

# Quality Review Report 2011-2012

High School for Health Careers and Sciences  
High School M468

549 AUDUBON AVENUE  
MANHATTAN  
NY 10040

Principal: HARRIS MARMOR

Dates of review: March 1-2, 2012

Lead Reviewer: Holly Reichert

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

High School for Health Careers and Sciences is a High school with 667 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 9% Black, 88% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 32% English language learners and 13% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 85.7%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is developing.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school maintains a nurturing, supportive, and safe environment which makes students feel confident in their ability to learn. (1.4)
  - o Throughout the school, students respectfully engage with peers and staff. In some classrooms, students take initiative and work with their peers on academic tasks even when they have not been directed to do so by teachers. Students and families stated that the new attendance policy motivates them to keep track of days absent and the presence of parent monitors allows for friendly and familial-like support in the halls. Students are interested in their learning and the school supports them in their development. Students stated that they are interested in health careers and the diverse field of science, and that they would like to learn more about these fields.
- The school's individualized student guidance and advisement program provide targeted support and direction to students ensuring readiness for careers and the college application process. (4.4)
  - o Students are informed by guidance counselors of their progress status and are provided with an action plan to get them back on track if they need credit recovery or tutoring for Regents exams. Families are informed of their child's academic status and what the school is providing them. Seniors are mentored by the assistant principal of science who provides another layer of personal attention geared at keeping students aware of and on track for graduation and beyond. This year's senior scholarship has increased as a result of this new senior mentoring program.
  - o The school's weekly health topics program provides students with learning opportunities about science. A student remarked how one of the health topics classes changed her thinking about nutrition and food. The students viewed a documentary on the adverse health effects of eating fast food. The student said that before the class she was unaware of how food affects the body. As a result of the class, she decided to stop eating fast food and focus on making healthier food choices. In addition to the health topics class, students also take advantage of the school's other health careers learning opportunities like volunteering at the neighboring senior center and interning at local health care and medical facilities.
- Teachers use of rubrics to assess student work provide students with feedback on how well they meet requirements for courses and tasks, which gives them a focus for making necessary improvements. (2.2)
  - o The school has department specific rubrics, and many teachers have rubrics for class-specific tasks. Students stated that rubrics help them know what is expected and how well they did on an assignment. They are also used at times for self or peer assessment or to revise their work. Student work displayed throughout the school shows the accompanying rubric score, and in some cases, next steps for growth are provided.
  - o In classrooms, checks for understanding are developing to meet student needs. When a student was asked about the rationale for a written response, the student stated that previous class work with a timeline had given the reference point for writing. Student self-reflection practices as well student-to-student feedback on

ideas and work is emerging. Many teachers ask students questions that align to the range of Bloom's Taxonomy. Checks for understanding that build along the continuum and include higher level questions are becoming more frequent.

- The schools implementation of cycles of short, frequent observations provides teachers with feedback and next steps to develop their instructional practice. (4.1)
  - The administrative team provides teachers with regular and on-going support to improve classroom practice. The principal regularly visits classrooms and conferences with teachers providing them with praise and next steps. As part of the feedback process, the school is developing its use of a researched-based rubric. Some teachers are aware of and use the rubric as a tool for self-reflection. When asked about the rubric, some teachers stated that they see value in having a tool that guides them in specific aspects of instruction across a continuum of practice. The administration explained how they use different elements of the rubric to look at various points in the process of teaching from planning to delivery of instruction. One of the assistant principals stated that using the rubric to conduct informal visits has supported the teacher tenure process. Teachers in the math department stated that the support they receive from the assistant principal has positively impacted their instruction. The teachers incorporate the feedback they receive into their practice.
- The administration aligns resources to meet school goals, thus enabling the community to collectively address school wide needs. (1.3)
  - The school prioritizes funding and scheduling decisions targeting school wide goals. Alongside the senior mentoring program, the school also added credit recovery using an on-line program as well as additional Regents classes and after school tutoring. Students spoke about how the senior mentoring program, in addition to guidance support, helps to keep them on track and focused on graduating on time. They mentioned how supportive the special Regents preparation classes are and how extra after school tutoring provides them with another resource for support. As a result of these instructional supports, the school has seen an increase in total scholarship across its senior class.
  - The school programmed a subgroup of students for the Bridges program in order to support their specific learning needs. This strategic decision provides students with interrupted formal education with an intensive program with a team of teachers who have also been scheduled to regularly meet to discuss student learning and data as well as challenges encountered and to receive professional development from their CUNY Bridges pilot provider. In the team meeting, teachers focused on the individual needs of a student, decided on next steps to support the student's learning and behavioral needs establishing an accountability loop among the team to follow through with these specific action steps. The use of time, in the form of teachers' schedules and student programs to target a high needs group of students, has allowed teachers to have formal meeting time to review provide these students with an intensive instructional program. As a result, the school is developing a team of teachers focused on a group of students for whom they share responsibility and for whom they are targeting instructional practices to best meet their needs.

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

- Develop curriculum in all content areas that is aligned to key college-ready standards so that all students have access to material that is relevant, engaging, and rigorous. (1.1)

- o Currently, the school does not have curriculum or tasks aligned to key college-ready standards. Teachers do not have units of study that have been aligned to key standards. For example, the course outline for the Algebra 1 class consists of a list of topics aligned with the textbook and does not convey key college-ready standards limiting postsecondary readiness development.
- o There is little evidence of planned differentiation across the school to meet the needs of the diversity of learners. Across the school, lessons are not differentiated for full engagement, access, and extension for all learners. In a number of classrooms, students who had completed the assigned task sat and waited while other students struggled to understand and complete the task as a result of limited planning that currently does not provide cognitively challenging and differentiated curriculum with multiple entry points and extensions for all students.
- Develop robust action plans and goals connected to the curricula for student subgroups and students in need of support in order to ensure continual and measurable growth and achievement. (3.2)
  - o Several teachers across the school have set individual student goals for a small number of students; however, they are not specific to the curriculum, the action plans are not benchmarked, and there are no teacher revisions of these goals. The senior mentoring program uses attendance and summative data to provide credit recovery and Regents tutoring. The Bridges program monitors student attendance, behavior, and summative outcomes with the aim of using this data to create team goals; however, there was no evidence of these goals. Teachers and teams have not set learning goals and action plans for all student groups and individual students in need focused on college-ready standards that link to changes in classroom practice. As a result, teachers and teams are unable to measure student growth in these standards over time. Without goals connected to the curriculum, actions taken by staff to support students is not based on college-ready skills and content mastery, and team members are unable to connect what they do to how student learn.
- Track student learning goals to ensure that all students are making progress towards graduating on time and meeting and exceeding college ready standards. (3.3)
  - o Although the school has created a list of the students who fall in the bottom third, there is no evidence of learning goals developed for these students or evidence of what has been achieved by this group over time. Without a systematic and on-going process for using a variety of data to set and monitor and revise goals, the school does not accurately track progress or make timely informed adjustments to its plans over the course of the year.
  - o Some teachers contact families about student attendance and behavior issues, and progress information is periodically sent home by the school. However, there is no evidence that this communication is followed up on and tracked. Without follow-up data, the school does not have evidence that this communication had an impact on student behavior or progress. In addition, the feedback that families receive is not always timely and specific in terms of student progress toward learning goals. Consequently, the practice of providing feedback to students and families regarding progress and opportunities for support is inconsistent and does not provide sufficient information to support students in mastering learning expectations.

- Develop the work of collaborative teacher teams to incorporate an inquiry approach that focuses on student outcomes, promotes teacher leadership, and holds teachers accountable for student learning. (4.2)
  - o This year, the school made the strategic decision not to program common planning time for teachers. The three inquiry teams that the school does have meet after school with one focused on math and the other two focused on specific programs. The teams do not follow an explicit inquiry approach or have defined shared leadership structures. While the math team looked generally at student response errors on a summative assessment, there was no protocol used and teachers did not state what changes they would make in their practice to engage targeted struggling students. In the Bridges team led by an assistant principal, teachers looked at one student's first semester grades and discussed attendance and behavior; this led to teachers stating they would call home, speak to the student in class, and provide incentives. Team members do not consistently analyze student work and performance data to inform their practice to improve student learning outcomes and there is not a clear system for shared leadership across teams. Without a collaborative and accountable focus on analyzing student work to inform instructional changes to improve student outcomes, the teams do not draw connections between how student learning is related to teacher practice. Consequently, the school is unable to accurately state how the work of the teams has impacted student learning.
  
- Cement the school's strong beliefs about how students learn best so that they can propel all teachers to offer effective instruction that meets the needs of all students across the school. (1.2)
  - Although the principal has a clear vision for how students learn best focused on high levels of cognitive engagement, group problem-solving, and students learning from students, this vision is not evident throughout the school. Across classrooms, some students responded to teacher-directed questioning or were called on by the teacher directly; however, there was no structured student-to-student interaction across the school. In a few classrooms, students were seated in groups and given a collaborative task; however, not all students in all groups participated with their peers or engaged with the work. When asked about what they were doing, some students were not able to explain the work or were unsure what to do, and as a result, were not able to complete the work. In another class, students were asked to do an activity that was dependent on their understanding of specific vocabulary terms. Students struggled to correctly complete the task and said they were not sure of the meaning of the words and there were no reference charts or other aids to assist students with these key terms. The provision of multiple entry points, supports, and extensions to move student learning was not evident across classrooms. As a result, classroom practice across the school lacks coherence to the school's instructional vision about how students learn best and is not strategically differentiated for the diverse population of the school.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: High School for Health Careers and Sciences	UD	D	P	WD
Overall QR Score		X		
<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>	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	
<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>	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		
<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>	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		

<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?		<b>X</b>					
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning?	<b>X</b>						
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?		<b>X</b>					
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?			<b>X</b>				
<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, with particular attention to the CCLS?		<b>X</b>					
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?		<b>X</b>					
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?		<b>X</b>					
5.4 Use data to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of structured professional collaboration, capacity building and leadership development strategies?		<b>X</b>					
<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>