

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

**Global Technology Preparatory
Junior High-Intermediate-Middle school M406**

**160 East 120th Street
Manhattan
NY 10035**

Principal: Chrystina Russell

**Dates of review: April 3- 4, 2012
Lead Reviewer: Luz T. Cortazzo**

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Global Technology Preparatory is a Junior High-Intermediate-Middle school with 172 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 43% Black, 52% Hispanic, 1% White, 1% Asian students and 3% other students. The student body includes 9% English language learners and 33% special education students. Boys account for 56% of the students enrolled and girls account for 44%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 92.9%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal and staff have strategically crafted engaging competency-based curricula that align key State standards and innovations, enabling students to benefit from experiential field-based learning. (1.1)
 - The school's instructional team has carefully studied the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and the instructional expectations laid out by the New York City Department of Education's iZone team. As part of their iZone participation, the team has subsequently engaged the students in rigorous, technology-enriched instruction where 100% of the students are able to present and synthesize their work in multiple modalities, including traditional essays and verbal presentations, as well as with technological tools including iMovie, podcasts, webpages, blogs, on digital portfolios and other digital presentation formats. As a result, teachers are positioned to expose all students, including students with disabilities and second language learners, to a blended curriculum that engages all students to solve authentic problems and project-based learning modules as evidenced during the foreign language classes. Students were observed using Power speak learning modules in Spanish, French, and Mandarin Chinese. Students achieve language mastery at their own pace based on their unique learning goals.
- The principal effectively draws additional resources and makes highly effective organizational decisions across all aspects of the school that support student ownership and engagement. (1.3)
 - The school raises additional funding from external sources and, combined with school funding, aligns their resources to meet students' needs as evident by the one-on-one laptop environment for all students. The principals' long-term vision of incorporating learning settings that use space, time and technology flexibly in order to meet each student's needs is evident throughout the school. Students learn from teachers and staff who have the time, structures, skills, and student load needed to facilitate a personalized learning experience for each student. Additional staff support student learning during the day as well as during extended time, thereby reducing class size in English language arts and math classes and maximizing the school's capital resources and capacity. Students benefit from structured opportunities to learn anytime, anywhere using technology that supports their needs and motivations. Consequently, their learning ownership and engagement is increased, as evidenced in all classes by personalized feedback, coaching and progress.
 - Teacher assignment and student time is structured to respond to the learning needs of all students and the high-engagement philosophy of the school as observed during the book club block, where each staff member services a specific group of students per grade thus reducing total student load. Additionally, the learning day is also extended until 6:00pm four times per week to address 21st century skills in a hands-on, structured manner. As a result of these strategic decisions, time on task is optimized for the entire school community who share a clear focus leading to increased student achievement.
- The school staff maintains a very safe environment and coordinates supports to positively impact on students' personal and academic development. (1.4)

- Staff, students, and parents strongly agree that the school's healthy and safe climate where students' social, emotional and personal academic needs are readily addressed underpins the high level of student attendance, performance on school projects, and progress on State assessments .The school excels at knowing each student well and capitalizes on staff commitment to integration by mainstreaming students with disabilities to the maximum extend possible. A constant mainstreaming of 6th grade students in the 12:1:1 class utilizing a personalized learning plan for each student to reach mastery at their own pace through a learning progression design in order to meet their strengths, needs and motivations has led to the dissolution of the 7th and 8th grade self-contained classes. The data driven personalized approach enables teachers, parents and students to facilitate reflective conversations so that the students own the consequences for their actions and collaborate with the adults in setting their next steps for personal and academic success.
- The principal and faculty use online systems to track student progress and strategically adjust school practices throughout the year resulting in students receiving immediate and personalized feedback on their progress. (2.1)
 - The principal and all teachers at the school consistently demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of each student's changing needs, as demonstrated by their daily ongoing analysis of a wide range of data, including Acuity, conference notes, unit test grades, Study Island, IXL and Achieve 3000. Students use adaptive technology to receive rapid and personalized feedback on their progression toward mastery of competencies during the regular school and extended time. Consequently, students' progress through individual units and courses by demonstrating mastery of competencies instead of simply progressing based on seat time as observed in the 6th grade English language arts class.
- Effective student support services and collaborations provide students with a wide range of opportunities to grow academically and socially. (4.4)
 - Social workers and guidance counselors from Hunter College and the in-house Borinquen Health Clinic share strategies and provide workshops that support the professional development of teachers so that they are better prepared to service challenging students. Additionally, internal and external partnerships such as Union Settlement and the in-house Borinquen Health Clinic provide students and families with a broad range of social and emotional support services. Consequently, services are deeply embedded and well integrated in school culture and directly impact students' academic opportunities and social emotional growth as noted in the calm school environment.
 - Partnerships such as Citizen Schools provide targeted, data-informed services to all students during the school day and hands-on learning opportunities beyond the traditional school day. Real world opportunities are provided after school for all students by Citizen Schools. This partnership provides apprenticeships opportunities four times per week until 6 pm, ranging from tutoring, fitness, cook book publishing to Space Exploration with guidance from on site Citizen teachers and volunteer professionals. Consequently, students benefit from working with mentors who help them, enhance their literacy and math skills, accomplish goals and continue on a path to post-secondary and career readiness as evidenced by the students' proficiency levels in English language arts and math increasing as noted in their latest assessments results.

- The principal and faculty have an ongoing, solid understanding of the performance and progress of all students, by group and by subject, which leads them to inform instructional revisions effectively throughout the school year. (2.2)
 - o The iZone work has facilitated teams and individual teachers to deeply analyze data for student subgroups in order to adjust instruction and design time with individual students to reflect and revise their learning plans to ensure students are on a trajectory to master competencies. All students, including those with disabilities and English language learners, receive both formative and summative feedback on their progression towards mastery of competencies as well as specific strategies to improve performance. Consequently, students' progress through individual units and courses by demonstrating mastery instead of progressing based on seat time as observed during the classroom visit to the 8th grade math class.

What the school needs to improve

- Increased internal capacity to consistently implement pedagogical techniques that promote high levels of student thinking and engagement. (1.2)
 - o Staff across the school believe that students learn best when learning is enhanced by technology and students are required to produce high-quality, professional work. Throughout classroom visits there were examples of blended and extended learning which include a combination of traditional and innovative instruction. Students receive personalized feedback on their progression towards mastery of competencies as well as specific strategies to improve performance. However, in some classrooms, lessons were teacher dominated. As a result, students were not able to take charge of their learning, through both technological and traditional means, in order to solve real world problems.
- Develop a consistent system for providing teachers with written feedback that accurately captures strengths and next steps in order to validate their practice ,and support their professional growth. (4.1)
 - o Although a common instructional focus is supported by the principal and all teachers, and the school uses a research-based framework to provide frequent feedback, most of the feedback is usually communicated through informal conversations between the principal and teacher where the two speak to the classroom snapshot coupled with student data. Currently, the school leader does not consistently provide written feedback to teachers on the effectiveness of their practice, hindering the school's ability to gauge the impact of iZone work on teacher practice and how teachers goals have been aligned to support teachers' development based on student data and classroom observation.
- Increase parent voice in school-wide decision making and planning so that the school develops an additional branch of ambassadors that enlists the broader local community in supporting college and career readiness. (3.1)
 - o The principal and teachers analyze a great wealth of data, including students' academic achievement results, teacher effectiveness summaries, attendance trends, and online occurrence reports, in order to identify the key school-wide goals that will benefit children most. However, at this time, parents express that they are just beginning to join the goal-setting conversation during monthly

meetings. Consequently, the extended school community is not fully informed of this year's action plan for continued school improvement and consequently cannot yet support the school in its efforts.

- Formalize periodic check-ins, focused specifically on the school's systems for reflecting on performance data organization and performance report dissemination, so that structures are evaluated and revised in a timely fashion. (5.2)
 - o At this time, several conversations have occurred to further improve assessment practices and data collection at the school. Additionally, the principal and faculty have begun to explore the Writing Matters English language arts performance task and its alignment to the Common Core Learning Standards through an examination and mini-norming of student work. During the 6th grade literacy meeting, teachers were observed discussing the Teaching Matters Argument Writing Performance task, connecting student writing to the performance task, and deciding on next steps based on the evidence seen in student work. However, a calendar for systematically discussing necessary changes for evaluating and modifying necessary changes throughout the year has not yet been formalized. Therefore, the school is not able to make strategic mid-course adjustments to instructional and curricular plans.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: GLOBAL TECHNOLOGY PREPARATORY	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	
1..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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