

# **Quality Review Report**

## **2010-2011**

**Cypress Hills Collegiate Preparatory School**

**High School 659**

**999 Jamaica Avenue  
Brooklyn  
NY 11208**

**Principal: Alex Maysonet**

**Dates of review: May 10 - 11, 2011**

**Lead Reviewer: Dr. Roseann Napolitano**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Cypress Hills Collegiate Preparatory School is a high school with 440 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 18% Black, 69% Hispanic, 3% White, and 8% Asian students. The student body includes 13% English language learners and 12% special education students. Boys account for 48% of the students enrolled and girls account for 53%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 83.4%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is proficient.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- Dedicated school leaders and staff establish a strong set of beliefs about how students learn best that align with the curricula and differentiated teaching strategies for accelerated academic outcomes.
  - Discussions about vocabulary and the literacy curriculum take place at the team and school level. The result of which is the implementation of a new vocabulary strategy, *Word Square*. This strategy improves the understanding of new words through the use of symbols/pictures, synonyms and context clues and was evident in several classrooms visited reflecting a common understanding of how students learn best.
  - Administrators and teachers understand the need for increased differentiation, which is a common instructional focal point in most classrooms. Teachers rely on internal and external assessments to determine student groups. For example, students are grouped based on ability level and teachers' questions vary in complexity to support each group's ability. Consequently, lessons have multiple entry points and scaffolds enabling students to produce meaningful work products.
- Organizational decisions are made to leverage internal structures and human resources for alignment with the school's instructional goals to meet student learning needs.
  - A schoolwide goal is to improve the graduation rate by ensuring that students earn the appropriate number of required credits for graduation. A new twelve week credit recovery program allows students the flexibility to recover two courses, whereas the old ten week program allowed students to recover only one credit. Meetings are scheduled after each marking period that includes deans, guidance counselors, teachers and administrators to discuss scholarship reports and other relevant data in order to determine individual student progress towards graduation. As a result, students receive challenging academic support that allows them to earn credits in order to meet graduation requirements.
- The school has a safe and inclusive environment that meets students' social-emotional learning and academic needs.
  - The school's advisory program ensures that every student is known by at least one adult for support with social-emotional learning. During regular advisory periods, teachers focus on a theme unique to the student's grade level. Students actively participate in Town Hall meetings scheduled by the school leadership, which supports an effective exchange of information. Students indicate that this venue allows them to express their voice and influence learning opportunities. By providing a variety of social and academic supports based on need students have social and emotional care that results in academic growth.

- School leaders and faculty promote family engagement and shared commitment that result in increased levels of community involvement and decision-making in school activities.
  - School leaders and grade level teachers engage in reciprocal discussions with families regarding student academics, attendance and behavior through “Kid Talks”. This venue for home-school contact is very personal and leads to a deeper understanding of school expectations while offering possible solutions for family concerns. Rich dialogue between the home and school enables students and adults to play an active role in decision-making in order to support high expectations for success.
  
- Formalized inquiry practice regularly engages all teachers in classroom decision making that inform teaching practice, builds leadership and improves student learning.
  - Summative data from various sources informs the focus of teacher team work. In the area of social studies, teachers meet by grade and by content area to address instructional concerns. For example, a great deal of focus is placed on monitoring progress in Global Studies. The team adheres to a protocol and analyzes data and student work to share best practices, adjust the curriculum and monitor student progress. As a result, internal assessments and mock data results indicate improved outcomes for student learning.
  - One representative from each teacher team attends the monthly schoolwide inquiry team and analyzes relevant data trends and findings from all teams in order to collaborate on important decisions about curricula adjustments and teacher practice. This structure allows teachers to have a voice in decision making that positively impacts student learning across the school and develops teacher leadership capacity.
  
- The school leader promotes independent and shared learning by providing teachers with leadership opportunities and instructional supports that result in professional growth.
  - Through a partnership with La Raza, the school works with Cambridge educational consultants to provide professional development and expert coaching to teachers. This is implemented through professional learning community meetings where teachers engage in book studies based on specific content to inform teaching practice and extend knowledge as it relates to the evolving State standards which leads to specific learning strategies to improve instruction and leverage change in classroom practice.
  - The principal supports opportunities that foster leadership among administrators and faculty. For example, as a mentor principal in the Leaders in Education Apprenticeship Program (LEAP) a teacher spearheaded the schools initiative to align curriculum maps to the Common Core Learning Standards. By providing teachers with job-embedded leadership opportunities, the school builds adult capacity encouraging teachers to revise classroom practices and improve learning outcomes.

## What the school needs to improve

- Strengthen academic tasks that emphasize rigorous habits and higher order skills aligned to the curriculum to challenge all learners across all content areas and grades, in order to increase learning outcomes.
  - In most classrooms visited there was evidence that teachers design academic tasks aligned to key State standards and provide most students with challenging activities that require higher order skills. However, the depth of knowledge resulting from the academic tasks varies from group to group. As a result, some tasks do not consistently push all students to extend their thinking in order to increase learning outcomes inclusive of a diversity of learners.
- Continue to expand upon data analysis in order to identify trends and student needs that inform instructional decisions to improve learning outcomes for all students.
  - Teacher teams analyze assessment results for targeted students in order to identify trends and individual students' strengths and areas of need. Individual teachers as well as teams use pre and post tests for unit assessments, and mock regents to supplement Periodic Assessment data and summative data to create a clear picture of the needs and strengths of targeted sub-groups. At the classroom level, many individual teachers use data to evaluate the progress of student subgroups. However, some teachers cannot easily create a snapshot of strengths and needs for targeted student populations in order to adjust their instructional decisions to positively impact academic outcomes.
- Continue to make proactive decisions with actionable feedback based on performance evaluation of teachers and student data in order to support professional growth.
  - Currently the school uses formal and informal observations as the primary venue for providing feedback on teacher performance and evaluation for all teachers. Danielson's "Framework for Teaching" is being used on a limited basis with untenured teachers. However, teacher practice for all teachers is not evaluated through the lens of student work and data in order to provide differentiated opportunities aligned to teachers' need. As a result, the school cannot fully determine the effects of its professional development on student achievement in order to guide professional growth for teachers that accelerates student outcomes.
- Enhance systems for measuring interim progress towards meeting annual goals to support improved outcomes for all students.
  - At the school level, a core team meets monthly to assess schoolwide progress. Teacher Teams meet regularly to analyze data reflected in spreadsheets, charts and graphs. Individual teachers tracking individual student progress towards meeting academic goals by using a Student Goals line graph. However, there is some variation in the measuring and monitoring of interim progress towards meeting annual goals. Consequently, curriculum and instructional adjustments are not

consistently informed by regular benchmark data analysis to focus areas for improvement.

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

<b>School name: Cypress Hills Collegiate Preparatory School</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>	

<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.</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>			
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?			<b>X</b>				
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?			<b>X</b>				
3.3 Ensure the achievement of learning goals by tracking progress at the school, teacher team and classroom level?			<b>X</b>				
3.4 Communicate high expectations to students and families, engage them in decision-making, and promote active involvement in the school community?			<b>X</b>				
<b>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.</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>			
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?			<b>X</b>				
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning?			<b>X</b>				
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?			<b>X</b>				
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?			<b>X</b>				
<b>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.</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>			
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?			<b>X</b>				
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?			<b>X</b>				
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?			<b>X</b>				
5.4 Use data to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of structured professional collaboration, capacity building and leadership development strategies?			<b>X</b>				
<b>Quality Review Scoring Key</b>							
<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>