

Quality Review Report 2009-2010

East Bronx Academy for the Future

**Middle-High School 271
1716 Southern Boulevard
Bronx
NY 10460**

Principal: Sarah Scrogin

Dates of review: October 29 – 30, 2009

Lead Reviewer: Joel T. DiBartolomeo

Part 1: The school context

The East Bronx Academy for the Future is a middle-high school with 622 students from grade 6 through grade 12. The school population comprises 33% Black, 64% Hispanic, 1% White, and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 11% English language learners and 24% special education students. Boys account for 54% of the students enrolled and girls account for 46%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2008 - 2009 was 84.0%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

The school's theory of action recognizes the primacy of teaching and learning and provides a clear vision for the future development of the school. Efforts are made to align the curriculum to State standards using the 'Understanding by Design' format, interim teacher-generated assessments and instructional practices. School decisions about critical supports in the form of resources, professional development, organizational structures, and student intervention programs are made to enhance the work of teachers and students resulting in a good level of student motivation and engagement.

The school reviews and analyzes summative and interim data routinely and uses the information to make school-level instructional adjustments. The school, however, does not make good use of action plans or document carefully the progress of student subgroups. As a result, the school is not able to make definitive interim or yearlong judgments about the impact of its instructional or organizational decisions. This makes future planning and subsequent goal setting activities inexact.

School leaders and teachers have established a professional community that centers on care and trust, which supports good collaboration. The school supports students and parents well with a variety of experiences that serve to establish meaningful relationships, and fosters student interest and motivation in their studies. Teachers use a protocol of 'Teacher Talk' and 'Kid Talk' during effective team meetings to review student achievement data. These meetings deepen pedagogical effectiveness, refine the curriculum and provide opportunities for staff to pose and resolve questions about practice. However, these activities are not always coordinated, nor do they employ a framework for inquiry that results in the precise alignment of practice or the realization of evidenced-based conclusions.

Special education and English language learners are well supported in classrooms both during and after the regular school day. Parents participate in training provided by the school as well as school-sponsored retreats. Teachers provide students with useful information about their progress, but this practice does not always result in feedback so students can use it to articulate their next learning steps. Parents and students have access to information related to classroom grades, however, there is no consistent practice of providing them with feedback related to the skills and sub-skills students have learned. As a result, neither students nor their families can identify accurately next steps for student learning.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school's leadership team, through consistent demonstrations of competence and integrity, and the establishment of a mutually respectful school environment with high expectations, has earned the trust and support of teachers and students.
 - Parents and students express high degrees of positive regard for their teachers and the school's leaders and value the education provided for students.
 - Students and their parents are provided with information and are supported in making decisions about post-secondary options resulting in the expectation that students continue their education after high school.
- Teaching is enhanced through the multiple opportunities afforded faculty members to share their practice, pose problems, review assessments, and take part in decision-making to align strategies with the school's framework for instruction.
 - Teachers' enthusiastically implement core instructional strategies such as the workshop model that effectively guide classroom learning incorporate supervisory feedback to adjust their practice in an effort to enhance student performance.
 - Teachers meet with both subject and grade level colleagues to address issues of instructional program alignment and coherence three times a week resulting in good levels of student motivation and engagement.
- The school is highly supportive of the professional development of new and experienced teachers to help them develop effective instructional strategies and acquire content-area expertise.
 - New teachers benefit from their participation in a formal mentoring program by school-based coaches resulting in their accelerated development.
 - Teachers' participation in 'Teacher Talk' and 'Kid Talk' allows them to use a wide-range of protocols to share their expertise in pedagogy and review the impact of their instruction and assessment practices on student learning.
- The school aligns its available resources to support stable meeting time for teachers, effective teacher assignments, and the integration of further the use of technology into its instructional program.
 - The school has ensured the stability of professional meeting time for teachers in which they are expected to develop more effectively as practitioners.
 - Middle school teachers have implemented a one-to-one computer initiative that capitalizes both social networking and web-based strategies that promotes good opportunities for individualized instructions.
- The school closely analyzes teacher-created interim and State assessment data to determine students' strengths and areas of need, which results in effective adjustments to the curriculum.

- The identification of differences in student outcomes by subgroups and individual students enables the school to identify achievement gaps among its different subgroups.
- The school's students are well supported in both formal and informal aspects of school life thus enabling them to accelerate their progress through high school.
 - The school effectively utilizes support from a range of external organizations to support student growth.
 - New Visions, the school support organization with which the school is aligned, provides a variety of professional development opportunities that permits the school to increase the range of differentiated support its teachers can offer students.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop structures to document progress for students not making one year's growth so that the different gaps in student achievement are narrowed and individual student progress is accelerated.
 - Presently the school does not identify students not achieving one year's progress and thus is unable to target instruction for them.
 - The school does not track, set goals, or create specific action plans for student subgroups and therefore they are unable to judge the impact of the strategies they employ.
- Ensure consistency in all of the school's action plans so they include measurable, differentiated goals and interim checkpoints for student progress, allowing teachers to make secure judgments about the effectiveness of their instructional strategies.
 - Staff members do not use action plans with interim checkpoints of student learning to enable them to making judgments about student progress.
 - The school has identified key strategies but these are not staged and phased within the context of a clear plan for their development.
- Utilize an action-research model that pulls together those activities in which teachers are investigating how the conditions in which learning is taking place result in the refinement of the school's theory of action.
 - The school's collaborative inquiry team does not coordinate and align the investigations currently taking place in team meetings, resulting in inconsistent teacher development.
- Deepen formative assessment practices so that the degree and quality of students' self-management of their own learning results in all students being engaged in rigorous instructional activities.
 - School practices do not consistently make clear for students the criteria for success and, as a result, students are unable to monitor their academic progress.
 - The school does not provide all students with carefully scaffolded opportunities to learn that are based on what students already know and can do.

School Quality Criteria 2009-2010

School name: East Bronx Academy for the Future	△	➤	✓	+
Overall QR Score			X	
Quality Statement 1 – Coherent Instructional and Organizational Strategies: 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 and deliver rigorous and coherent curricula, including the Arts, 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 its 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