

# Quality Review Report 2010-2011

**South Brooklyn Community**

**High School K698**

**173 Conover Street  
Brooklyn  
NY 11231**

**Principal: Louis Garcia**

**Dates of review: June 1 - 2, 2011**

**Lead Reviewer: Aimee Horowitz**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

South Brooklyn Community High School serves students at the High school (Transfer School) level. The school has 173 students enrolled in grades 9, 10, 11, 12. The school population comprises 7% white students, 21% black students, 2% Asian students, 69% Hispanic students, 1% Native American students, 44% boys, and 56% girls. Currently, 2% of the student body is English language learners. The school enrolls 8% students with Individual Education Plans (IEP's). Attendance data is not available. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 73.4%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is proficient.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal's strategic organizational, resource, and scheduling decisions are well aligned with student learning needs and support improved student outcomes.
  - To improve achievement in English and support students with disabilities through integrated co-teaching, an additional special education teacher was hired. The school's strategic programming decisions regarding intensive support in literacy and writing have improved student outcomes. Coaches provided differentiated supports for teachers in English and social studies resulting in revision of both curricula, increasing credit accumulation in English courses.
  - Strategically scheduled collaborative inquiry work provides opportunities for teachers to analyze student work; pinpoint learning needs, and target instruction. As a result, strategies to improve evidence in writing and analysis of quotes have been implemented across content areas, improving student writing as evidenced by benchmark assessment data.
- Staff gathers a wide range of data to understand individual student and relevant subgroup performance and progress resulting in targeted instruction that meets student needs.
  - The school uses mock Regents, benchmark assessments, and other formative as well as summative data to analyze student performance and target instruction for individual students and subgroups. As a result, students with disabilities and other struggling students are programmed for a small Humanities course to address literacy deficits in social studies and English, improving student outcomes on end of unit assessments.
  - The school wide use of an online data system captures quantifiable information on students' participation rates, homework, levels of class work and exam performance, providing teachers and advisors with the ability to adapt instruction for individualized academic and social-emotional support, resulting in targeted instruction that increases student achievement.
- Highly effective student support services and collaborations afford students a wide range of opportunities that support their social-emotional and academic needs.
  - Advocate counselors have ongoing conversations with students, staff, parents, and administration as well as joint professional development sessions with school staff and administration. This strong collaboration enables students to reflect on their decisions, to create and refine action plans, aiding them in visualizing their path to graduation, and in owning their success. Students report that these supports help them to be accountable, to take responsibility for their actions, and to realize their goals.
  - Together with Good Shepherd counselors, the faculty provide seamless academic and youth development supports and resources. Students meet as community scholars - a mixed grade level advisory. They report, "In community, we help each other because we all have a story and are at different places on our journey to graduation. It helps me handle stress, setbacks, and discuss life issues." Good Shepherd's model provides each student with an advocate

counselor to effectively support resolution of issues and student success.  
Student internships effectively provide meaningful, real-world work experiences.

- The school has established highly effective systems for monitoring teacher practice with a clear focus on improving instructional practices.
  - This year, the focus of teacher observation was shifted to what students are doing and learning rather than on what the teacher is doing. Actionable feedback is tied to coaching and school wide and teacher goals, shifting teachers' foci such that they assess student learning through exit passes and student work products to reflect on their practice. Further, those who do not implement recommendations to improve pedagogy and increase student learning have been rated unsatisfactory and are held accountable for student achievement.
  - Professional development is differentiated to support teacher needs as assessed through observation, reflection, and student data. Faculty members have been exposed to the Common Core State Standards with teachers participating in content specific workshops. Lead teachers and coaches participate in mentoring workshops, enhancing their ability to support groups and individual teachers. Teachers also self-select outside professional development based on interest, adding to strategies for improved achievement.
- Relationships across the school are supportive and inclusive of students, teachers, and parents who are valued and proud to be part of the school community.
  - Each student has a counselor that supports their social-emotional and academic growth. Students report that they speak to their counselors every day in group and as they greet them in the morning. Students note, "They care about us and they tell us exactly what we need, what our next steps are." "Groups teach us problem solving, and bonding; we talk about our situations. It is like a small family." "When my counselor smiled, it made me come early for a month."
  - Student voice is heard through community meetings and in groups, where students are consulted on school wide issues. For example, the school's rest room policy was changed based on student initiative. Students state, "The connection here between students and teachers is different; we can trust our teachers; we respect them but can talk to them about our problems." "Teachers explain things and analyze our work to see what we understand so they know how to help us. Teachers are always here to help us even if we are not in their class. No teacher ever made me love reading until I came here; I never read a book before that. Here they have books we can relate to and they open our eyes to new genres."
- Families are engaged in reciprocal dialogue with the school regarding their child's performance, attendance, progress, and social-emotional development, resulting in extended support at home for student achievement.
  - The school has strong relationships with students and their families, engaging them regularly via telephone, conferences, and frequent progress reports, including comments about areas in need of improvement. Personal phone calls inform parents of absence or lateness within fifteen minutes of the start of the day. Intake conversations focus on students' areas of strength and weakness and on creating a plan with next learning steps for success. One parent noted, "They share goals with us and help us get extra help for our child. They speak to us about our child's progress." Another stated, "My son had no plans to go to

college, but because of this school he has been accepted and is going next year.”

- Across classrooms teachers have implemented the use of rubrics for students to self and peer assess. Students affirm that teachers regularly afford them opportunities to revise and reflect on their work, behavior, and progress so that they can set meaningful goals and are accountable for their decisions and progress.

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

- Promote consistency in differentiation for purposeful groupings and student engagement, enabling all students to access challenging learning experiences that meet their needs.
  - Differentiation is inconsistent throughout the school with stronger students often supporting weaker students. Although, there was evidence of differentiation based on product choice, evidence of differentiation of content and flexible groupings was limited. Consequently, some students cannot access reading and additional resources while others are not appropriately challenged for progress.
  - The school believes that making learning relevant to students' lives is motivating and curriculum maps include essential questions evidencing this belief. However, instruction inconsistently engages students in responding to these questions, resulting in missed opportunities to motivate students and improve outcomes.
- Ensure that all classes are rigorous such that they consistently engage all learners, include critical thinking skills, and result in higher order student work products.
  - Although some teachers plan learning activities that include differentiation through use of manipulatives, providing students with choice, incorporating film clips, and making lessons relevant with real world applications, questions and tasks generally lack rigor; minimizing the school's ability to engage students in problem solving and higher order thinking that produce extended responses.
- Establish effective systems for school self-evaluation, review, and modification of curriculum and practice with a clear focus on improving student learning.
  - Although the school reviews data to evaluate decisions, no collaborative school wide evaluation system is in place. Instructional practices are not regularly adjusted to respond to student needs and Common Core Standards alignment is not consistently addressed, preventing timely modifications for improvements to take place in teaching and learning.
- Strengthen teachers' responses to student work to include guiding comments with clear next steps that convey high expectations and ensure student success.
  - Administration and advocate counselors set high expectations for students, which are communicated during entrance conferences. However, teacher feedback does not consistently provide students with clear next steps to help them set and achieve specific skills and content based academic goals, resulting in missed opportunities for improved achievement. Although school goals are shared with families, parental voice in key decision-making is minimal.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

<b>School name: South Brooklyn Community High 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>	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				
<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>	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			
<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>	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				
<b>Quality Review Scoring Key</b>							
UD	Underdeveloped	D	Developing	P	Proficient	WD	Well Developed