and faculty use a wide variety of data to develop a clear understanding of the performance and progress of students, which informs instruction and effective organizational adjustments.
  - Teacher chairs, leading various teams, consistently collect and analyze assessment data in order to adjust instructional practices that better promote student learning. For example, the high school English language arts team conducts an in-depth item analysis of the Regents examination to determine areas of strength and weakness. This has led to a focus on writing, with an emphasis on organization, by using strategies such as graphic organizers at the grade 11 level. Consequently, student performance is steadily improving.
  - Teacher teams at every level constantly review class test results and periodic assessments to identify trends, track progress and adjust teaching practices. As a result, students' learning needs are met and groups of students at the middle- and high-school level are making good academic progress.
- The school's support personnel and partnerships effectively support students and families and promote students' growth and development.
  - The school effectively utilizes its many support personnel to provide a well-organized youth development program. Counselors conduct lessons for students on understanding transcripts, promotional and graduation requirements and available intervention services. Social workers provide at-risk counseling to address personal issues. Students therefore take ownership for their learning and make academic progress. The college advisor works hand-in-hand with students and parents to prepare them for the PSATs, SATs, the college application process, and financial assistance programs. Consequently, parents are well informed and feel confident that they can support their children's post-secondary plans.
  - The partnership with the Sports and Arts in Schools Foundation allows students to explore interests like dance, drum line and sign language, in a supportive environment. Students are building confidence and are translating interests into paid work experiences. Additionally, the partnership with the College Board provides support to students and

families by offering college scholarships. Therefore, students are motivated to learn, achieve and succeed.

- The principal has established effective systems for school self-evaluation, review and modification of decisions that impact on improving student learning.
  - The school's consistent collection and analysis of data, on a regular basis, is responsible for the timely scheduling of academic intervention programs such as Saturday Academy, peer-tutoring, and credit recovery. As a result, students receive the necessary academic support and learning time to improve their classroom and Regents performance, as well as to earn the credits necessary to meet graduation requirements.
  - School leaders review scholarship data at mid and end of year to make programmatic changes for students and teachers, which leads to differentiated courses for students. For example, the school programs grade nine students for a study skills class, a United States history class or a global studies class for a single or double period, depending on their learning needs. Furthermore, the school adjusts teachers' assignments so that students' needs and teachers' skills are carefully aligned. Consequently, more students are meeting with academic success as measured by report card and Regents grades.

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

- Design more specific curriculum maps, to improve learning outcomes for a variety of learners with different needs.
  - The high school utilizes course outlines that indicate key topics, State standards, and skills. It does not include tiered questions, differentiated activities, assignments, or homework. As a result, the level of rigor varies across grade levels and subject areas, and is dependent upon teacher experience and skill level. Consequently, not all students are making anticipated gains.
- Improve differentiation of instruction so that all lessons engage students and offer suitable challenge at their level to promote thinking and learning.
  - Teachers effectively use data to form groups based on performance or skill level. Some teachers use data to differentiate lessons according to learning style, literacy and skill level. However, this is not yet an embedded practice across the grade levels or content areas and not all students, including students with special needs, are being challenged at an appropriate level.
- Strengthen all teachers' responses to student work, to reflect guiding comments, level of performance and clear next steps.
  - All teachers use rubrics to evaluate student work, notate performance level and give positive feedback on what students do well. However, teachers do not all identify clear next steps on written work on display in the classroom. This leads to a false impression that the students' work is not in need of revision; thus impeding progress for some students.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2009-2010

<b>School name: Brooklyn Collegiate</b>	Δ	➤	✓	+
<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>	Δ	➤	✓	+
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>	Δ	➤	✓	+
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>				<b>X</b>			
<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>				<b>X</b>			
<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>				<b>X</b>			
<b>Quality Review Scoring Key</b>							
△	<b>Underdeveloped</b>	➤	<b>Underdeveloped with Proficient Features</b>	✓	<b>Proficient</b>	+	<b>Well Developed</b>