

Quality Review Report 2009-2010

Health Professions and Human Services

**High School 420
345 East 15th Street
New York
NY 10003**

Principal: Robert Gentile

Dates of review: March 2 - 4, 2010

Lead Reviewer: Sara Carvajal

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Health Professions and Human Services is a high school with 1693 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 24% Black, 51% Hispanic, 5% White, and 19% Asian students. The student body includes 4% English language learners and 8% special education students. Boys account for 28% of the students enrolled and girls account for 72%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2008 - 2009 was 90.7%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

School leaders, in an effort to address the diverse needs of its student population, make informed and effective organizational decisions across all aspects of the school to support improvements in learning. For example, a dynamic team of teachers and administrators has refashioned the school's traditional credit recovery model into a flexible, student-friendly approach that validates multiple intelligences, optimizes students' time on task and prompts increased credit accumulation. In support of accelerating adult learning, the school provides assorted professional development structures for teachers to learn effective teaching methods for differentiated instruction that has proven effective in meeting the needs of different types of learners. This is complemented by a rigorous, standards-aligned curriculum, including a wide array of elective courses and internship opportunities, which drives and benefits student achievement. Additionally, the school seeks to build upon their current range of effective academically driven partnerships to include community links that support students' socio-emotional growth. However, structures are not yet evident to fully support female students also grappling with the responsibilities of motherhood.

Administrators and teachers effectively analyze a wide range of assessment data to monitor school-level needs, student progress and create purposeful intervention mechanisms when needed. This information allows school leaders and faculty with the means to consistently convey high expectations to students and parents through assorted media that positively influences student achievement. However, there is not sufficient evidence to show that the school uses a goal-setting process that supports student improvement with an eye to raising student achievement based on transferable knowledge and a malleable skill set. Instead, the school focuses its student goals exclusively on attaining particular achievement outcomes on Regents and classes. Additionally, the school does not yet include precise short- and long-term measurable outcomes to monitor students' progress effectively, and to reinforce ownership and accountability.

The principal has sustained effective systems for school-self-evaluation and modification of curricular decisions with a clear focus on improving student learning. Most noteworthy is the school's purposeful course accreditation process. Yet, they do not yet engage in periodic self-evaluation to include reflective analysis of the usefulness of current tools for aggregating and organizing data, thus ensuring that the instruments fully support collaborative inquiry.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school provides assorted professional development structures for teachers to learn effective teaching methods for differentiated instruction that has proven effective in meeting the needs of different types of learners.
 - The principal has deliberately focused all staff on the “tripod for learning” and differentiated instruction this year. During small group sessions, the administration has progressively deepened the staff’s understanding of the tripod philosophy by engaging teachers in rich discussions about disconnects between assessment and instruction that impede student achievement. The school has employed an outside consultant, focused on nurturing teachers’ use of student data on ARIS for lesson planning. Additionally, the school organized a pilot opportunity for colleagues to model effective differentiation practices for one another through work stations. This balanced variety of supports has prompted a paradigm shift in which teachers are openly acknowledging where they require deeper understanding of pedagogy, consequently seeking support from their colleagues. Moreover, teachers are gaining steady momentum in the use of student data to address the unique deficits of individual students.
- Leaders make informed and effective instructional and organizational decisions that support improvements in learning.
 - A noteworthy example of a major strategic decision made this year is the reconstruction of the credit recovery program into a differentiated model, which capitalizes on a thematic approach to tap into the multiple intelligences of participating students. After completing a total of 14 hours over a span of an estimated four weeks, students are expected to expedite performance tasks and projects in lieu of traditional essays to demonstrate their levels of knowledge and skill. As a result of the more flexible model, the school is experiencing a significant increase in students’ credit accumulation rate across grades.
- Students benefit from a rigorous, standards-aligned curriculum, including a wide array of elective courses and internship opportunities, which drives student achievement.
 - The coursework for all classes is driven by State standards. Moreover, science coursework, which underpins the school’s health professions and human services theme, also addresses the high curricular expectations of the *National Science Standards*. The site weighs considerably on technology and forensics courses, further supporting the school’s theme. A great majority of students are matched to internships at hospitals and labs throughout the City to supplement the theory learned in class with practical field experience. As a result, students and parents applaud the site for proactively supporting them with college and career readiness skills that lay the groundwork for accelerated success in science-related fields.

- Administrators and teachers effectively analyze a wide range of assessment data to monitor school-level needs, student progress and create purposeful intervention mechanisms when needed.
 - Administration meets periodically with the school's data and programming specialists to review a wide array of summative data, including grade 8 scores on ARIS, Regents' passing rates, cohort data and credit accumulation. The school-wide portrait developed through this data is fine-tuned via conversations about the outcomes on Acuity interim assessments and predictive exams as well as ongoing credit recovery updates. Consequently, the school has made purposeful decisions in revamping its grading policy and modifying its credit recovery system so that increased precision occurs when targeting students in need of support and matching them to the appropriate guidance and intervention structures.
- School leaders and faculty consistently convey high expectations to students and parents through assorted media that positively influences student achievement.
 - The school employs a variety of personal interfacing, such as grade-wide assemblies, orientation sessions, and monthly parent teacher association meetings, which promote its high expectations to the vast majority of students and their families throughout the year. Additionally, the school engages families in "parent to parent" sessions and "shadow week", during which times parents gain first-hand insight of the real-life rigors and expectations of assorted classes so that they may take the lead in supporting academic success at home. As a result, students and their families esteem the school as a site that offers all students a top quality education, complemented by personable support structures.
- The principal has sustained effective systems for school-self-evaluation and modification of curricular and organizational decisions with a clear focus on improving student learning.
 - Assistant principals analyze all Regents outcomes through item analyses in order to make adjustments to daily instruction. For example, the science supervisor used the detailed data trends to identify a misalignment between the coursework and this summative assessment. Subsequently, the content and skills foci of assorted labs were revised so that the daily lab experiences improved the students' preparedness for their Regents.
 - The school's accreditation committee, which is comprised of both administrators and teachers, meets at the end of each semester to make decisions regarding the types of courses students need, according to the High School Scheduling and Tracking (HSST) data coupled with anecdotal student input. Recently, the team decided to include photonics and technology courses based on students' growing interest as a foundation for continued study in college.

What the school needs to improve

- Refine goal setting for students so that interim benchmarks are clear, success evaluated and readjustments made throughout the year.

- Some teacher teams track the mastery of goals for targeted general education student groups through the student achievement reflected on the HSST report at the end of each report card cycle. Other faculty looks at credit recovery data every three weeks in order to assess student progress. However, the school has not yet concretized its systemic structures for gauging student progress with student goals. As a result, several targeted students do not yet benefit from deep, reciprocal conversations that engage them in adjusting their learning goals throughout the school year.
- Expand the school's present system for self-evaluation to include periodic reflective analysis of the usefulness of current tools for aggregating and organizing data, ensuring the instruments fully support collaborative inquiry.
 - The school's core inquiry team, which is comprised primarily of school administrators, consistently reviews a comprehensive range of student scholarship data that is organized on an Excel spreadsheet. Similarly, the special education teacher team organizes a wide array of student data in folders, using these data sets to engage in "kid talk" during its departmental meetings. However, at this time, the school has not yet set structures in place that support a periodic reflection of the elements of its assessment practices and data organization. Consequently, the English language learner subgroup is not yet highlighted on any of the school's data tools for explicit discussion during inquiry meetings.
- Shift goal setting across all subjects to support student improvement goals based on skills or content-based benchmark data with an eye to raising student achievement.
 - Detailed, data-driven goal setting for students receiving special education services is consistent and leads to a rich stream of conversations between school-wide teachers of general education and special education. Beyond this realm, however, individual teachers and teacher teams engage the remainder of the targeted students in broad-stroked goal setting, primarily focusing on increased credit accumulation and improved Regents' scores. As a result, not all students benefit from goals that focus on the development of transferable knowledge and skills across classes.
- Build upon the current range of effective academically driven partnerships to include community links that support students' socio-emotional growth.
 - The school sustains a highly effective partnership with Urban Dove, a local community agency that has supported the school with team building amongst its faculty. Additionally, several deans have participated in conflict resolution training, leading to an increasingly safe, respectful culture at the site. The school also provides all students with an advisory class to support social-emotional needs. However, at this time, administration and faculty agree that they do not have guidance structures in place so that the recently increasing demographic of young mothers are provided life skills support services.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2009-2010

School name: Health Professions and Human Services	△	▷	✓	+
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>	△	▷	✓	+
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>	△	▷	✓	+
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