

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

Urban Assembly School of Business for Young Women

High school M316

**26 BROADWAY
NEW YORK
NY 10004**

Principal: PATRICIA MINAYA

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Lead Reviewer: Elyse Doti

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Urban Assembly School of Business for Young Women is a High school with 382 students from grade 9 through grade 9. The school population comprises 44% Black, 49% Hispanic, 2% Asian students and 0% other students. The student body includes 4% English language learners and 16% special education students. Boys account for 0% of the students enrolled and girls account for 100%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 82.6%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school has successfully leveraged partnerships, in-house guidance and supports to foster and accelerate the academic growth of students. (4.4)
 - The Women's Bond Club funds a college advisement program including compensation for students to go on college visits and in school application support. This partnership helps students and parents to successfully navigate the college application process and directly contributes to increased college enrollment rates, which reached 64% last year, well above the city average.
 - The school develops strategic partnerships including working with City Kids, an attendance outreach program through the United Way. The program works with 50 targeted students to increase attendance through incentive programs and mentoring. As a result the school's overall attendance increased from 82.6% to 85% in one year.
- Relationships across the school are warm, supportive, and inclusive of students, teachers and staff who work together as a united team to create a calm, respectful, orderly environment for learning to take place. (1.4)
 - Students and parents appreciate the supportive and nurturing environment of the school. Students explained that they have plenty of adults that they can turn to when seeking academic, social or emotional support including two guidance counselors, a college adviser, and parent coordinator. One student explained, "The teachers make you feel welcomed." Teachers work directly with guidance staff to identify students in need of social and emotional assistance and together coordinate services for the students. As a result students described the school as "safe, caring, intimate, and helpful." In creating a safe, nurturing environment for learning to take place, the school continues to raise the graduation rate more and more each year. Last year's graduation rate increased by 3% to reach 80.3%.
 - Students explained that their school administration and teachers listen to them and provide opportunities for them to participate in school decisions. One student explained how she helped bring in an opportunity to support education for girls in developing countries through a tie-dye cupcake project. Another girl explained how a project in one of her classes, led to the bathroom privileges being reinstated.
- The school leadership has established a system for monitoring and providing feedback on teaching practices with a clear focus on improving school wide instruction. (4.1)
 - The school leaders have introduced the Danielson Framework to the faculty and have used it to conduct short frequent observations and provide quality feedback regarding teaching practices. Teachers have developed individual goals aligned to the city wide prioritized Danielson elements. As a result teachers said that they are clear about the expectations for teaching and learning in their classrooms and with the feedback provided, have already made steps towards improvement.

- School leaders make informed and effective organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet student learning needs. (1.3)
 - The school has made strategic decisions in the organization of the student's schedules and an investment in support programs to further support the school's literacy initiative and goals. The school invested in the Great Leaps and the SAL program for the students that were most needy. They also added a new class to supplement the English classes called, Independent Literature Study for 9th, 10th and some 11th grade students to support development in reading comprehension. The school purchased leveled reading libraries with engaging texts to support classes at various reading levels. As a result, the school has already seen an increase growth of an average of 1 year on the Gates MacGinitie assessment.
 - The school has purposely designed teacher programs to allow time for teacher team meetings and common planning time within the school day. They have also build in structures to allow extra professional time on Wednesday afternoons. Professional assignments were modified this year to allow teachers even more meaningful time to meet and plan together. As a result, teachers have been able to regularly look at teacher and student work in order to improve tasks and instruction.
- The school has makes purposeful choices around key standards in order to design curricula that prepare students for post secondary experiences. (1.1)
 - The school has been using the College-readiness Performance Assessment System in various subject areas to expose students to the demands of college readiness skills and to track the development of the Key Cognitive Strategies (KCS): problem formulation, research, interpretation, communication and precision/accuracy. The school leaders have also strategically aligned curriculum to the key standards outlined in the 2011-12 Instructional Expectations. Teacher teams regularly use protocols to further develop teacher units and lesson to better align to the standards and learning targets. As a result students feel that they understand the demands of college and post secondary experience. They know that they are being prepared and understand that their class work is helping to further build those skills.
- Across the school teachers are engaged in structured professional collaborations that promote distributive leadership and center on improving student and teacher learning. (4.2)
 - A vast majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry based structured collaborations. Through years of experience working together to fine tune their process, the science department has become an expert in using this approach to analyze key elements of teacher and student work. The department developed student learning targets that are aligned to standards matched to units of study and individual tasks. Students use trackers to monitor mastery of learning targets in each unit. Teachers use the trackers to identify topics for re-teaching and to determine student groupings. The department uses Looking at Student Work protocols to examine lessons and student work from their target population in order to identify places for improvement in the teacher work. This collaborative work cycle has lead to increases in the weighted regents pass rate from a 1.6 to sustaining a 1.9 for the past two years.

What the school needs to improve

- Extend and deepen the use of strategies and systems to ensure all teachers know individual student needs, strengths and achievements in order to provide targeted instruction at the classroom level. (2.2)
 - Special education teachers are starting to use Scantron assessments to identify individual student's strengths and needs. Great Leaps and the Gates MacGinitie assessment provide further information regarding fluency, phonemic awareness and math skills. This has not yet translated into changes in classroom practice. As a result, groups of students with various needs are not consistently receiving differentiated or customized instruction across classrooms based on their specific needs.
 - Assessment practices in classrooms did not reflect the use of on-going checks for understanding. Some teachers used exit slips but those slips were not collected until the following day or were not directly connected to the learning goals for the day. Therefore, there were many missed opportunities to collect information about the learning taking place and make mid-lesson or mid-unit adjustments to meet the needs of the students in the classroom.
- Expand the use of data informed processes to set measurable and differentiated learning goals for student subgroups and students in need of additional supports. (3.2)
 - Teacher teams have analyzed data to identify topics and skills that students are struggling with. Individual teachers closely examine the work and progress of five targeted students. However, they have not yet used this data to set specific measurable goals to accelerate their learning and the learning of groups of students who they are responsible for. In the absence of these goals, impact of changes in classroom practices will be minimized.
- Promote greater consistency across classrooms in the use of questioning and student participation as well as discussion to provide multiple entry points for a range of learners. (1.2)
 - Through the use of the workshop model and essential questions, classroom practices reflected a clear set of beliefs around student centered learning. Throughout classroom visits however, the use of questioning, and routines led to a general level of student thinking and participation. In many classrooms student discussion consisted of students answering the teacher's questions and the teacher calling on a new student to respond. Additionally, in some classes groups of students were asked to complete a task without a clear sense of how each student was being held accountable or being challenged in their thinking around the task. As a result some individual students and groups of students were not pushed to produce work that cognitively engaged them and pushed their thinking to a higher level in order to produce meaningful work products.
- Further develop or use data tools for gathering, analysis, dissemination and use of data as a whole school, grade, and department and extend the analysis to deepen the examination of patterns and trends in all relevant subgroups (2.3)
 - The school clearly is aware of data access points and examines data from systems such as ATS, ARIS, scholarship reports through STARS-HSST, and attendance reports. However there is not an apparent process for how all that data is used to develop a clear picture of the specific needs of relevant

subgroups. School leadership is aware of Regents scores and pass rates but are not yet able to identify and make these accessible to staff, indicating which relevant subgroups are thriving and struggling in each content area. As a result interventions are geared at general needs and programs are created to catch large data trends in areas such as credit accumulation and regents pass rates. Individual teachers and teams of teachers however are not yet using data or data tools to make curricular and instructional decisions for relevant subgroups, resulting in missed opportunities to target instruction for these small groups.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: Urban Assembly School of Business for Young Women, the	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 as evidenced by meaningful student work products?			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, use on-going assessment practices and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom level?		X		
2.3 Use grading policies and tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize, aggregate, and analyze student performance trends to inform instruction and curriculum?			X	
2.4 Engage families in school decision-making, activities and an open exchange of information regarding students' progress toward school and class expectations?			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 staff, students and families, and support students and families to achieve them?			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, guidance/advisement 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, with particular attention to the CCLS?			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
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