

Quality Review Report 2009-2010

Bronx High School of Business

**High School 412
240 East 172nd Street
Bronx
NY 10457**

Principal: Enrique Lizardi

Dates of review: January 5 - 6, 2010

Lead Reviewer: Jeffrey Soloff

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Bronx High School of Business is a high school with 468 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 33% Black, 64% Hispanic, 1% American Indian and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 13% English language learners and 18% 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 85.6%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Under the leadership of a strong principal, the school is evolving into a true learning community that focuses on supporting the academic and personal growth of students and teachers. Recently created curriculum maps and rubrics underpin the delivery of standards-based instruction. Parents and students are pleased with the school's welcoming environment, with its focus on safety, rigor of instruction, and the accessibility of teachers and administrators.

The school effectively collects and analyzes a wide range of data in English language arts, math, science, and social studies to study patterns and trends, and to monitor the performance and progress of individual students and subgroups. The inquiry teams serve as a springboard for deeper data analysis and the creation of successful strategies that support the learning of the targeted groups, including twelfth graders with math Regents failures and tenth grade special education students. Although differentiation is a common goal for the staff, a minority of teachers are not yet confident in differentiating instruction well enough to meet the needs of every student.

Professional collaboration at the grade and department levels, characterized by sharing lesson plans, intervisitations and turnkey training, benefits new and experienced teachers in strengthening their practice. The school has not yet provided sufficient training for paraprofessionals to facilitate student learning when working in special education classes.

Teachers set meaningful student goals at the beginning of the year and update them every six weeks, based on assessment data. However, this information has not yet been shared widely with the result that students cannot articulate their goals and next learning steps. In addition, progress reports indicating student progress between marking periods are not sent to parents. This limits parental knowledge of interim student performance and hampers their ability to support accelerated achievement.

The school has developed thorough systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching. The school leader emphasizes the need for ongoing improvement of teacher practice. There is a thorough observation process, which emphasizes a discussion of student assessment data and learning styles at pre-observation conferences and an informal visit to classrooms following the observation to ensure that recommendations become part of practice. The school's monitoring, evaluation and revising of instructional, organizational, and budgetary practices generally result in informed decisions and increased learning opportunities for students.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Warm and respectful relationships among students, teachers, and school leaders result in an environment that is conducive to learning and supports the academic and personal growth of students.
 - The school's positive, collaborative culture provides the opportunity for all students to experience a challenging education in an environment that stresses academics and safety. The principal's zero-tolerance policy has resulted in improved student behavior and greater student engagement. Teachers, rather than students, change classrooms each period. This creative policy reduces negative student interactions in hallways and maximizes instructional time since students do not leave the room except for lunch and physical education classes.
 - Students are supported by close relationships with the school leaders and teachers, causing them to feel safe and secure in calm learning environment. A student summed up other students' views by saying, "I always have someone to turn to if I have a problem".
- Administrators and teachers effectively use a wide range of assessment data to monitor school-level needs and student progress, to plan instruction and to create appropriate intervention strategies when needed.
 - The school's comprehensive use of attendance, suspension, Regents test results, and classroom-level assessments is responsible for an increase in attendance rates, improved progress by sub-groups and increased graduation rates.
 - At a deeper level, thorough analysis of first period attendance data led to an adjustment to students' schedules. Starting school 50 minutes later has resulted in improved first period attendance and greater student engagement.
- All teachers are members of teams that utilize an inquiry approach to examine student work, plan together, and share ideas and best practice in an effort to improve student outcomes.
 - All teachers are engaged in inquiry through departmental and block teams that meet two to four times each month. Teams purposefully analyze formative and summative assessments, attendance data, and share teacher practice and materials so that instruction and student outcomes improve. Student goals are revised every six weeks to reflect student progress so that students are constantly being challenged to take the next step.
 - The work of the inquiry teams encourages active teacher collaboration across the grades and departments to improve coherence and consistency in student learning. Teams are developing strategies to benefit specific subgroup populations with early signs of positive impact.

- Teachers skillfully identify groups of students with particular needs and provide beneficial, targeted, and caring support.
 - Through thorough data analysis, teachers identify students who need additional supports and set differentiated goals for them that accelerate their learning and enhance their credit accumulation. One inquiry team is focusing on twelfth graders who have multiple failures on the math Regents. Extra help and Saturday classes are offered in the school's effort to get these students to pass the Regents exam. Students feel well supported and encouraged to aim high.
 - Teachers set data-based instructional and attendance goals for students in the beginning of the year so that students are aware of those areas where improvement is necessary. Teachers revise these goals, based on current data, at the end of the first five marking periods to better meet the needs of each student.
- The school has established effective systems for the consistent monitoring of teacher practice with a clear focus on improving instructional practices.
 - All teachers are required to complete a pre-observation form that includes recent student test data, goals, student learning styles, and differentiated strategies to be employed for instruction. Administrators and teachers discuss the lesson plan and outcomes to ensure that all students are engaged at their entry points, thus benefiting from just the right level of challenge.
 - Recommendations for improvement from post-observation conferences are monitored by informal and formal observations that take place within two weeks of the initial observation. This is to ensure that teachers are making the necessary adjustments so that student learning is maximized.
- Leaders use a wide range of data to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of organizational decisions, interventions, professional development, and staff deployment and make adjustments in response to student learning needs.
 - Administrators review Regents exam scores, mid-term and final exam data to make decisions about teacher assignments. Teachers are assigned classes by their success in teaching particular subgroups of students. This maximizes teacher effectiveness and increases student-learning outcomes.
 - The principal builds leadership capacity by assigning duties such as programming and data analysis to future leaders. He encourages potential building leaders to take courses in educational administration. The three current assistant principals were teacher leaders in the school and subsequently were selected to become administrators.

What the school needs to improve

- Provide consistent feedback to students and their families with detailed reasons for their success and clear next steps for improvement so that students can achieve their goals.
 - The school sends communications home to parents about expectations and activities but does not send ongoing progress reports home to them. This lack of reporting reduces the amount of information available to parents about their child's progress and limits their ability to be involved in their child achieving their goals.
 - While a majority of teachers employ rubrics, students do not use them in order to reflect on what they have done well and where there is a need for improvement. This limits their ability to improve the quality of their own work and to achieve their goals.
- Promote greater consistency in differentiation so that lesson plans reflect purposeful groupings that challenge students at their level and accommodate different learning styles to maximize student learning.
 - The school has rightly identified the need to improve teachers' ability to differentiate instruction as a school-wide goal this year. Classroom observations reveal that the school is making good progress in this regard because many, but not all, teachers effectively provide differentiated instruction and tiered reading. In a few cases, therefore, the individual learning needs of all students are yet being not consistently addressed by every teacher, which hampers their engagement in lessons.
- Provide training for paraprofessionals to enable them to interact more effectively with students when they work in special education classes to better facilitate student learning.
 - Paraprofessionals assigned to special education classes are not being used effectively. Observations indicate that paraprofessionals are not assisting students with their work a majority of the time.
- Institute procedures to ensure that students can articulate their academic goals so that they can focus on next steps.
 - Teachers conduct on-going assessments, but results are not communicated regularly to the school community. Although teachers set goals for students and periodically revise them, students are unable to state either their individual goals or what next steps they need to take to improve their learning.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2009-2010

School name: Bronx High School of Business	△	▷	✓	+
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