



**Department of
Education**

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Bronx Guild High School

High School X452

1980 Lafayette Avenue

Bronx

NY 10473

Principal: Samuel Decker

Dates of review: November 8-9, 2010

Lead Reviewer: Elena Papaliberios

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Bronx Guild is a high school with 324 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 36% Black, 60% Hispanic, 1% White, and 3% Asian students. The student body includes 11% English language learners and 22% special education students. Boys account for 48% of the students enrolled and girls account for 52%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 83.0%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- This school has developed partnerships that provide internships to students in a variety of fields which help to develop students' ability to succeed in the workplace.
 - The strength of this school model is directly connected to its internships. Most students are involved in an internship either in the school or with outside organizations where real world learning opportunities are offered at places such as Cablevision News 12, community based organizations and local businesses. Other partnerships include City Year, Project Reach, Hostos Community College, Bronx Community College. These partnerships have led to the social and academic development of students at all grade levels.
 - Teachers have been trained to be Crew leaders where they go through intense professional development on how to work with the whole child. Each student is assigned to a crew and remains a part of that crew for four years. The training afforded has helped staff provide ongoing social and emotional support to all their students and enabled them to create a culture that is safe.
- The school maintains a safe environment that is conducive to learning, nurturing and is one where all students are known well by at least one adult.
 - Parents and students feel that each student is well known to at least one member of the staff. Parents speak positively of the practice of attaching each student to a crew and a leader that will follow him/her for the four years. A parent shared that, "The crew leader really gets to know each kid." The staff has been able to create a culture that is safe where everyone feels part of a community.
 - In every classroom visited there is evidence of an environment of mutual respect where all feel safe. Students and adults address each other by their first name, work in teams and make choices about the projects they are involved in. As a result, students take ownership of their projects.
- Teachers are engaged in collaborative professional teams that are structured and focused on improving student outcomes.
 - All teachers meet on collaborative teams where student work and teacher practices are addressed. The 10th grade team looked at student work, focused on math, and shared strategies that would help students improve. Team members gave suggestions to the teacher on pedagogical strategies that may lead to better student outcomes. The work of the math team has led to improved math regents outcomes. After years of not meeting annual yearly progress (AYP), the school met AYP in math for the 2010 school report card.
- The school provides families with information regarding student progress allowing parents to monitor and view data online in order to determine students' growth and offer additional home support.
 - Every class requires students to develop their own projects. Parents are often present to observe students' project presentation and can see how students

are progressing based on the work, presentation and the research they have done. Crew leaders meet with parents to discuss students' strengths and weaknesses as well as their progress in all classes.

- Some teachers use Engrade as a tool to track students' progress. This is available to students and a few of the teachers are making this information available to parents as well to see online. This provides parents with current information, gives students the ability to monitor their own progress, and as a result, parents are better equipped to support their child's development at home.
- The staff communicates high expectations to students thus providing students with motivation to improve academically.
 - Parents and students agreed that teachers at this school have high expectations for their students. A student said, "When the teacher checks my project, she pushes me to do more research and give more information even if I have enough. She wants me to do better and expects me to do my best." This has motivated students to work hard and has led to presentations that are well thought out. Parents speak of how demanding the projects are and how some students are given the freedom to select their own topics. Teachers often meet with students and provide clear expectations for student work products.
 - Parents are active participants in this school community. They participate on school leadership teams, in the Parent Association, and at project presentations providing feedback to student projects. This has resulted in more active parent involvement at all grade levels. And parents who are more aware of what students are learning.

What the school needs to improve

- Use the observation process to develop data driven teacher goals in order to improve the pedagogical practice and develop individualized professional development plans, especially for new teachers.
 - A Quality Review recommendation from last year focused on the observation process; however, no changes to address those concerns have been implemented. The lack of uniformity in providing feedback continues to make it difficult to monitor teacher practice and promote best practices to support student learning and also impacts on the effectiveness of evaluation and tenure decisions. Consequently, the observation process is not effectively used as a vehicle to cultivate professional development plans for all teachers.
 - Teachers participate in professional opportunities during teacher team meetings; however, these are generic and not part of an individualized professional development plan. Thus preventing the school from supporting the growth of teachers and improve their pedagogical skills.
- Build consistency in the level of rigor in all curricula and across all grade levels in order to challenge students and prepare them for college level work.
 - There was inconsistency in terms of how classes visited challenged students. For example, a social studies class had students drawing symbols and in another class students were asked to work on their projects without monitoring the type of online sources they were using for their research. Anything they

found online was being used, leaving students unprepared to identify valid sources and to demonstrate a high level of rigor that would help them to do college level work.

- Lesson planning falls short in addressing the diversity of learning, especially for students with disabilities, through differentiation of instruction. Although the school has over 20% of students with an individual education plan, the lessons developed lack differentiated tasks for students with disabilities leaving them without academic supports to scaffold their learning.
- Further develop teaching strategies to reflect a common belief around student learning that consistently meets the needs of all learners through engaging tasks so that meaningful work products leverage academic growth.
 - Across classrooms there was an inconsistent understanding of how students learn best through uneven levels of engagement and inconsistent differentiated learning tasks. Although the school centers on a project based model, which leads to differentiated products, the direct instruction provided to students lacks opportunities to deliver differentiated content. The absence of consistent differentiation has prevented the school from adjusting to the needs of an ever-changing student population.
- Make intentional choices that align with and support the instructional goals of the school in order to leverage the academic growth of students.
 - The school is beginning to align resources through the hiring of staff to assist in meeting its instructional goals. Special education teachers have been employed to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities but have not seen yet an impact on student performance. Although this hiring practice has been used to address the needs of one group of students, its purpose centered on student needs. The lack of a consistent utilization of hiring teachers best suited to work with a specific group of students or content area leads to a deficient use of teacher and student time.
 - Students are programmed to participate in internships and academic classes during the school year. Consequently, there is an uneven balance in the allotment of time for internships and academic work, leaving some students struggling to receive enough instruction in order to be amply prepared to complete coursework and prepare for assessments.
- Strengthen the process by which teachers use assessments to identify strengths and weaknesses of students in subgroups so that instruction can be tailor to meet their unique needs.
 - Many teachers use projects to assess students but there is little evidence that a range of assessments are used to measure progress student groups. The lack of this practice prevents teachers from having a clear understanding of the skill level and knowledge students have acquired in each of their classrooms. Without the utilization of a common assessment, there is no way to assess how students are doing on grade level, by content area or subgroups. Without identifying the strengths and weaknesses of these categories, students do not receive academic interventions targeted directly to their needs.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: Bronx Guild 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