

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Magnetech 2000 Junior High School

**Middle School Q231
145-00 Springfield Boulevard
Queens
NY 11413**

Principal: Emmanuel Lubin

Dates of review: November 8 – 9, 2010

Lead Reviewer: Lenon Murray

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Magnetech 2000 is a middle school with 931 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 92% Black, 6% Hispanic, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 3% English language learners and 16.7% special education students. Boys account for 54% of the students enrolled and girls account for 46%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 92.9%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Teaching strategies and practices are consistently aligned to the curriculum and demonstrate strong beliefs in utilizing learning styles and differentiation to increase student achievement.
 - The leadership and the teachers can articulate informed reasons for the way students are grouped. They express the belief in conversation and in classes that students learn differently according to their individual learning style and that planning reflects that reality to support struggling students.
 - The principal, staff and teachers place emphasis on defining and implementing differentiated instruction. The majority of teachers differentiate by student work products. They provide assignments with varying degrees of difficulty. Some groups of students are asked to write more or answer questions of increasing challenge. Other students simply answer questions that require recall or comprehension. The mathematics classes have differing problems that included multiple steps to engage a diversity of students. This has led to improved performance on early unit tests on the sixth grade.
- School leadership effectively utilizes the budget to expand programs and instructional resources to improve students' achievement over time.
 - The school leadership has put particular emphasis on the expansion of Arts education by expending resources to include visual arts, theatre, dance and music to enhance literacy and improve students' confidence and achievement. Programs and projects in the Arts, including student performances and plays, are built into the school's schedule to increase students' higher order thinking skills.
 - The school increased the number of computer labs and provided SMART boards to teachers ready to incorporate technology into their instruction. They have also invested in various technology instructional supports to better meet the needs of students. As a result, the school has students effectively using computers for independent work weekly.
- Teachers align assessments to their current curriculum and examine student outcomes to adjust classroom level decisions to accelerate student growth.
 - Teachers have developed general and subject specific rubrics to clarify the standards and effectively assess student work to increase fluency and stamina in writing. This has led to increased student writing output including special education classes.
 - Teachers analyze results from periodic assessments and unit assessments in order to measure student progress in mathematics and literacy and identify struggling students. Interventions are put into place with struggling students to improve areas of weakness individually and in groups. From this work, early results indicate students are improving.

- The observation process and various supports afforded to teachers raise the level of instructional practices and teacher reflection to further professional progress.
 - The school leadership conducts regular formal and informal observations of all staff while utilizing the observation process as an individualized professional development tool to improve instruction. Teachers have opportunities for input in their conversations with their supervisors. The leadership holds teachers accountable to enhance their skills to improve the performance of their students. This has resulted in strong teacher motivation to improve the level of teaching in their academy cohorts.
 - Newer teachers have been provided with mentors and teamed with more experienced teachers. The principal is the head of the math department and observes and supervises the newer math teachers. Probationary teachers receive more individual observations and feedback to become reflective practitioners and improve student performance. This has resulted in closer monitoring of newer teacher lesson planning and implementation.
- The administration has created and shared goals that reflect the needs of the school based on data analysis to create a collective knowledge towards a plan to increase student progress.
 - The school gathers data systematically on the students' needs by doing teacher generated surveys and student assessments including on-demand writing, student presentations and diagnostic assessments. The school leadership team takes a leading role in the analysis of all school data and the data specialist is the chairperson. By organizing baseline data on student performance and parental responses, the principal has developed major goals to further develop students' essential writing skills, to improve teacher capacity in the core subject areas of differentiated instruction, and to challenge and stretch the school's highest achieving students while supporting students in need of remediation. The various school constituencies are encouraged to become involved for the benefit of students. The teaching has become focused in learning academies and early in-house assessments are indicative of some initial improvement in student work.

What the school needs to improve

- Revise the curriculum to embed rigorous tasks that challenge all students to extend their thinking to higher levels to improve their performance.
 - The school leaders and faculty place some emphasis on aligning their curricula with the State standards. The school has purchased literacy programs to support students' needs however, adjustments to the actual curriculum that work towards addressing student deficits are lacking.
 - The level of rigor was inconsistent across classrooms as academic tasks asked students to copy, complete simple graphic organizers, share a company they plan to start up, complete worksheets, and alphabetize. Without academic tasks that challenge students' higher order thinking so that knowledge and understanding are achieved, the curriculum struggles

to prepare students appropriately to be successful in future educational settings.

- Deepen the culture of mutual trust shown to students by their peers and by students toward adults to expand the safety and respect of the school environment.
 - According to students, many things have changed this year to make the school better. Different learning academies are in place along with color coded uniforms for each academy to better identify students. The suspension and incident rates have declined and students show interest in their learning and believe that the school is generally supportive of their personal and academic development. Even though it was too early to gather data on the impact of these initiatives, students expressed that their peers still attempt to intimidate them and occasionally disrupt their learning.
- Communicate high expectations and challenging goals for students and families so that students' academic and behavioral performance increases throughout the school community.
 - The school leaders and faculty reach out to parents online with programs and the school website. The parent association reaches out to parents with regular meetings and workshops. The school phone system reaches out with important announcements to all homes with a valid phone number. The new uniform policy has tremendous parental support but the level of expectation for academic and behavioral performance is not sufficiently high.
 - Parents feel the school has improved but were not aware of the school wide goals and their purpose to accelerate student achievement nor had they played a role in making decisions related to school plans. Parents shared various strengths and areas of growth for the school and without their voice represented at leadership discussions, the school community struggles to work collaboratively to increase student achievement.
- Expand professional development opportunities so the faculty is fully equipped to support students' social and emotional needs in order to increase student engagement.
 - The school has various partnerships that target the Arts but these outreach efforts do not include every student or do they focus on students' social-emotional development. While teachers are exposed to anti-bullying and peer mediation professional development, its impact on student needs has yet to be measured.
- Improve the structures that evaluate curriculum and instructional decisions on the school's use of resources to make adjustments that foster achievement.
 - With the various initiatives in place, the school is developing systems to measure their effectiveness and impact on student learning. Without a consistent structure to provide information that leads to adjustments in curriculum and organizational decisions, the school struggles to continuously address school wide needs.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: Magnetech 2000	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