

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Beach Channel

High School 410

**100-00 Beach Channel Drive
Queens
NY 11694**

Principal: David Morris

Dates of review: November 16 - 17, 2010

Lead Reviewer: Eileen R. Waters

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Beach Channel is a high school with 1,087 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 49% Black, 40% Hispanic, 6% White, and 3% Asian students. The student body includes 9% English language learners and 20% special education students. Boys account for 57% of the students enrolled and girls account for 43%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 76.7%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is underdeveloped.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal makes organizational decisions that foster teacher interaction centered on student data and instructional practices.
 - Three technology laboratories and the purchase of SMART boards enable some teachers to infuse technology into student learning. Additionally, the on-site United Federation of Teachers Teacher Center provides staff with support for their professional growth and the principal coordinates with another school housed inside the building to schedule learning walks for his staff. A cumulative result of these practices supports classroom environments developing into inviting spaces with reference materials posted for student use.
 - The restructuring into small learning communities allows staff members to meet throughout the week and discuss department or cohort concerns regarding students. From this practice of on-going conversations, teachers are developing professional relationships with their colleagues.
- Professional collaboration as a school priority drives the development of opportunities for teachers to grow as educators.
 - A professional development plan, developed for the year, includes topics around goal setting, using ARIS data, and developing learning environments. Through utilization of their network's resources, and by attending conferences held by 'High Schools That Work', teachers are provided professional development on the evolving State standards, working with challenging students, and other educational topics related to their practice. Additionally, teacher teams meet during the week to discuss practice and look at student work with the administration. The impact of these offerings is evident in classroom environments, teachers talking about data with their colleagues, and a portion of teachers looking at class data to develop an academic understanding of their students.
- Goals have been developed to address the current needs of the school and shared with the staff in order to foster a shared vision.
 - School-wide goals were set to increase the graduation rate, student achievement in math and English, and credit accumulation based on data. A broad action plan is mapped in the Comprehensive Education Plan, and the administration is still developing a more detailed rollout of steps to be taken to reach their goals. Teachers are informed of the school's goals and have begun to address specific topics in their weekly team meetings. From this practice, a common understanding of the school's overall needs is developing along with general solutions.
- Part of the school community has developed a respectful tone where some students are engaged in learning and feel supported in their academic development.
 - Although only about two-thirds of the students attend class daily, those students that are present in class express the desire to graduate early by

taking additional classes, an ambition to attend college, and share pieces of work about which they are passionate. Students feel comfortable going to guidance counselors and staff members regarding concerns and college planning. Currently, some students have selected colleges they desire to attend and are beginning the conversations and process.

What the school needs to improve

- Devise a curriculum rich in content, centered on key standards that engages learners through rigorous, high order thinking skills, thus decreasing the achievement gap and meeting students' needs across all disciplines.
 - The various subject area curricula display inconsistent focus and development. The social studies curriculum is planned out in greater depth when compared to the English curriculum, which offers a basic overview. Although the school has been cited for not making annual yearly progress in English and math, the current curriculums lack comprehensive content to provide teachers with an instructional plan to meet students' diverse needs, build upon their strengths, and challenge their thinking through rigorous tasks. As a result, challenging activities and higher-order thinking skills were rarely evident in classrooms. Teacher directed questions focused on low-level thinking and demanding student work products were not accomplished at the conclusion of classes.
- Establish instructional practices that consistently engage and address students' differentiated needs and reflect a common instructional belief among staff about how students learn best.
 - Instruction is primarily teacher dominated with minimal time dedicated towards engaging students in rigorous work. The majority of classes had students completing the same task without taking into account the unique learning needs of the English language learners, students with disabilities, students repeating the course, high achieving students, or struggling students. Consequently, students were not consistently engaged and challenged to develop their academic mind through high-level conversations and rigorous instructional tasks that focused on their unique needs.
- Identify a common instructional focus among staff that guides teacher growth through effective feedback provided from frequent observations and leads to differentiated professional development work.
 - Although all formal observations conducted this year have been rated satisfactory, the feedback from these and from snapshots of instruction provides teachers with minimal instructional foci. Feedback is not aligned with the school's goals nor does it include a focus on student data or student work outcomes. Observation reports are limited in lesson detail and tend to include next steps on attendance and classroom appearance. As a result, response towards teacher practices has been ineffective in shifting instructional procedures to align with the school-wide goals set to increase student achievement.
- Develop the ongoing practice of collecting and analyzing data so that trends, strengths, and areas of need can be identified and incorporated in classroom level decisions.

- Cohort meetings focus on looking at non-instructional data to develop interventions that would entice students to attend school regularly. The English department looks at student work pieces from one teacher to provide feedback and develop next steps. At this time, all teachers are not sufficiently gathering and analyzing academic data to identify strengths, needs, and trends in the performance and progress of students and relevant subgroups. The lack of using a plethora of data to develop a unique portrait of students' learning abilities hinders their potential to be successful, and the teachers' ability to redesign their instructional practice to meet the unique needs of their learners.
- Initiate a collaborative approach in inquiry teams across all subjects to help in setting student improvement goals based on benchmark data with an eye on raising student achievement.
 - Although teachers participate in regularly scheduled team meetings, their focus on attendance monitoring and conversations on instructional practices are not significantly impacting on student learning. Data is generally looked at during these meetings, but it is not utilized to produce a change in instructional practices or student results. The work of these teams lacks a goal-oriented focus with reassessment points embedded along the way to evaluate the advancement of student outcomes. With the absence of a structured inquiry approach among teacher teams, limited evidence of student growth is apparent and discoveries made have not triggered an analysis of instructional practices for adjustment purposes to best meet students learning needs.
- Create a clear system to measure the ongoing effectiveness of policies and practices in monitoring and evaluating progress of school wide plans and goals for accelerating learning.
 - The school does not monitor its progress relative to prior year's goals or to goals established for this school year, nor is a long-term plan to address the status of the school developed. Specifically, data on achievement or progress towards goals is not evident, thus limiting the school's ability to know what adjustments are needed. Teacher teams are focusing on improving yearly attendance, yet without a cohesive plan that measures improvements made or effectiveness of interventions, results are inconclusive and attendance remains a major concern.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: Beach Channel High 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