

Quality Review Report 2009-2010

Leadership and Public Service High School

High School 425

**90 Trinity Place
New York
NY 10006**

Principal: Lawrence Pendergast

Dates of review: February 4 – 5, 2010

Lead Reviewer: Elaine Gorman

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Leadership and Public Service High School is a high school with 634 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 31% Black, 52% Hispanic, 6% White, and 9% Asian students. The student body includes 4% English language learners and 18% 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 84.7%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

The strategic principal, appointed as an Executive Principal to turnaround the school, is credited by all constituencies for his focused commitment to improving student outcomes. He serves as an exemplary role model for higher expectations for adults and students. Staff, parents, and students welcome the changes in the culture and academics. The school engaged in thorough review of last year's Quality Review, Progress report, and Learning Environment survey, which resulted in focused goals that are embedded in all documents and inform school practices. These goals are intended to have an impact on both short- and long-term goals, but the school has yet to identify specific interim goals and benchmarks for all school, team and classroom plans, so that progress can be measured and modified in a timely matter to optimize actions. This collaborative goal setting informed substantive organizational modifications, including double periods of instruction in English language arts and math, as well as additional advanced placement courses. Creative programming now provides for daily common planning by content teacher teams, as well as a 12th grade team.

The committed and self-reflective staff is appreciative of the opportunities to revise curriculum maps, develop common interim assessments, to refine instructional practices based on the identified needs of students and, in some cases, to follow the progress of individual students. Through ARIS, teachers have identified former English language learners as a subgroup that has not made sufficient progress, but the school has yet to identify and examine patterns and trends in the progress of these students or other relevant subgroups at the team or classroom level in order to take timely actions. The work of the teams is becoming an embedded practice, but as new teams, they have yet to share their work across the community in order to make explicit connections across subject areas. Additionally, they have yet to sufficiently integrate rigorous habits and higher-order skills into curriculum or fully embed the promising differentiated instructional practices. Teachers recognize that they have yet to refine their capacity to fully use an inquiry model. Additionally, as new teams, staff have not yet fully connected the developing curriculum with the results of interim assessments and lesson study to further the coherence between what is taught and how it is taught.

Parents and students appreciate both the motivation and support they receive to prepare for college, including multiple opportunities for tutoring in and outside the school day, increasing accelerated coursework and college coursework, and internship through the partnership with Syracuse University.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The strategic principal is an exemplary role model for all members of the community, sharing his focused commitment to improved student outcomes through transparency, substantive feedback, and trusting collaborations.
 - The Learning Environment Survey and conversations with teachers provide evidence that the principal is trusted and respected for his focus on quality instruction, with 91% of staff responding that the principal puts the learning needs of students ahead of other interests. This focus on instruction and resulting outcomes is widely supported and informs school decisions.
 - Each teacher has selected an instructional goal from the California teaching standards. The principal and assistant principal make frequent informal and formal visits to classrooms and provide substantive feedback to assist teachers in making progress toward their goals.
- School leaders and faculty make informed decisions across areas of the school to further continuous improvements in learning by adults and students.
 - As a result of the previous Quality Review, the school developed a new schedule to provide time for common planning. Double periods in 9th grade English language arts and math and 10th grade Global History were created to support students entering high school, many below grade level in literacy and numeracy. Both initiatives are impacting positively on student outcomes.
 - Additional teachers were hired in special education and music rather than replacing an administrator that left the school. Class sizes are also kept below contractual numbers. As a result, students are benefitting from a wider curriculum and have increased learning opportunities within their classrooms.
- The committed and reflective staff are revising curriculum with modifications and extensions to meet diverse learning needs.
 - A common template is now used to create curriculum maps aligned to State standards. The developing curriculum is informing the development of common assessments. Teachers in some content areas have begun the conversation about concept development across grades. Staff understand the importance of this next step to address the needs of individuals and groups, and the need to make cross-content connections, which at this time, occurs informally.
- Professional collaboration is high priority and faculty welcome daily content meetings to strengthen instruction to raise learning outcomes, and to refine their capacity to fully use an inquiry model.

- The faculty use professional periods four times a week for lesson study, curriculum and assessment development, collaborative inquiry, and administrative issues, which has resulted in increasing shared responsibility for outcomes.
- The development and revision of interim assessments has been a focus for team meetings, as well as the review of student work. In many cases, teams are just beginning to note the effectiveness of a change in practice on learning.
- School leaders, faculty, and other constituencies effectively collaborate to identify focused goals that have an impact on short- and long-term learning outcomes.
 - The faculty, parents, students, and Friends of Leadership agreed to regain the mission of college preparation and success through greater credit accumulation, leading to higher graduation rates and advanced diplomas. These goals are threaded throughout the Comprehensive Education Plan, the principal's performance goals, and conversations in teams.
 - The collaborations among the school leadership team and the increased participation of teachers in United Federation of Teachers consultation, along with weekly emails by the principal to staff and parents keep the vision and goals as the foundation of decision making.
- Increasing expectations for college success are supported by warm and available staff members who offer multiple opportunities for tutoring, changes in programming, and an exceptional partnership with Syracuse University.
 - Parents and students are appreciative of the availability of staff for tutoring three days a week and on Saturdays, as well as the support offered by the "teacher angels" assigned to seniors in danger of not graduating or not earning a Regents diploma. They particularly like that they can work with a teacher other than their classroom teacher so that they can see another perspective. As an unintended consequence, teachers are building their own capacity in developing respectful environments through their work with peers.
 - Selected students are now able to earn Syracuse college credit. Tuition for students is supplemented by the school budget on a sliding scale. Syracuse has also partnered with school staff to write a leadership curriculum that is anticipated to be implemented next year. Selected Syracuse students spend a semester at the high school as mentors in community projects, and once graduated, some have joined the staff. The cycle results in embedding mentoring for these new teachers.

What the school needs to improve

- Deepen systems to organize, analyze, and respond to multiple data sources, including the examination of patterns and trends of all relevant subgroups at the team and classroom level, in order to take timely actions.

- New content teams are looking at data from various sources, including recently developed common interim assessments and student work, but teacher teams have yet to sufficiently analyze patterns and trends. The analysis at the school level has not yet been linked specifically to instructional goals for teachers. As a result, there is only loose coherence which limits the impact of actions.
- The use of ARIS helped identify previously served English language learners as a focus of study for inquiry, but explicit goals for the subgroup have not been delineated. The school recognizes that, as a result, these students are not making sufficient progress. The emerging use of a web-based tool is beginning to facilitate data analysis and goal setting, as well as communications between staff and between staff and families.
- Deepen the connection between the developing curriculum and the expanded work of the inquiry team collaborations to further the coherence between what is taught and how it taught.
 - Although daily team meetings offer a strong structure, a robust plan to revise curricula and unit plans, based on the results from interim assessments and inquiry has yet to be formalized.
 - A deliberate structure for cross-content intervisitations exists and the opportunities are valued, but the lessons observed have not become a data source for either content teams or school goal setting.
- Build on promising practices of differentiated and project-based learning to further students' development of rigorous habits and higher-order skills.
 - Students work in heterogeneous groups and have a choice of assignments as a consistent practice, which they say that they appreciate. However, in many classrooms the choice is based primarily on multiple intelligences, and has yet to incorporate scaffolding of content or substantial literacy strategies. The result is that too many students are not sufficiently challenged.
 - Several teachers make good use of rubrics to provide clear expectations and rigorous standards, but this practice is uneven across the school, as is questioning to elicit higher-order thinking. As a result, students do not all consistently produce high quality work.
- Refine action planning by developing interim goals and benchmarks for school, team, and classroom plans so that progress can be measured and goals and objectives modified in a timely manner to optimize the impact of actions.
 - School leaders and constituencies engage in short- and long-term planning processes using accountability reports, but the interim goals and benchmarks are not sufficiently refined to fully optimize the impact of work.
 - While there are promising practices by teams of teachers and individual teachers for measuring progress toward interim goals for groups of students and targeted individual students, these are new and are not consistent across the school.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2009-2010

School name: Leadership and Public Service 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