

Quality Review Report

2009-2010

**Brooklyn High School for
Leadership and Community Service**

**High School 616
300 Willoughby Street
Brooklyn
NY 11205**

Principal: Georgia Kouriampolis

Dates of review: December 7 - 8, 2009

Lead Reviewer: Ronald Feinstein

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Brooklyn High School for Leadership and Community Service is a high school with 151 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 66.9% Black, 25.8% Hispanic, 5.3% White, and 1.3% Asian students. The student body includes 3% English language learners and 16% special education students. Boys account for 55% of the students enrolled and girls account for 45%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2008 - 2009 was 85%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

This transfer school has developed a sense of mutual respect and established an environment that strives to counter the effects of truancy and a lack of academic engagement. As transfer school students may exhibit low credit accumulation and multiple Regents failure, the principal, Community Based Organization staff, guidance counselors and school leaders constantly evaluate transcripts in two-week cycles to check on progress. An effective collaboration with the Brooklyn Bureau of Community Services assigns advocate counselors who meet with students 3 times a day focusing on school culture, academics and socio-emotional well being, with students making improvements in pass rates. An on-going analysis of data from these inputs generates continual re-creation of the schools' master schedule so that students are offered the specific classes and Regents preparation needed for graduation. Staff and students have access to a computer program allowing timely review of student information including data about attendance, grades, benchmark analyses, log book entries and homework. An analysis of five benchmark assessments drives instruction and provides formative data that result in adjustments to curriculum and supports for students. Teachers and advocate counselors conduct goal-setting sessions, after the third benchmark for every student, that is broadly aligned with students' learning needs but these lack a focus on essential State indicators and therefore do not have sufficient impact on student outcomes. Setting goals is new for most students and is a developing practice for most teachers and therefore goals chosen often lack rigor. Bi-weekly benchmarks mailed to families include grades, but do not describe clear next steps for learning or suggestions for how families may assist their students.

New teaching staff collaborates with a mentor and content coach and meet in common planning periods. Administrators and teachers analyze student transcripts, review grading policy, and then recommend students for additional instruction. This dedicated time is in all teachers' daily schedule. The principal's vision for the future development of the school includes a professional development plan that aligns with school-wide and individual teacher goals, regularly scheduled classroom inter-visitations. Although it refines how teachers assess what students have learned, building on current systems to communicate this data school-wide, teachers personal goals matched to whole school goals is not established fully. Teams of teachers have begun to use protocols for analyzing student work during collaborative team meetings. The inquiry process is developing the skills to uncover the alignment and coherence between what students need to know and do, that result in refinements to the curriculum.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal and staff work as a unified team to create a calm, respectful, supportive and inclusive environment where students, parents and teachers are valued and take pride in being part of this school community.
 - The school, in close collaboration with its Community Based Organization, effectively integrates a philosophy of youth development that helps each student foster supportive relationships with adults and peers and builds confidence and self-esteem for students as learners.
 - Students are assigned an advocate counselor who meets with them at least 3 times a day. Advisories meet twice weekly and focus on school culture, the academic and the socio-emotional well being of students. These meetings result in immediate counseling interventions that include clear actions for classroom expectations.
- There is an ongoing understanding of the performance and progress of individuals, by group and by subject, which informs instruction and organizational adjustments.
 - Community Based Organization staff, guidance counselors and school leaders constantly evaluate transcripts in order to meet each student's needs and ensure that students programs are effective.
 - Transcript analysis for higher-credited students drives the continual re-creation of the school's master schedule to ensure these students receive the classes and preparation for the specific Regents they need for graduation.
- Collaborative and data-informed processes that are understood and supported by the school community, lead to timely planning and goal setting across grades and subjects for individuals and groups of students.
 - Teachers analyze five benchmark assessments that drive instruction during each cycle/semester, using strategies from backwards design and formative data that result in adjustments to curriculum and differentiated supports for students such as individual learning plans for students who did not meet standards.
 - Teachers and advocate counselors conduct a goal-setting session after the third benchmark for every student. Students are guided through a reflection process that culminates in the creation of one specific and attainable goal for each class for example "I will complete class work every day" and "I will work on my *do-nows* on a daily basis."
- The school has established effective systems for monitoring teaching practice with a clear focus on improving instructional practices by dedicating special attention to faculty new to the profession.
 - All new teaching staff partner with a mentor and a coach and meet weekly in common planning periods. This work includes team teaching and a

model classroom approach where teachers collaboratively assess progress on the Santa Cruz continuum.

- Six teachers and the literacy coach attend the weeklong summer professional development with the Center for Urban Education that focuses on understanding differentiation in the classroom and create units of instruction implementing Bloom's Taxonomy and Understanding by Design strategies for the workshop model.
- A highly effective network of specialized support ensures that personal, social, physical, and emotional needs of students and families are met.
 - Students are assigned an advocate counselor who meets with them daily addressing academics, community building, post-secondary school and life skills such as fostering supportive relationships with adults and peers. Students have made significant improvements in course pass rates through counseling and Community Based Organization support.
 - The *Learn to Work* program provides internships focused on educational and career goals and works with students to secure working papers and employment.
- The principal has established effective structures for school self-evaluation, review and modification of practice, maintaining unwavering focus on coherence of policies and practices in service of improved student learning.
 - This new school has completed four complete cycles of instruction. At the end of each cycle staff gathers to review how teachers use benchmarks to ensure they are an accurate measure of progress.
 - The principal and staff dedicate a full day at the end of each cycle to analyze student transcripts, review grading policy, and then recommend students for targeted instruction.

What the school needs to improve

- Provide consistent feedback to students and families with information on progress and next learning steps for improvement.
 - At the end of the third benchmark, teachers and advocate counselors guide students through a reflective goal-setting process that is only broadly aligned with each student's learning needs and outcomes and lacks focus on essential State indicators.
 - Bi-weekly benchmarks, currently mailed to families, include grades but do not yet articulate clear next steps for learning or suggestions for assisting students' improvement.
- Refine and ensure that goals include precise short- and long-term measurable outcomes to monitor students' progress effectively.

- The worthy practice of students setting their own goals is new for most and the goals chosen often lack rigor and sharp academic focus and thereby it is difficult to measure their quality and effectiveness towards the best progress.
- The routine of teachers and advocate counselors conferencing with students at end of third benchmark regarding individual progress reports is under-established as is its communication across the school.
- Implement a yearlong professional development plan that aligns with whole school and individual teacher goals to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
 - Focused protocols for visits to collaborative model classrooms with the goal of improving instruction and student outcomes are under-developed.
 - The expertise of teachers and coaches skill in analyzing student work during the regularly scheduled collaborative teamwork is not yet deep enough.
- Include measurable long-term outcomes with interim checkpoints in all school goals to assist in monitoring of progress and growth.
 - The alignment and coherence between what specifically transfer students need to know and do, and how this continually demands adjustments to what is taught is insufficiently explicit.
 - Teachers' assessment of what they believe students have learned is not built onto current systems enough. Communication specific to next steps is not sufficiently clear.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2009-2010

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| School name: Brooklyn High School for Leadership and Community Service | Δ | ➤ | ✓ | + |
| Overall QR Score | | | X | |
| Quality Statement 1 – Instructional and Organizational Coherence: The school has a coherent strategy to support student learning that aligns curriculum, instruction and organizational decisions. | | | | |
| <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? | | | 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 | |
| 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. | | | | |
| <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? | | | 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 | |

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