



**Department of
Education**

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

**Quality Review Report
Division of Performance and Accountability
2010-2011**

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Crown School for Law and Journalism

Elementary-Middle School 161

**330 Crown Street
Brooklyn
NY 11225**

Principal: Deborah Barrett

Dates of review: November 22 - 23, 2010

Lead Reviewer: Rhonda Hurdle-Taylor

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Crown School for Law and Journalism is an elementary-middle school with 865 students from kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 89% Black, 9% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 3% English language learners and 10% special education students. Boys account for 48% of the students enrolled and girls account for 52%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 94.2%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school maintains a supportive learning environment and works collaboratively with parents in an atmosphere of shared decision-making.
 - Monthly parent workshops focus on Common Core Standards, content skills, and the progress report. Parents receive diagnostic assessment results, interim progress reports, and report card grades, that keep them informed of their children's academic progress. As a result, parents are involved and are equipped to assist in their children's learning.
 - Parents value their access to the principal and staff through collaboration on the school leadership team and parent-teacher association. They help develop the Comprehensive Educational Plan and make budgetary decisions and feel their input is valued and in turn are supportive of the principal, teachers, and the school's academic initiatives.
- Parents and students alike appreciate the supportive learning environment the school provides, which promotes students' personal growth.
 - Parents speak of the school passionately, and are pleased with the principal's focus on their children's overall development. Faculty participate in anti-bullying workshops that offer tools to better resolve issues among students. These strategies, along with early morning tutorials, are enabling students to improve their department.
 - School-wide initiatives are a response to concerns regarding the effect poor conduct is having on academic performance. In an effort to promote a love of reading and build character development, the 25 book campaign, Respect for All, and the four A's to success are emphasized. Students say that their overall capacity as scholars is improving
- The curriculum offers a range of experiences, including the arts that provide valuable opportunities for students to develop their creative and artistic skills.
 - Students' unique interests are reflected in a variety of assignments that celebrate students' artwork. The school capitalizes on students' artistic abilities by continuously linking work products to content area coursework. As a result, projects show evidence of students incorporating writing and visual arts.
 - The curriculum offers opportunities for high performing students to participate in a Science Engineering Communication Mathematics Enhancement program that challenge their learning needs and helps them to build math and science skills. Well-diversified arts activities enable teachers to engage students in art, drama, stepping, chorus, steel pan, and orchestra, thus meeting the needs of a range of learners.
- School leaders make informed organizational decisions across the school that supports improvements in student learner.

- In alignment with the school's goal to offer an enriched curriculum inclusive of the arts, students are deliberately scheduled for an extended-day arts program that provides opportunities to develop their diverse talents. Consequently, students take tremendous pride in displaying their emerging talents at school performances and at community affairs.
- Achievement results indicate a drop in the number of students performing at proficiency on the State math examination. As a result, the principal assigned a newly hired, experienced math teacher, to teach in the upper grades where student performance was most severely impacted.
- Teachers work collaboratively to disaggregate data to understand student achievement and make classroom level decisions.
 - Teachers aggregate and organize all relevant data in an effort to create assessments that are tied to the curriculum in order to measure student progress. Additionally, students' use of online programs to improve their skills provide teachers with data that is used to determine trends and areas in which students need support.
 - Teachers use common planning time to collaboratively review student work and develop strategies around journal writing, writing rubrics, and mental math geared to improve student outcomes. Team members embrace this practice and adjust their instructional practices.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop and share with the entire school community data linked school-wide goals that are focused on each grade and individual students in order to ensure support for improving student outcomes.
 - The school leadership team has developed yearlong goals based on a variety of assessment results. However, there is no clear evidence that these goals are fully aligned to the school's Comprehensive Educational Plan. As a result, teacher teams are unable to articulate the desired long-term impact these goals will have on student performance.
 - As a result of poor performance on State assessments, the principal has established goals at the school level with detailed action plans. However, as these goals are not communicated to all members of the school community, their ability to articulate and demonstrate support for said goals is limited.
- Provide targeted professional development based on data and classroom observations to support all teachers so that they improve their practice.
 - Although the principal conducts classroom observations, and provides feedback to teachers for improving their instruction, this practice does not occur frequently and therefore does not effectively impact instruction. The feedback does not clearly indicate specific strategies needed to boost rigor supportive of improving student learning.
 - Teachers indicate that only a select number of staff attend professional development outside the school, therefore limiting the benefit to the faculty as a whole. Sharing of information from workshops and

conferences is limited, thus diminishing all teachers' chances to advance their own professional growth and development.

- Monitor and suitably revise goals to ensure they are reflective of the needs of students.
 - The principal has developed yearlong goals and has begun to monitor their effect system wide. However, based on student performance on key assessments, there is little evidence that these goals hold any connection with previous school-wide goals, thus hindering the ability of the school to improve student outcomes, or for school leaders to speak to the impact of goal setting on students' long-term growth.
 - Teams are beginning to identify their target population and develop assessment forms, binders, and progress reports, to monitor students' on-going academic progress towards attaining interim- and long-term goals. However, these efforts are inconsistent and as a result, teachers do not have the necessary data to measure progress of groups or individual students towards reaching interim benchmarks.
- Develop systems that effectively use data to evaluate professional development supports to make necessary adjustments.
 - Teacher teams participate in prearranged collaborative work in an effort to share best practices and improve their instructional techniques. However, the school does not have a system in place to evaluate the effectiveness of this engagement and to promote staff ownership.
 - The school does not have inherent systems for assessing professional development supports, and therefore it is unable to evaluate the impact of mentoring and teacher inter-visitations on classroom practice. The principal does not yet effectively monitor teachers' professional needs therefore hindering her ability to revise plans to support improvements in teachers' practices.
- Deepen the rigor in differentiated instruction so that tasks accommodate different learning styles and extend higher order thinking skills.
 - In classes where teachers prepare lessons that target the specific needs and strengths of students, there is evidence of differentiated instructional practices that address a range of student ability levels. However, this practice is inconsistent throughout the school.
 - Data-based grouping for instruction and strategies to increase academic rigor for students with varying learning styles, such as problem solving and making connections across content areas, is not sufficiently evident in all classrooms. Consequently, students who demonstrate the greatest academic needs are also exhibiting slow scholastic progress.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: The Crown School for Law and Journalism	UD	D	P	WD
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>	UD	D	P	WD
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		
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>	UD	D	P	WD
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 Align assessments to curriculum and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom level?		X		
2.3 Use or develop tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize, aggregate, 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		

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>	UD	D	P	WD			
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				
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>	UD	D	P	WD			
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				
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>	UD	D	P	WD			
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						
Quality Review Scoring Key							
UD	Underdeveloped	D	Developing	P	Proficient	WD	Well Developed