



**Department of  
Education**

*Joel I. Klein, Chancellor*

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

# **Quality Review Report 2010-2011**

**Brooklyn High School of the Arts**

**15K656**

**345 Dean Street  
Brooklyn  
NY 11217**

**Principal: Margaret Lacey Berman**

**Dates of review: May 9-10, 2011**

**Lead Reviewer: Vivian Selenikas**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Brooklyn High School of the Arts is a high school with 669 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 75.2% Black, 19.7% Hispanic, 2.5% White, and 1.9% Asian students. The student body includes 1% English language learners and 9% special education students. Boys account for 37.4% of the students enrolled and girls account for 62.6%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 90.6%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is proficient.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school has a safe environment that strongly supports students' artistic, social emotional and academic learning.
  - Many students reported that they can ask any one of their teachers for help either during or after class or school when they are having difficulty with academic work. This results in creating a “community of high level support” where students feel that they are known well and assisted by more than one adult, receiving support for success.
  - The school has structures such as 9<sup>th</sup> graders meeting once a week with their guidance counselor, guidance counselors sending out emails every Monday to parents, conflict resolution/peer mediation and phone messages for latecomers to ensure that student are safe and their social emotional as well as academic needs are met. These result in an inclusive school culture where individual students are well supported for academic achievement.
- The school designs engaging, coherent curricula, especially in the Arts, for a variety of learners that are aligned to key State standards.
  - The school has worked with Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID), the College Board and the Columbia University Comprehensive Math and Science Program (CMSP) to align core curricular areas to rigorous academic work and to the Common Core Learning Standards. This has resulted in multiple groups of targeted students earning more credits and successfully moving to higher academic course work for college readiness.
  - Teachers in the humanities department are working together with school leaders and engaged in curriculum alignment work using Collaborative Analysis of Student Learning (CASL). This work has resulted in a common lens for looking at student writing and an emphasis on teacher team meetings and specific classroom-based work targeting student needs, improving student progress on mock regents assessments.
- School leadership develops and aligns teacher pedagogy with student needs in order to ensure that it is engaging and differentiated, resulting in meaningful work products.
  - Teams of teachers attend ongoing professional development workshops, focusing on questioning techniques and the connection of “artistic product” activities to the development of students' reading and writing skills. This results in a shared belief that the deep commitment to the Arts at the school is clearly aligned to academic classroom pedagogy.
  - High levels of student engagement were observed in many classes in which students were provided multiple entry points for learners at different levels. In particular, classes for students in the AVID cohort provide students with exemplary scaffolds and supports, which result in student engagement in higher level academic work, as evidenced by student work products.

- The school provides effective teacher and student systems and structures that respond to the learning needs of students, ensuring improved outcomes.
  - The school provides increased time on task, through double period math classes for CMSP students and Advanced Placement classes and a second period of English (one literature based, one writing focused) for students entering the school in need of academic support or those eligible for enrichments. These decisions result in added time on task to productively engage in challenging academic work, developing high order thinking skills.
  - On-line remediation and credit recovery and project based learning tasks for tenth and eleventh graders is successfully used by a large cohort of teachers at the school. This results in increased number of students successfully completing homework assignments and effective communication to students and parents on students' learning needs.
- School leaders and teachers use a variety of data sources and tools to organize, and analyze student performance trends, with a focus on differentiated learning goals.
  - The school uses a variety of tools, such as Engrade and school generated teacher period attendance reports to identify students coming late to school. These targeted students are provided tutoring during lunch, Regents review after school and on Saturdays to support the work missed during their absence to first period. These result in students receiving a clear message that failure is not an option at this school and increased student outcomes.
  - Teams of teachers use grading and academic tools such as Engrade and Study Island to provide students, families, colleagues and school leaders with information on students who need additional supports or extensions in order to accelerate their learning. The use of these tools results in classroom teachers focusing students on the learning they need to remain on the path to mastery of standards and fulfilling their potential.
- The school has internal capacity and external partnerships to create a safe school culture that provide social emotional support for academic and personal growth.
  - Consultancies, specialized programs, particularly in the Arts, partnerships (AVID, CMSP, and College Board) and community-based collaborations support the social, emotional and academic needs of students and their families, resulting in a school community focused on supporting the goal of academic growth for all students.
  - Partnerships with organizations such as New York Cares, Groundswell and other grant funded opportunities are strategically aligned with the school's academic, social-emotional and real world learning goals for students. These partnerships result in opportunities for SAT preparation, financial aide workshops and internships that focus students on the skills needed for college and career readiness.

### **What the school needs to improve**

- Enhance existing structures for teachers and teams to gather and analyze classroom level data, creating a clear picture of students' strengths and areas of need.
  - The school has established successful teacher teams for targeted cohorts of students that effectively utilize assessments that offer a clear portrait of student mastery on

non-fiction reading and writing. These teams have also been successful in targeting students' strengths and areas of need, as well as impacting instruction in their classrooms. However, the lack of school-wide common planning time limits the school's ability to provide meaningful and actionable feedback, hindering their ability to improve student outcomes.

- Teachers and teams use summative and periodic assessment data to align learning goals with student outcomes. Plans for DY0 and the use of Engrade began to enhance this work. However, current practices do not provide teams and teachers the opportunity to develop expertise in designing assessments, hindering efforts to gather and analyze targeted classroom level data.
- Ensure that the common instructional focus frame consistent and effective performance evaluation that provides actionable feedback to teachers.
  - Many of the classrooms observed demonstrated that a focus on performance skills, benchmarks and mastery level work is the emphasis of the school culture. However, all teachers do not participate in the targeted professional development that would support this focus, reducing the school's capacity to promote professional growth for improved student achievement.
  - School leaders make performance evaluations and provide specific feedback to teachers based on classroom observations. Some school leaders provide actionable feedback to support the next learning step for each teacher, based on analysis of student work products. However, there is inconsistent use of analysis of student data and student work products in some classroom observations, resulting in an uneven implementation of the school's theory of action.
- Expand the evaluation of curricular and instructional practices to reinforce the alignment of instructional focus with the school wide practices.
  - School leaders and faculty have structures in place to regularly evaluate and adjust curricular and instructional practices in response to student learning needs. Learning around the expectations of the Common Core Learning Standards has begun in the teacher teams. However, the coherence between what is taught and how it is taught in order to accelerate student learning is not explicit, resulting in a lack of school-wide alignment with the enhanced expectations of the Common Core Learning Standards.
- Expand the systems to measure progress toward interim goals in order to identify areas of modifications needed from one year to the next.
  - There is an alignment of annual processes, such as the CEP to identify areas of need based on evidence of student performance. However, the explicit link between the review of these programs and the overall school goals in order to identify where changes in plans are needed to meet the increased expectations of the Common Core Learning Standards is not evident, minimizing the impact of the school-wide goals on enhancing students' levels of mastery.
  - Teams of teachers for targeted student groups and consultancies have embedded systems for measuring progress toward interim goals they have set for groups of students and targeted individual students. However, the culture of the faculty where sharing and studying this information is valued as part of a collective effort to improve instructional practices is developing, resulting in inconsistent systems for measuring progress of targeted individual students across the school.

**Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011**

<b>School name: K656 - Brooklyn High School of the Arts</b>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
<b>Overall QR Score</b>			<b>X</b>	
<b>Quality Statement 1 – Instructional and Organizational Coherence: The school has a coherent strategy to support student learning that aligns curriculum, instruction and organizational decisions.</b>				
<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
1.1 Design engaging, rigorous and coherent curricula, including the Arts, for a variety of learners and aligned to key State standards?			<b>X</b>	
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?			<b>X</b>	
1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet student learning needs?			<b>X</b>	
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?			<b>X</b>	
<b>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.</b>				
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
2.1 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the school level?			<b>X</b>	
2.2 Align assessments to curriculum and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom level?			<b>X</b>	
2.3 Use or develop tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize, aggregate, and analyze student performance trends?			<b>X</b>	
2.4 Engage in an open exchange of information with students and families regarding students' learning needs and outcomes?			<b>X</b>	

**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**

<b>UD</b>	<b>Underdeveloped</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>WD</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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