

# Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Satellite Academy High School

02M570

120 West 30<sup>th</sup> Street  
Manhattan  
NY 10001

Principal: Steven Zbaida

Dates of review: October 5-6, 2010

Lead Reviewer: Jill Herman

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Satellite Academy High School is a transfer high school with 270 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 32.2% Black, 61.5% Hispanic, 3.3% White, and 1.9% Asian students. The student body includes 2.6% English language learners and 10% special education students. Boys account for 44.6% of the students enrolled and girls account for 55.4%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 77.07%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is Developing.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The culture of the school provides an environment in which all students are known well by more than one person such that they are supported academically and emotionally which impacts their desire to be successful.
  - Students have the same advisor for approximately two years they are in school. The advisor is the point person for contacting the parent as well as dealing with any issues that arise in or out of school. Students, who are over-aged, under credited and fragile, strongly believe that teachers are a key factor in their coming to school and achieving academic success.
  - School leaders and staff closely examine attendance and referral data in order to conduct timely personal interactions that enable necessary adjustments to strengthen students' academic and emotional success.
- A strong, open communication exists among constituents of the school with on-going, frequent conversations providing information that impacts academic progress and next steps.
  - Advisory, which meets four hours a week, incorporates academic and personal goal setting. Reflection towards meeting goals fosters autonomy and self-awareness. Parents are contacted and come in to discuss academic and/or behavioral issues. Students placed on contract require parent conference and signature. As a result, students and families know exactly what is needed to progress and graduate.
  - A Learning to Learn portfolio is completed by all students. It contains seven goals: revision, taking notes, close reading, working in groups, discussion and presentation, independent work, and numeracy. Students provide evidence of achievement and reflect on growth as learners.
- Youth Development is strongly supported, internally and externally through partnerships, providing tools for staff to support at risk students by accelerating their progress towards graduation.
  - Given sixty per cent of the staff is new to the school this year, professional development is being provided school wide to support advisory, curriculum development, and to maintain school culture. Some teachers receive additional support by pairing up with an experienced staff member which ensures coherence of school culture and necessary student support.
  - Weekly case conferencing of students, following protocols, is scheduled to support staff in developing strategies, and these processes enable students to achieve.
- School leaders use a variety of data sources to identify needs of individual teachers and provide various opportunities for staff to work in ways that promote professional growth.

- School leaders use exam pass rates, course pass rates, student surveys, course outlines, and classroom observations to provide targeted assistance and make retention decisions. The principal has also identified staff needing to improve lesson plans or classroom management skills to support their ongoing development.
- Leaders provide various opportunities for staff including a buddy system and math coach to improve assessments. Also, teachers new to the school have the opportunity to attend professional development out of the school that exemplifies the pedagogical focus.
- The school makes strategic decisions utilizing monetary and human resources to support and strengthen student achievement.
  - A large investment in technology allows students to demonstrate mastery in a variety of ways. Students create videos, power point presentations, and animation that facilitate their learning by promoting strong motivation and computer skills.
  - Teachers attended orientation in the summer which informed classroom and course decisions. New teachers do not teach Orientation classes designed to familiarize students with the culture and expectations of the school. Teachers' loads are four classes of approximately 22 students. Using external partners, allows staff to meet twice a week for three hours during school day and meet after school with students. These decisions impact teachers' development as well as individual time with students.

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

- Redesign curricula and assessments across all subject areas to embed rigorous habits, higher order thinking skills and provide evidence of college readiness skills.
  - Students spend approximately two years or less at Satellite and are placed in courses based on credits needed to graduate. Course offerings are limited, and Algebra and Geometry are the only math courses offered. Courses are not always aligned to key or State Standards, with students receiving credit for Student Government and a time management course as first cycle of an American History class for graduating students. As a result, students graduating in January have not yet applied to college.
  - Course outlines make reference to State standards but lack a clear connection and common thread throughout the curriculum. For example, class assignments involve learning the format of a five paragraph essay, writing a paragraph response to a non-fiction piece in a class for seniors and a whole class reading a text aloud. Hence, the curriculum does not work towards preparing students for college level courses.
- Develop clear structures for evaluating progress towards short and long term academic and curricular goals and modify procedures to make adjustments throughout the year.
  - While some evaluative processes are in place regarding review of data, there are no school wide systems for examining interim benchmarks. As a result,

administration struggles to identify where adjustments are needed in plans and strategies.

- As a result of a non-uniform assessment/grading system, teachers weigh various grade components with different values, and they utilize different interim assessments in the same subject area making it difficult to strategically examine school wide practices and progress of targeted students.
- Strengthen classroom practices and routines to reflect levels and learning styles of the diverse learners in order to maximize and accelerate student learning across classrooms.
  - Classroom teachers indicate that they share a common belief about pedagogical approaches, and focus on group work. However, student work products do not consistently provide evidence of analysis, making connections across texts and other higher order thinking.
  - The majority of classes have students reading the same material and completing similar assignments. Therefore differentiated instruction is not used regularly to meet the diverse needs of students and challenge the thinking of all students.
- Strengthen alignment of yearlong assessments to curriculum and utilize in depth data analysis to adjust classroom and curricular decisions.
  - Course goals include the following: will develop capacity to write with confidence, develop a curious, inquiring mind, exploring short stories. Learning goals are not aligned to assessments and they lack the measurable outcomes needed for teachers to inform their instruction.
  - The Comprehensive Educational Plan indicates that curriculum alignment remains a concern. Evidence of key standards is not apparent among assessments. In addition, performance based indicators are not present in classrooms assignments. Rubrics are varied and not always aligned to The New York City Performance Based Assessment Tasks of which the school is a member.
- Develop the collaborative inquiry and data capacity of all teams to build differentiated learning goals that accelerate student learning.
  - While teams have chosen subgroups to target, a narrow approach of using one data source limits both the information gathered as well as the practices required to improve student learning.
  - To date, not all teams have developed processes for analyzing student work and teacher assignments limiting the school's ability to leverage classroom change and accurately determine students' needs.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

<b>School name: Satellite Academy 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>	<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>