



**Department of
Education**

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

The Young Women's Leadership School

Middle/High School M610

**105 East 106th Street
New York,
New York 10029**

Principal: Dr. Althea Bradshaw-Tyson

Dates of review: February 3rd – 4th 2011

Lead Reviewer: Geri Taylor-Brown

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Young Women's Leadership School is a middle/high school with 436 students from grade 6 through grade 12. The school population comprises 34% Black, 58% Hispanic, 1% White, and 4% Asian students. The student body includes 2% English language learners and 6% special education students. The average attendance rate for the school year 2008 - 2009 was 96.6%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- School leaders plan how to effectively use resources to accelerate student achievement.
 - The principal strategically implemented reading classes in the middle school grades “to strengthen the foundational skills”. Additional assessments are also administered to get a clear picture of student progress and student needs. As a result the periodic assessments reflect student improvements in reading.
 - The school devotes one Monday per month, for “Best Practice PD”. Teachers meet and share best teaching ideas. In addition, there is an online version where “teachers create shared lesson plans”. These practices help teachers to establish a resource file of instructional strategies that improve student success.
- Faculty is committed to supporting student success through a common focus on academic needs.
 - The principal and assistant principal’s work closely with all staff members ensuring that their professional learning needs are met. While both internal and external professional development opportunities are offered, school leaders carefully match personnel with on-going support that align their pedagogical improvement with the achievement of their students. This effective move encourages teachers to do their best for all students.
 - All staff members, community stakeholders, parents and students are pointedly focused on student learning and achievement. Specifically, teaching staff are working on a book study: **How Girls Learn**. This study has instilled a spirit of determination, throughout the school, that each young woman will be academically successful. In addition, it is linked with the school goal and the State standard that student be “college ready”. As a result students are motivated to always do their best!
- School leaders and faculty analyze student information from multiple assessment sources to obtain a clear understanding of student achievement.
 - Teachers gather data from multiple sources. Discussions at team meetings include sharing learning trends captured from this data. In addition, some teachers have developed additional data sorting and tracking systems. For example, a math teacher uses the entire side wall to display color-coded records of student scores. This visual system offers students immediate access to their achievement data. As a result students in this class know what skills need improvement.

- Parents are integral educational partners who work collaboratively with school staff to ensure full support as students grow academically and socially.
 - Parents spoke highly about the access they have to school staff members. The school staff also does outreach via telephone calls and emails to parents. Consequently, these communication vehicles have empowered parents to fully participate in their child's education. Parents agreed the "You are in it" when it comes to helping you child succeed.
- The school provides a broad range of course offerings that appeal to students with different learning abilities.
 - School leaders and teachers developed the current curriculum through their collaborative work on Teacher Inquiry Teams. The selection of key standards was based on the examination of student data. This good practice has resulted in some engaging academic tasks including the publication of a book: *Listen Up Teachers!* Students spoke about how working on this project sharpened their writing skills and provided them with knowledge about the book publishing industry.
 - The school has creatively developed challenging courses that are standards aligned and of high interest to students. The development of a film/video class which was co-taught by a school volunteer resulted in student entries to the Tribeca film Festival. This coursework strengthened student literacy skills and clearly linked school work with the world-of-work.
- The school's outstanding job of conveying high expectations for all students reflected in excellent graduation and college attendance data.
 - The school communicates that every student will graduate and attend college. There are multiple visual reminders in the hallways as poster-sized pictures of graduating seniors line the hallways and stairwells. The consistent message is that college is a requirement, not an option. One parent stated, "College is a part of the language of the school from the moment you walk in". As a result, the school boasts 100% college acceptances for the graduating class of 2010.

What the school needs to improve

- Strengthen teacher practice of implementing differentiated instruction to ensure that tasks address the learning needs of all students.
 - Most teachers offer varied instructional tasks to engage student in many classrooms. This practice emanates from a general staff belief that teaching should address the multiple student learning needs. Although this is commonly expressed, it is not sufficiently rooted in school culture as it is not consistently practiced across classrooms. And as a result, instruction varies from class to class. For example, in an English class, students performed their project-based assignments while in science students completed

the assigned tasks and then sat patiently awaiting the “next thing to do”.

- Develop systems for the timely monitoring of student progress so that appropriate adjustments are made to policies and practices to ensure continued student academic growth.
 - The school is in the second year of using Teacher Ease for communicating student progress to parents. The Principal says using this tool has prompted “constant conversation” about improvements in academic achievement, attendance and student behavior. These emerging discussions have proven beneficial in this initial stage of disaggregating data for staff and encouraging parents to review their child’s information electronically. However, the school has not established a seamless structure that connects use of these tools with teacher team work. Also, the sharing of student data with families does not clearly provide students with a way to determine next learning steps. As a result, there has been some inconsistency in student progress.
- Establish an articulated, coherent and consistent set of school goals that result in a well comprehended awareness of the academic focus.
 - The school leaders have developed a set of school-wide goals that appear in multiple documents including the school CEP. However, school goals have shifted from last year’s focus on math to the current focus on reading. As a result, not all community members are clear on the current plan of action for accelerating student learning.
 - The Principal and cabinet review and analyze student data as a key part of developing goals. However, the analysis is not fully cyclical and does not include consistent comparisons of assessment data and linkages with instruction. As a result, instructional practices are not focused on school goals across subjects.
- Refine the process of assessment analysis to include adjustments to instructional decisions so that students clearly know their next learning steps.
 - Teachers work individually and in teams to align class exams with the school’s focus on “writing across all areas”. Results of these assessments are used by teachers to gauge what learning took place. However, this assessment analysis does not yet provide detailed information to influence significant and consistent changes in instruction. As a result feedback provided to students does not give them sufficient insight into their next learning steps. In addition, teachers use the results of periodic assessments such as the Ed Performance Series and mock Regents exams, but this practice is not consistently enacted limiting opportunities for growth.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

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

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							
UD	Underdeveloped	D	Developing	P	Proficient	WD	Well Developed