

# Quality Review Report 2009-2010

**Chelsea Career and Technical Education High School**

**High School 615**

**131 Avenue of the Americas  
Manhattan  
NY 10013**

**Principal: Brian Rosenbloom**

**Dates of review: May 20 – 21, 2010  
Lead Reviewer: Catherine M. Powis**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Chelsea Career and Technical Education High School is a high school with 567 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 35% Black, 59% Hispanic, 2% White, and 4% Asian students. The student body includes 5% English language learners and 10% special education students. Boys account for 65% of the students enrolled and girls account for 35%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2008 - 2009 was 78.3%.

### Overall Evaluation

#### **This school is proficient.**

A strong commitment to high expectations by all stakeholders is what separates this school from its past. The last two progress reports reveal that Chelsea Career and Technical Education High School has improved student achievement. The principal's strategic decision to create a program and schedule that supports common planning time allows teachers to meet and discuss their practice and student outcomes. In addition, student programs are customized to scaffold support for specific grade levels, groups of students, and individuals. This is matched with many efforts to engage parents in initiatives for attendance improvement, credit accumulation, and higher grades. Parents feel supported by the parent coordinator who fosters a very strong relationship to help their children succeed. Students are treated as young adults, having a voice through student government and being able to leave the building for lunch. In turn, there is a mutual respect and positive attitudes that permeate the school, and reinforces a safe and nurturing learning environment.

The data specialist works diligently to create tools that bring organization and transparency to student achievement and progress data. This valuable information informs all staff so that tactical decisions are made to improve interventions. However, teachers have not mastered ways to assess student progress and create learning goals that are differentiated, and that offer next steps for improvement. Teacher teams lack the skills to inform their work through action research and inquiry and, therefore, do not consistently evaluate and revise their teaching practices to meet the needs of all learners. In addition, valuable curriculum and benchmark assessment revisions made by social studies and English teams are not yet an embedded practice of long-term planning to ensure student gains. Likewise, the math team is working toward the alignment of curricula from one year to the next. However, this practice lacks consistency, and therefore, does not yet have long-term impact on student achievement.

Professional development is valued, and is driven by the school's short- and long-term action planning. Experienced, as well as novice teachers, meet in grade or department teams to analyze student data, develop curriculum, and discuss practices. New teachers feel supported by this structure, and they have learned to hone their teaching skills as seen in the classrooms. Other teachers take a lead role that nurtures a coherent culture of professional collaboration. Furthermore, retreats provide valuable time to monitor and revise action plans so that student achievement is a continued focus for improvement. However, there is still a lack of consistency in teacher pedagogy that ensures multiple and differentiated approaches to learning so that all students can make timely progress.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal relentlessly models high expectations for both students and teachers, making clear his commitment to achievement for all learners.
  - During his daily walks the principal capitalizes on every opportunity to converse with students, reminding them of the school's Move to the Right Campaign for higher grades and good attendance. Students appreciate that he cares about their success. As one student commented, "I received tremendous support to turn myself around." As a result, more students are on grade level for credit accumulation than ever before.
  - Parents play a key role as partners and advocates of school-wide initiatives such as, honor roll and student of the month. Additionally, the parent coordinator is a key partner to improve student attendance, consistently reaching out to engage parents in their children's success in attendance improvement. School-wide attendance rates indicate significant improvement from 75.8% in 2007-8, already exceeding its goal of 80% for 2010.
- The school's relationships with home and community are highly supportive resulting in an environment that promotes the social, emotional and academic growth of the young adults.
  - Students speak very highly about the interest that teachers have in their success, and how student government provides them with a voice in decision-making. Spirit week and senior prom are activities planned by students that support their personal growth, and have an impact on their achievement since they now like coming to school to learn.
  - All stakeholders are very quick to reveal how the school is transformed into a safe learning environment where adults and students share a mutual respect. Clear expectations result in students who regulate themselves as young adults. They value the privilege of being able to leave the building for lunch, and understand the consequences of not returning on time.
- School leaders and faculty are deliberate in developing tools that enable them to access information supportive of precise decisions about curriculum, instruction, and assessment that improve student outcomes.
  - The data specialist strategically organizes and structures a wide array of customized data for teams, individual teachers, and school leaders. At a glance, staff is able to access several timely comparisons of grade, class, student groups, and individual student progress and provide interventions for each student to improve outcomes from one marking period to the next.
  - The web-based technology, Edline, as a replacement for grade books, makes it possible for school leaders and faculty to organize student achievement and progress data. This has brought transparency to student performance beyond the classroom, serving as an accessible information system, effectively supporting school-level decision making to improve student achievement.

- Professional development systems are driven by school-wide goals and improve teacher practice and student outcomes through multiple opportunities for collaboration.
  - School leaders prioritize professional development and understand its importance in building a coherent culture in this revitalized school. Teacher teams and new teachers report that ongoing supervisory support helps to clarify bottom lines for instruction and focuses them on priorities and next steps for their development.
  - Grade level and department teams take advantage of common planning time, meeting frequently to examine curriculum and its impact on student outcomes. The growth of teacher leaders exemplified at these meetings results in ownership of the school's initiatives and a move toward greater instructional consistency across the school.
- Structures are in place to monitor and revise short- and long-term action planning that is aligned to improving student performance outcomes.
  - A wall-length whiteboard in the principal's office tracks the pass rates and credit accumulation toward specific diploma requirements of all upperclassmen, and is updated as students achieve goals. This monitoring system is coupled with student information from ARIS and the IT tool, and a review of ongoing scholarship reports so that trends in student performance are regularly monitored, and timely adjustments can be made to interventions, such as assigning credit recovery and Saturday programs for those students not making progress.
  - A recent weekend Chelsea Retreat 2010 for all faculty provided an opportunity for faculty and school leaders to build on the school's long-term improvement plan "...to set in motion the next phase of Chelsea's turnaround." All stakeholders collaborated to establish 2010-11 school progress and performance goals. A roadmap presents a coherent set of initiatives designed to achieve these annual goals for long-range impact on student achievement yearlong and year-to-year.
- The principal is an analytic thinker who engages staff to make informed and strategic organizational decisions that empower teachers and support the school's instructional goals.
  - The school recognizes the direct correlation between students' grade 9 credit accumulation and their graduation rate. In response, creative scheduling results in freshman traveling together as a grade 9 house modeled after a middle school program, allowing for precise academic, social, and emotional support. The implementation of advisory has resulted in a significant increase in credit accumulation for freshmen.
  - The school has prioritized teacher collaboration by programming multiple common planning periods by department and grade throughout the week. Consequently, teachers embrace this opportunity to develop data analysis and pedagogical skills that result in improved student outcomes.

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

- Systematize ways in which teacher teams and individual teachers assess progress of individuals and subgroups of students so that student learning goals are differentiated and provide clear next steps for improvement.

- Further analysis of student work reveals that teachers have not developed mastery in utilizing review of student work as opportunities to isolate granular and specific areas of need, and provide meaningful feedback details tailored to each student as the next steps to improve.
- Frequent use of graphic organizers and other instructional strategies to organize thinking are widespread. However, the use of rubrics to establish leveled criteria to assess student progress and set goals for groups of students is not yet embedded in teacher practice.
- Ensure multiple entry points to learning so that content, process, and student work products are differentiated to match individual student needs.
  - In the best lessons, students are fully challenged by work that is modified to accommodate their individual needs. However, teacher practice is inconsistent in reflecting a cohesive approach that supports differentiated instruction. There is little difference in pedagogy for higher achievers. Similarly, student work does not show evidence of tiered supports to ensure meeting the needs of struggling learners to support their progress. Consequently, the special needs of both high achieving and lower achieving students are not sufficiently addressed.
- Develop a plan to deepen collaborative inquiry work, through the school's growing professional learning communities, where teacher teams engage in action research that improves student progress and teacher practice.
  - Department meetings provide structured collaborations where teachers discuss curriculum, instruction, and assessment. However, most teams do not yet engage in the inquiry process to guide improvement in teaching and learning for individuals and groups of students targeted for intervention.
  - Interventions for those students identified as struggling learners are provided through after-school tutoring and credit recovery courses. Teacher teams do not consistently reflect on or adjust their practice in response to areas where a lack of progress is identified through short-term assessment results.
- Ensure frequent review of curriculum development and long-term planning with more precise alignment to interim and annual benchmark assessments, and instructional strategies in all coursework.
  - Social studies and English teams, and the Humanities' assistant principal, work to create paralleled units of study that include kid-friendly learning goals, instructional strategies and skills, and pre- and post- formative assessments. However, this valuable curriculum revision is not yet fully developed in other content areas. Consequently, there is an inconsistent delivery of instruction in classrooms in response to student learning needs.
  - The math teachers and the assistant principal of math collaborate to make connections between math coursework, and identify skill sets that bring vertical alignment to curricula from year to year. Nevertheless, this curriculum initiative is not yet an embedded practice in all content areas, and is not embraced as an opportunity to further build a cohesive school community through long-term instructional planning.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2009-2010

<b>School name: Chelsea Career and Technical Education High School</b>	△	➤	✓	+
<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>	△	➤	✓	+
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>	△	➤	✓	+
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>	

**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
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>			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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>			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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>			X	

**Quality Review Scoring Key**

△	Underdeveloped	➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features	✓	Proficient	+	Well Developed
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