

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Metropolitan Corporate Academy High School

K530

**362 Schermerhorn Street
Brooklyn
NY 11217**

Principal: Lennel George

Dates of review: November 3-4, 2010

Lead Reviewer: Jill Herman

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Metropolitan Corporate Academy is a high school with 301 students from 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 79.1% Black, 16.16% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1.66% Asian students. The student body includes 2.3% English language learners and 17% special education students. Boys account for 51.8% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48.2%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 77%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is underdeveloped.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school community demonstrates a culture of mutual respect that supports the academic development of young adults.
 - Students and teachers are respectful to each other in the hallways and in classrooms. Guidance counselors oversee specific grades and deans run a mediation program which has improved the tone.
 - Students are very enthusiastic about the College Summit program that was recently introduced in their school. They also state that their teachers meet with them during lunch, before and after school if they need additional academic support. In addition there is a special program open to all students that promote excellence through developing character and achievement. Students therefore have interest in their learning and state that they want to complete high school and go to college.
- Teachers are beginning to gather and analyze classroom assessments that inform classroom decisions so that students will meet academic requirements and graduate high school.
 - Individual teachers use assessments which are globally linked to key standards and often provide a limited picture in relation to classroom level adjustments which would accelerate and support learning.
 - Teachers are not consistent in analyzing classroom information about students. Some use multiple data sources such as periodic assessments, last year's results on state exams or school report cards to understand the learning needs of students in their classes. As a result, differentiation is limited and identification of strengths and weaknesses of students is inconsistent which results in some students achieving and others not being successful.
- The school is building on teachers' recent training in data systems and teachers are beginning to organize data to make classroom level decisions that identify trends in performance and impact student learning.
 - Teachers are getting comfortable using ARIS and periodic assessments as well as some reviewing past history of students providing them with a fuller understanding of students' needs that will improve student outcomes.
 - School leaders organize and present data to staff. However, the opportunity to closely examine various data points that impact school wide performance trends is limited.
- Frequent collecting of data by classroom teachers enables staff to identify students who need additional support in order to achieve academic success.
 - A team of teachers are developing systems to support students who are not on track to graduate. They are looking at Regents and credits needed and will meet with individual students to set goals and a plan of action to insure graduation in four years.

- Teachers are giving more frequent progress reports in order to identify in a timely fashion students who are not succeeding. They report progress grades to principal, along with their action plans for students who are not achieving at high levels. These action plans are designed to improve classroom practice and meet the needs of students. These students can also be enrolled in after school or Saturday school which provides opportunities for students to make up missed work and therefore achieve academic success.

What the school needs to improve

- Design and develop a rigorous curriculum for all content areas in all classrooms in order to close the achievement gap and prepare all students for college.
 - The average classroom size is about 12 students due to large absenteeism. The vast majority of classes do not engage in discussions, merely questions and responses. As questions are mostly informational, responses are limited to a few words. The majority of readings are one page handouts and there is very little evidence of sustained and developed writing in any student work or assignments which limits students' achievement.
 - In the self-contained classroom, students could not read the handout which was down-loaded from the internet. It was not related to the aim and previous class discussion resulting in students not be challenged or engaged.
- Develop consistent pedagogical strategies that reflect a shared belief in how students learn best so that all students can be academically successful.
 - Many teachers' curriculum maps are comprised of a few unit plans. Many lacked assessments and measurable outcomes while some just listed skills. Teachers' submissions were varied and did not always contain goals or activities that would build necessary standard based skills that enable students to produce meaningful work products.
 - Students lack understanding of material in several classes. Few classes check for understanding. Materials handed out were not sufficient to answer teacher's questions. Many students quietly have side conversations and some just sit resulting in general lack of thinking and engagement.
- Align resources intentionally and purposefully in order to support and strengthen school's instructional goals to meet students' learning needs.
 - Inquiry teams are determined by teachers preps, and therefore inquiry teams, who meet three times a week, do not share common content, grades, or students. Subject area teams meet once a month and discuss trips and other logistics. Teacher time is not structured to support student learning because those who teach same students do not have an opportunity to meet.
 - There are many additional personal at the school this year. One is a special education assistant principal. Although, the principal did not know he was getting these people until the beginning of the year, the staff is underutilized given the enormous needs of the students. The self-contained teacher goes into the inclusion class and all fifteen resource room students are seen at the end of the day. 9th grade math, which will culminate in a Regents, has a teacher who was rated unsatisfactory.

- Provide opportunities for staff to develop both pedagogical and content expertise that will elevate school wide instructional practices and promote personal growth and reflection.
 - Teachers are not provided organized opportunities to visit other schools and do not receive additional content support. The professional development plan from September to December is primarily informational. As department meetings are once a month, they are rarely driven by practice and reflection. Teachers have limited resources in which to improve practice that would impact student learning and their own learning.
 - Teacher observations are fairly general, lacking alignment with targeted school goals. The principal reports that these are the same teachers since the previous Quality Review in 2008, and there is no classroom evidence of change in practice or any impact on student learning.
- Create systems that closely monitor and revise the ways in which data is collected in order to identify and target specific needs of groups or individual students in order to improve achievement towards school's goals.
 - Attendance data is monitored very similar to last year, as reported by the principal, with a few adjustments. Guidance counselors call home and so do classroom teachers. There is no process or system that examines either the efficiency or the results to suggest other strategies or procedures that would actually improve attendance as evidenced by current attendance report.
 - Although data is examined, it is not organized in ways that would narrow focus and allow school to examine correlations and causalities. There is no school wide system or opportunity for teacher input to discuss and recommend changes that could impact school wide goals and improve achievement of all students.
- Create internal supports for staff to consistently address social and emotional needs of students and families so that all students can experience success.
 - The Guidance department appears to operate independently. Counselors do not sit in on inquiry or other teams. Teachers say they are mainly paper pushers and are not integrated into a support system staff and students need in order to be successful.
 - The school does not have an advisory program or other mechanisms to deal with many of the obstacles students face which prevent them from coming to school and achieving.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: Metropolitan Corporate Academy	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