

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Brooklyn Bridge Academy

High School 578

**6565 Flatlands Ave
New York
NY 11226**

Principal: Max Jean Paul

Dates of review: October 5 - 6, 2010

Lead Reviewer: Doug Knecht

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Brooklyn Bridges Academy serves students at the High school (Transfer School) level. The school has 219 students enrolled in grades 9, 10, 11, 12. The school population comprises 85% black students, 4% white students, 1% Asian students, 10% Hispanic students, 48% boys, and 52% girls. Currently, 1% of the student body is English language learners. The school enrolls 1% students with Individual Education Plans (IEP's). Attendance is presently 63%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Brooklyn Bridges Academy (BBA) and its lead partner organization have created a strong network of youth development supports, which have resulted in meaningful learning and work opportunities for students.
 - The enduring partnership with F.E.G.S. Health and Human Service System has resulted in the creation of daily small group advisory sessions, behavioral and academic conferences, contracts with students and families, and home visits that have led to a systematic escalation of interventions and supports for students.
 - Advisors are funded by and trained in an advisory curriculum developed in collaboration with F.E.G.S. For the first time, the advisors attended a full-staff summer retreat to better integrate social-emotional and academic supports. Consequently, advisors now collaborate weekly with classroom teachers and the guidance team to review attendance and academic data. Also, intervisitations of advisory classes have increased consistency of practice among advisors.
- Leadership has made data-based adjustments to grading policies, support services, and attendance systems, resulting in increased student awareness of expectations and a 10% decrease in lateness compared to 2009.
 - Since assuming the helm of the school just three months ago, the Principal and Assistant Principal, in collaboration with F.E.G.S. leadership and the school staff, have made informed decisions about school policies that have resulted in more clarity for students and consistency among teachers regarding behavioral and academic expectations. As a result, the common “daily grade” formula and more stringent lateness policy encourage students to own their education and reveal that they feel “cared for” and prepared for post-secondary options.
 - As a result of the advisory program and collaboration with classroom teachers and guidance staff, students’ social-emotional and academic needs are being socialized across the staff. Students state that the adults “get to know you before judging us on our record”, and that all students, even the ones who do not attend consistently, are known well by more than one staff member.
- The growing use of the Bi-weekly Assessment Reports (BARs) and online tool “Power School” provides teachers with trend data on their students as well as access to current performance information for students and parents.
 - BAR data is typically aggregated every two to four weeks, following the end of each curriculum unit. The school leadership uses this data to track student performance resulting in effective adjustments at the school-wide level.
 - Almost all teachers utilize class-work, test outcomes, homework, BAR, and student conduct data. This information is integrated into student conferencing sessions and posted online. As a result, students and engaged parents are aware of assignments students have and have not completed and can make appropriate and timely adjustments.

- Analysis of school-wide data by the leadership team, and the subsequent sharing of this information with the staff, has yielded meaningful school-wide goals and a renewed commitment to the mission of the school.
 - The new school leadership has been using a range of student outcome trend data to focus the teaching staff on instructional goals such as integrating scaffolding and questioning techniques, and to refine guidance systems to improve student attainment. Consequently, the faculty has internalized these goals, implemented new strategies, and begun working more closely together so that students better understand their progress toward graduation.
- Systems are in place to monitor assessment and data practices resulting in improvements to guidance and academic supports and policies.
 - A priority of leadership has been to improve the quality of the guidance system for students. A veteran, part-time counselor was hired and the guidance-attendance team has implemented new tracking and communication systems. Student transcripts are now accurate and properly reflected in student class programs. Graduation and college information is regularly shared with students, parents, and advisors and teachers such that these supports are more coherent to the school community.
 - A review of course pass rate data propelled the school leadership and staff to implement the common grading policy. This improvement has offered leadership and teacher teams the ability to compare student performance across classrooms and make shared changes leading to discussions on assessment alignment to evolving state standards.

What the school needs to improve

- Identify key standards and embed them in curriculum so that habits of mind and work crucial to post-secondary success are constantly stressed.
 - While faculty has aligned curricula to State standards and Regents exams, and the English and Social Studies departments have agreed to integrate more writing into student tasks, student work products reveal that teachers are not yet collectively emphasizing specific standards and skills that are aligned within or across content areas.
 - The school leadership is implementing a plan to work with the staff this year to identify rigorous skills and habits that are enduring over time and relate to college success and embed them in academic tasks. One teacher has developed a curriculum map that incorporates such skills. School-wide implementation of such plans and models improve the coherence of curriculum across classrooms.
- Extend support of teachers in the use of protocols to examine student work products in collaborative teacher team meetings so that classroom pedagogy challenges students to think deeply, speak cogently, and write constantly.
 - The school leadership and staff have agreed to integrate more higher-order thinking opportunities for students in lessons. At this juncture the effort is most apparent in the science classes. However, teaching strategies, class work, and class discussions often did not challenge students of all abilities

beyond “compare and contrast” level tasks resulting in inconsistent differentiated learning opportunities.

- Teacher leaders need support in using protocols effectively and working collaboratively with colleagues to refine and raise the rigor of academic tasks so that students are fully engaged, not merely compliant. A significant number of students commented that the worksheets and “book work” were too easy and time spent reviewing for tests wasteful.
- Develop the use of common assessments and rubrics so that curriculum and instructional practices are better aligned across classrooms and to the school’s ambitious graduation and college goals.
 - Daily grades mainly capture student effort. Other assessments are generally aligned to the Regents-based curriculum; however, since key standards have not been identified, the resulting information on students does not easily connect across classes or to the college-oriented goals of the school.
 - While teams are beginning to evaluate the quality of student tasks in connection to their curriculum, there is not yet a clear picture of how periodic assessments offer a feedback loop on student sub-groups, such as students entering the school having earned 11-22 credits.
- Develop processes for teachers and teacher teams to use diagnostic and periodic assessment data to refine differentiated learning goals for targeted students and groups of students.
 - Some students articulated goals, but these goals are not typically connected to improving higher-order skills or understanding material taught in the curriculum. While data-informed, these goals tend to focus on work completion, such as “I will try harder” or “Get an 80 average”, as opposed to learning, such as literacy development. Because the goals are not an outgrowth of common diagnostic or periodic assessments, it is difficult for individual teachers, teams, and students to strategically leverage goals to improve instruction and achievement.
- Strengthen structures to consistently monitor the effectiveness of teacher team meetings and efforts to develop teacher leadership in order to maximize the school leadership’s time and support.
 - Teachers are meeting regularly in teams, and advisors, teachers, and guidance counselors are also collaborating. School leaders are attached to different teams to provide support, though team leaders have yet to be identified across teams. The Principal and AP are implementing a plan to offer more consistent leadership development opportunities to staff, but, at this point, systems to evaluate the quality of the teamwork and collaboration are embryonic therefore teachers express the need for clearer feedback and next steps regarding their work together.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: Brooklyn Bridge 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
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