



**Department of  
Education**

*Joel I. Klein, Chancellor*

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

# **Quality Review Report 2010-2011**

**Institute for Collaborative Education**

**Middle-High School 407**

**345 East 15 Street  
Manhattan  
NY 10003**

**Principal: John Pettinato**

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

**Lead Reviewer: Elaine Gorman**

## Part 1: The school context

### **Information about the school**

Institute for Collaborative Education is a secondary school with 500 students from grade 6 through grade 12. The school population comprises 17% Black, 22% Hispanic, 50% White, 9% Asian students and 2% Multiracial. The student body includes 11% special education students and 0% English language learners. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 96.3%.

### **Overall Evaluation**

**This school is well developed.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The highly instructionally focused leadership team and committed staff make intentional decisions regarding key content and skills embedded into rigorous spiraled curricula, resulting in academic challenges for all students.
  - Aligned with State and national standards, teacher-designed curriculum plans backward from grades 12 in core disciplines and across grade levels enhancing rigorous interdisciplinary tasks, with infusion of media literacy. Purposeful scaffolding allows students entry points to robust discussions with high-level evidence. This is exemplified in 7<sup>th</sup> grade classes, where students analyze comparisons between Lion King and Macbeth and defend their point of view with precise insights. Parents echo, “The school challenges students giving confidence and ownership for learning. They read books I read in college.” “Where are They Now” reports show that students write at higher levels than their national peers.
  - Teachers create units of study for each course, using Understanding by Design templates for academic and operational coherence, regularly reviewed by department and grade teams. Using interim assessments and student work, courses provide content and skill development, with adjustments made as increasing numbers of students exceed standards. This includes a math pilot linking Common Core Standards to Habits of Mind, aligning performance tasks to emerging State assessments.
- Deeply embedded beliefs about student learning bind the community and underpin teaching practices that engage students in rigorous performance tasks, resulting in high-level discourse and evidence-based writing.
  - Designed on principles of Coalition of Essential Schools, staff, students, and parents agree that inquiry and critical thinking are pillars of the instructional program. Teachers skillfully develop robust tasks increasing in complexity. Students analyze conclusions of sophisticated material, questioning world issues and social responsibility. This results in middle school students whose performance indices are 184 in English language arts and 192 in math, well exceeding targets of 147 and 127 respectively.
  - Students complete research and experimental design papers, in topics such as neuroscience, defending the work to panels of parents, students, faculty, and community members, developing meta-cognition and academic confidence. On the school survey, 85% of students report they complete multiple research papers yearly. With scaffolding and rich feedback, students complete literary criticism and historical essays producing student writers with strong voice, capable of analyzing multiple sources. As a result of strong preparation, colleges admit 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> graders to classes, and PSAT writing scores exceed national averages.
- The school collaboratively makes strategic organizational decisions, informed by ongoing analysis of student learning and social-emotional needs, creating a responsive environment that holds itself collectively accountable.

- Weekly faculty and grade-level student performance meetings allow faculty to establish organizational and instructional priorities and integrate individual, departmental, and school goals. Meetings of department coordinators allow for collaborative evaluation of instructional practices, decision making, and student/faculty needs, resulting in a reflective system that maintains 96% attendance and 80% graduation.
- In spite of limited budget, the school remains committed to core beliefs, resulting in smaller classes, daily advisories, and student-led town halls, using grants and external resources to supplement funds. Substantial uncompensated teacher time not only supports 50% of students earning exceeds or honors on Project-Based Assessment Tasks (PBATs), but also immeasurable appreciation by families for their child's education, leading to college success and enrollment of younger siblings.
- A refined system of curriculum-embedded assessments provide a comprehensive view of students' areas of mastery and needed intervention, informing decision-making that results in accelerated student learning.
  - Faculty regularly engage in examination of departmental plans that lay out standards and goals for students toward mastery of content and skills, with concrete promotional benchmarks premised on quarterly project-based interim PBATS. Students report staying focused through periodic review of their interim assessment folders, which are passed to the teacher of the next course. At open binder night, parents examine their child's "portfolios" of assessment projects and goals, furthering their understanding of the process and ways to support their child's success.
  - Interim assessment folders across subjects inform decisions at all levels, impacting programming and instructional moves. Input from some graduates feeling unprepared in large, lecture-style college classes is resulting in semester and final exams to be added in selected courses.
- With collaboration as a guiding principle, a robust system of communications engages student and families in reflective and reciprocal discussions about student progress toward well-articulated outcomes, with next steps.
  - Quarterly, students take performance-based assessments in each class. Teachers' highly precise analysis leads to enhancement of less effective assessments to ensure relevancy. Report cards are issued each cycle, with two providing a rich narrative of student strengths and challenges, allowing families a focused view of their learning path, beyond state tests.
  - Parents work closely with faculty to develop a series of regularly updated materials such as the Family Handbook, allowing for school-wide discourse on culture, expectations, and decision-making. Students from multiple grade levels sit on a Principal's Leadership Team whose work mirrors the Parent Teacher Association and School Leadership Team, creating sustained commitment to continuous improvement.
- A strong theory of action underpins a cohesive system of goal setting action planning for staff and students, binding the community by assisting each other in meeting high standards.

- The school community continues to focus on identifying needs and implementing plans for developing areas of improvement. In these efforts, students, families, and broader partnerships consistently collaborate, including weekly staff meetings (also open to family representatives and external colleagues) and weekly grade meetings (focused on individual student progress) to develop plans that will target assessed needs. The school has formalized strategic planning by using a systemic goal setting template, now also used by students, to collect and review goals, monitor progress in achieving goals, and cycling back to set new goals for the following year; thereby always pushing to a new level.
- Through well-supported instructional expectations and analysis of academic and social-emotional development, administrators, mentors and peers offer differentiated support and feedback, building teacher capacity.
  - Guided by a deeply supported school culture using analysis to focus holistically on students, departments and teachers regularly review explicit goals and action plans with benchmarks, inspiring each other to refine their practice. With specific feedback by administrators each day, and support from the Network team, external partners, and Coalition schools, the vast majority of staff demonstrate high degree of content and pedagogical skill, producing students admitted to college in high number.

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

- Maximize assessment collection tools to easily access patterns and trends of subgroups facilitating high leverage school and classroom decisions.
  - Although the school has a series of web-based tools allowing faculty to communicate and share information about student performance and needs, the school has not made full use of the data to identify its unique subgroups, such as students that do not begin in grade 6, further maximizing instructional moves. Additionally, not all teachers are equally adept as users of technology. Without further professional development to ensure all staff can manipulate the data and make full use of tagging, the sharing of proven strategies is less robust.
- Implement plans to redesign exit outcomes for students using inclusive processes to maintain genuine ownership by the school community.
  - Renew the cycle of action research that led to the school's original design as part of a planned instructional redesign, insuring university experts and professional practitioners engage with staff to update commencement benchmarks appropriate to current and increasingly competitive post-secondary goals. Without implementation, including Common Core Standards alignment with interdisciplinary units across grade levels, integration with emerging standards will not continue at high levels.
- Extend use of student assessment, observations, and peer collaboration to reflect more deeply on professional growth and teacher leadership.
  - The school is significantly invested in frequent, structured reflective practices based on student work and assessment products, with strong feedback loop. However, without implementing plans incorporating more

teacher intervisitations and a formal critical circle of friends, along with the collegial exchange, the staff will blunt its efforts to continue their own pedagogical work together to benefit student learning.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

<b>School name: Institute for Collaborative Education</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>	<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>

**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>	<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>

**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>	<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>