

# **Quality Review Report 2010-2011**

**Samuel Gompers Career and Technical Education High  
School**

**High School 655  
455 Southern Blvd.  
Bronx  
NY 10455**

**Principal: Joyce Mills-Kitrell**

**Dates of review: January 13-14, 2011**

**Lead Reviewer: Geri Taylor-Brown**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Samuel Gompers Career and Technical High School is a high school with 1078 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 28% Black, 69% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 16% English language learners and 25% special education students. Boys account for 77% of the students enrolled and girls account for 23%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 73.4%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is underdeveloped.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- School leaders work cooperatively to ensure a respectful and calm school tone.
  - In November the school acquired cameras throughout the building. All students and staff members are fully aware of this recent installation. As a result there has been a decrease in the number of school incidents.
  - Gompers students are anxious to succeed and use phrases such as: “CTE schools give you an advantage – you see the future better”, to describe the potential of their school. Career and Technology Education (CTE) courses, and student summer internships serve as a motivation for students to also excel academically. As a result, there is a correlation between the percentages of students who excel in CTE classes and academic classes.
- Some teachers provide a variety of instructional tasks to meet the learning style needs of students.
  - The school administered a learning styles survey to all students. Results showed that Gompers students had a variety of learning styles. Some teachers are beginning to incorporate varied academic tasks into their lessons to appeal to the different student learning styles and to increase student engagement in class. For example, in both a social studies and an English classroom students were offered the tasks of writing, reading, working in pairs on PowerPoint presentations, or developing a three dimensional model in completing an academic activity. Students in these classrooms stated that they acquired new knowledge and exhibited high interest and enthusiasm during lessons.
- The principal and cabinet gather and examine various student data to establish areas of strength and areas needing development.
  - School leaders gather summative school data and, as stated by the principal, they examine this information “by content, by grade and by special population”. A recent mid-year review of student data showed a correlation trend between 9<sup>th</sup> grade class failure and their waning attendance. As a result the administration is developing incentives to improve the attendance of these students.
  - Staff members are provided with student data through the Datacation system. This student data storage and tracking system provides exam, courses, attendance information and more in one location. Current usage includes data gathering and examination which gives the teachers who use the system a general picture of student needs and strengths. (c)
- Staff members provide students and their families with consistent information regarding expected student behavior which has resulted in a calm school environment.
  - Across classrooms and throughout the school there is an expectation of how students behave in classrooms, during hallway passing, and in

common areas such as the cafeteria. These expectations have been adopted by students leading to improved climate and decorum.

- The school continues to employ a variety of outreach strategies to keep parents fully informed and involved in school activities and decisions. Celebrations to recognize student success such as awards nights and pep rallies have shown a 20% increase in parent attendance according to school leaders.

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

- Establish a solid standards aligned curriculum in all subject areas that offers learning opportunities for all students.
  - The school is working on developing meaningful and appropriate curriculum across subjects. School leaders developed and disseminated laminated placards which include: "The Common Core State Standards" and "A Strategy for Curriculum Development". However, this effort has not resulted in the development of an appropriately rigorous curriculum or substantially detailed curriculum maps. Subsequently classroom tasks do not include activities that promote higher order thinking or complex work products from students.
- Clearly connect all resource allocations to data driven instructional needs.
  - The school has spent a great deal of grant money on technology. They purchased several software programs including the reading program - Achieve 3000 and Plato Credit Recovery. In addition, every teacher was given a Netbook. However, even though some limited training was provided only one teacher was utilizing the Netbook computer to record notes during a meeting. Thus, the benefits of the programs and the equipment have not been fully realized and have not had any impact on student learning.
  - School leaders made a decision to arrange student program grouping that includes classes where multilevel course work occurs. This design where one group of students is preparing to take a State exam and one group of students has passed the State exam was seen in both math and English classes. However, even with the dissemination of separate class work packets, this money-saving design has not yet resulted in student success .
- Develop assessments that are aligned with the curriculum and that provide teachers with clear information on student learning needs.
  - Teachers typically develop assessments using "questions from New York State Regents to assess student knowledge of specific subject areas." In addition, the school administered interim assessment, specifically in English, in October and December. While some of these assessments are solidly correlated with State Standards, the school has not made purposeful decisions in selecting assessments that render a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses of their specific student populations. In addition, even though the school uses both Datacat and ARIS data collection systems, teachers examine a limited amount of this information in determining student learning needs. In addition, there is no sufficiently deep analysis of the

assessment data that has rendered a change in what is taught or how it is taught to improve student outcomes.

- Implement a structured teacher evaluation system that provides actionable feedback and promotes pedagogical growth.
  - There are inconsistencies in the current classroom observation practices and products. A collection of various formal and informal observation documents showed emphasis ranging from the limited availability of textbooks to the proper usage of hallway passes. Both samples exemplify the fact that there are not clear expectations for classroom teaching. These weak performance evaluations contribute to the incoherent instructional focus. While all teachers believe “all kids can learn” this is not evidenced in the school practices. As a result, teacher pedagogy has not sufficiently improved.
- Create structure that support monitoring of short and long term goals to ensure that timely and appropriate adjustments are made that improve student learning.
  - While the school sets annual goals, examination of progress towards attaining these goals has not yet been routinized. There is an examination of student data at report card time and during the mid and end-year formative assessments. However, even though the data is examined there are no adjustments made to instruction and only minor adjustments made to improve student behavior, such as attendance. But evidence shows that these attempts are unsuccessful as even student attendance has not significantly increased.
  - School leaders meet daily and the cabinet meets regularly. However, agendas and discussions are not rigorous enough to deem critical analysis of school information that result in revision that impact student learning. In addition, these meetings have not yet been systematized for supporting decisions of this magnitude. This has resulted in the implementation of nonproductive decisions.
- Design and implement teacher teams that engage in true inquiry work that impacts student learning and increases student success.
  - Teachers meet in two team configurations: Professional Learning Communities (PLC) that examine student work and Professional Learning Teams (PLTs) where “they are grouped by content”. While the groups discuss how to work with some individual students, no school team is using an inquiry approach. One team spoke about implementing a :double-period “intervention program” for students. But this technical change and other team recommendations fall far short of impacting real improvements in learning for students.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

<b>School name: Samuel Gompers Career and Technical Education 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?		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				
<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?	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				
<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?	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					
<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>