

Quality Review Report 2009-2010

**William E. Grady Career and Technical Education High
School**

**High School 620
25 Brighton 4th Road
Brooklyn
NY 11235**

Principal: Carlston Gray

Dates of review: March 23 - 24, 2010

Lead Reviewer: Isabel DiMola

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

William E. Grady Career and Technical Education High School is a high school with 1,308 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 74% Black, 18% Hispanic, 4% White, and 3% Asian students. The student body includes 3% English language learners and 19% special education students. Boys account for 81% of the students enrolled and girls account for 19%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2008 - 2009 was 82.2%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is underdeveloped with proficient features.

Administration use data to track student progress and understand school-wide trends and areas for concern. The strategic use of resources allows the school to develop programs that address the needs of students and progress towards reaching its goals. A freshman academy groups incoming grade 9 students homogenously giving teachers opportunities to focus instruction on group needs, resulting in increases in the number of first-year students earning ten or more credits. Several credit recovery programs help students earn credits, thus moving them forward toward timely graduation.

The principal has a clear vision for school improvement supported by school-wide goal setting and clear action plans to foster student progress. The use of data to set goals for individual and groups of students on the classroom level is just beginning, with some teachers using data to plan instruction. However, this practice is not consistent across all subject areas. Communication with parents regarding individual student goals is also inconsistent. As a result, some parents are uncertain of how they can collaborate with the school to support or enrich academic progress.

Teacher teams meet regularly to plan instruction and monitor student outcomes. Their use of inquiry is emerging and school leaders are just beginning to monitor the impact of this work on school outcomes. The use of data to develop the curriculum and inform instruction is evident in some subjects, especially in English language arts and the career technical programs. However, school-wide, data-driven differentiation of instruction does not yet exist. This results in missed opportunities for students to access content through multiple entry points. The principal is very clear in his expectations of rigorous instruction. However, there are inconsistencies in accountability with regard to classroom practice. Supervision of instruction does not yet fully align to school-wide goals, resulting in inconsistent, incoherent instructional expectations and practices.

Administration and faculty work hard to create a safe, respectful learning environment. Professional development builds teachers' capacity to support students' emotional needs. Strong external partnerships support the career technical education program giving students access to internships and jobs upon graduation. Several community organizations support the social-emotional growth of students. Despite efforts to motivate students, many display apathy toward school and do not embrace a belief in high expectations. As a result, some students choose to remain disconnected from the school and its supports, and place their priorities elsewhere, limiting their progress.

What the school does well

- School leaders make strategic organizational decisions that align to school-wide data and address the needs of students, resulting in student progress.
 - o Programming first time freshman homogenously by reading and math levels in a freshman academy allows teachers to focus on the needs of groups of students that historically have difficulty staying on track toward graduation. Teachers have common planning time to collaboratively plan and set goals. As a result, students' ninth grade credit accumulation and scholarship targets are improving.
 - o The allocation of resources to support student progress is data driven, giving priority to the areas of greatest concern for the school. Flexible programming of credit recovery courses provide students across all grade levels with opportunities to recover credits, resulting in increased credit accumulation for students and gains in the school's graduation rate.
- School leaders collect and analyze data to understand the strengths and areas of need of individual students and groups of students.
 - o School leaders analyze data from Acuity, ARIS, the progress report, and observations to inform school wide decision making. By regularly monitoring periodic assessments and gathering observational data, school leaders evaluate instructional decisions and revise their practices where necessary.
 - o Analysis of eighth grade data through ARIS allows school leaders and faculty to understand and plan instruction aligned to student needs. An example is the use of summative and formative data by English teachers, to plan units of instruction and lessons that address the specific skill needs of students. As a result, students are making progress towards their learning goals in English language arts.
- School leaders use data effectively to develop school-wide goals and action plans that leverage change and result in improved student outcomes.
 - o By analyzing credit accumulation, graduation rate, and instructional decisions when creating the Comprehensive Educational Plan, school leadership is able to create targeted goals and specific action plans that improve student outcomes. This results in all interim goals set at the school-wide level aligning with the overarching long-term goals. This provides a coherent path to school-wide improvement.
 - o School leaders create action plans that align to data-driven needs assessment at the school-wide level. Analysis of the graduation cohort showed a need for Regents examination support. Subsequently, the school created a plan that includes weekly monitoring of student progress toward benchmarks, analysis of outcomes and improved student performance.

- School leaders develop partnerships with community and professional organizations, accelerating the academic and personal growth of students.
 - o The school uses community resources to support and enhance the academic program in the school. Close collaboration with several entities, including The Greater New York Home Oil Heating Association and Metropolitan Transit Authority, results in students having the opportunity to participate in internships and gain employment upon graduation.
 - o Faculty members participate in professional development that builds capacity to provide students and families with social-emotional support. Guidance counselors and community-based organizations like Good Sheppard are developing the capacity of faculty to communicate with families and students. Consequently, youth development services are helping to support students' emotional and academic needs.
- School leaders create structures for measuring the progress of interim and long-term goals and make revisions when necessary to address school needs.
 - o By analyzing outcomes after each marking period, school leaders monitor the progress towards school goals and evaluate the effectiveness of instructional and organizational decisions. For example, the reprogramming of students who did not reach credit accumulation targets provides opportunities for credit recovery.
 - o Weekly monitoring of the progress of grade 12 students allows teachers and school leaders to respond to students' needs in a timely manner. This results in improving student performance and progress towards meeting the requirements for graduation.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop coherent and rigorous curricula across all subject areas and implement differentiated instruction that aligns to the needs of students.
 - o Although curriculum guides that align to State standards exist for all subject areas, it is not apparent that school leaders and teachers are making purposeful, data based decisions on content strands and skills to emphasize in most subject areas. As a result, the rigor and alignment of instruction to students' needs is inconsistent across subject areas and classrooms.
 - o Although instruction in most English and career technical education classes is data driven, most instruction across the school is generic, offering students undifferentiated access across the curricula. This results in uneven levels of student engagement and minimal opportunities for students to build higher-order thinking skills.
- Expand efforts to build a school culture that promotes safety, respect, and high expectations for all students and members of the school community.
 - o School leaders work to create a safe learning environment for students. Some students participate in programs that build self-esteem. However, many students struggle with putting value on academic achievement. As

a result, motivation is uneven with many students placing their priorities on outside school endeavors resulting in stagnated progress toward learning outcomes.

- o The principal and most faculty members have high expectations for students. Communication of expectations is not effective in building some students' belief in their ability to achieve academic success. Consequently, some struggling students and their parents accept minimal progress, resulting in a lack of motivation and participation in the school community, hindering overall school performance.
- Establish a protocol for supervising instruction to ensure alignment between school goals and supports for teachers in developing pedagogic skill.
 - o The principal has clear goals that relate to instruction and student achievement. However, inconsistency in the supervision of instruction creates misalignment between the feedback teachers receive in observation reports, pedagogic development, teacher and supervisor accountability, and the school's overall instructional goals. Thus, there is little common instructional focus and a lack of coherence in the culture.
- Expand opportunities for faculty to engage in collaborative inquiry allowing teachers to have a voice in decision making, which affects school-wide policy.
 - o Although most teachers are involved in professional collaborations, the use of inquiry as a tool to understand student outcomes and affect school-wide change is emerging with teachers beginning to receive training on the inquiry process. As a result, there is limited capacity by teachers to use inquiry as a tool to influence instructional and programming decisions that affect student learning throughout the school.
 - o School leaders only evaluate the effectiveness of teacher teams informally throughout the school year. Consequently, there are inconsistencies and a lack of coherence in understanding the impact each team has on improving student outcomes and influencing school-wide progress.
- Expand teachers' use of data to set and communicate measurable, differentiated learning goals for students to improve their progress.
 - o Although some teachers use data to understand students' learning needs, goal setting for students and groups of students at the classroom level is not consistent across all subject areas, limiting the impact data has on leveraging change in classroom practice to meet students' needs.
 - o The school uses common assessments to monitor student progress and measure mastery of content strands. However, there is no consistent method of communicating student learning targets and progress to students and parents. Teachers use their own method of sharing information. As a result, opportunities for families to support or enrich their children's learning are uneven, limiting the level of collaboration between the school and parents.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2009-2010

School name: William E. Grady Career and Technical Education High School	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