

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

New Millennium Business Academy Middle School

Middle school X328

**1000 TELLER AVENUE
BRONX
NY 10456**

Principal: DORALD BASTIAN

Dates of review: January 17-18, 2012

Lead Reviewer: Eve Bois

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

New Millennium Business Academy Middle School is a Junior High-Intermediate-Middle school with 209 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 37% Black, 60% Hispanic, 0% White, 0% Asian students and 2% other students. The student body includes 17% English language learners and 24% 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 89.8%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Administrators and teachers analyze a wide range of assessment data to identify the strengths and needs of students in order to elevate school-wide decisions. (2.1)
 - Analysis of the New York State exam results and periodic assessments, such as Acuity assessments and teacher made departmental tests, enable administrators to develop an understanding of the school's strengths and areas of need. For example, close analysis of summative data revealed that students struggled with both technical essay writing and extended responses in mathematics. Careful review of formative classroom assessments, analysis of student reading levels, and the Santa Cruz Model assessments for writing, enable administration to identify trends in student performance. This provides the principal with an overview of the school's strengths and areas of need. As a result, administration is able to make informed instructional and organizational decisions.
- The use of a tool has enabled faculty to gather, analyze, disseminate, and identify patterns and trends in student performance in order to make instructional decisions. (2.3)
 - The school uses an online system to gather and organize student data. The system is used in concert with other data sources, such as an in-house developed Scantron system that enables math teachers to see student performance over time. Administration and staff have access to this data in school and at home. Using these online data gathering tools enable administration to make student information available to teachers and staff on a consistent basis. In addition, administration and teachers are able to organize and aggregate data such that trends and patterns are evident, thus enabling them to make informed instructional and organizational decisions.
- Teachers collaborate frequently to examine student work, plan together, and share best practice with the goal of strengthening instruction and raising learning outcomes. (4.2)
 - Every teacher in the school is involved in inquiry work that is supported through ongoing professional development and resources. Through the use of protocols, grade level inquiry teams meet regularly to analyze assessment results, including student work, and identify instructional practices to implement to address academic deficiencies. Teams are led by teacher leaders who create professional learning experiences for their colleagues, such as video-taping of teaching strategies. Consequently, there has been an increase purposeful interaction among teachers, thus resulting in collaboratively developed curriculum and elevated teacher practice.
- The school's systems and partnerships support students and their families in continual learning, and promote students' personal growth and development. (4.4)
 - In response to feedback on the Learning Environment Survey and a history of safety challenges, both in and outside of the building, the school has ramped up professional development to support faculty and staff in creating a safer and more respectful school culture. Through the implementation of "Respect for All", Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS), the increase in the number of safety agents, and frequent school-home communication, there has been a decrease in the number of fights on and off campus.

- The school is continually developing its range of internal structures and externally provided services to support students and their families. A Saturday academy provides learning time to address individual students' academic needs and includes scheduled afternoon sports like basketball and baseball, which leads to increased attendance and engagement. Several parent workshops on topics ranging from parenting teens to choosing high schools engage parents in their student's learning and development while increasing overall parent involvement in the school community. These activities and trainings ensure that students and parents' personal needs are address, thus enabling them to focus on student academic growth.
- School leaders are making organizational decisions that support the school's goals and promote improvements in learning. (1.3)
 - The school acquired a technology grant which it used to purchase SMART Boards and digital video equipment for several classrooms. Teachers are learning how to use these technology devices to support student writing. Some teachers are beginning to plan cooperative groups and differentiated lessons that involve the use of the Smart Boards. As a result, in some classrooms, there is increased student engagement.
 - Teachers are organized into content area and grade level teams that meet weekly to improve instructional practice and set common goals. As a result, teachers develop an understanding of, and ability to recognize, best practices, and support each other as they design and implement instruction. For example, the assignment of a strong lead English language arts (ELA) teacher as a coach and model enables other teachers to identify strategies to integrate literacy across content areas and serves as a vehicle for them to reflect on their own practice.

What the school needs to improve

- Further develop the curriculum and academic tasks to include rigorous and challenging learning experiences that foster higher order skills so that students are cognitively engaged. (1.1)
 - Although some teachers engage students in rigorous habits and higher order skills, the practice is inconsistent across all classrooms. For example, in some math classes, students work to translate algebraic expressions into written sentences and vice versa. The activity prompts mainly emphasized students' understanding of the vocabulary of algebraic expressions, which they had "learned earlier" as one student explained. In other classes, students were not engaged in such concept building activities with varied or scaffolded tasks to address the needs of English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities (SwDs). In addition, level of rigor embedded in the various tasks did not consistently reflect the academic need of students that were surfaced as a result of the analysis of student work. Consequently, the engagement of all students, including ELLs and SWDs, is limited.
- Deepen differentiation of instruction so that all lessons engage students and offer suitable challenge at their level, including effective questioning that elicits higher-order thinking and extends learning. (1.2)
 - Although teachers employ questioning techniques to engage students in learning, instruction does not consistently employ open-ended questions leading to high levels of student engagement. For example, in some classrooms, teachers ask students to take a position on the author's purpose or on a math solution and defend their positions. In other classrooms, students are asked similar questions but not required

to defend their responses. Or, the teacher asks students to solve the problem then give the solution and does not assess to determine misunderstandings or missteps. In addition, few teachers require students to discuss solution or positions with each other, while many did not require or structure in student-to-student discussions, thus limiting thinking.

- Extend data gathering and analysis practices school-wide to provide a complete picture of students' progress and leverage data analysis efforts across all aspects of the school. (2.2)
 - Teachers use a variety of assessments to determine students' math and English language arts (ELA) performance and progress, including running records, periodic assessment and classroom level assessments. However, the analysis does not yet extend to the sub-skills of literacy and math so that there is a clear understanding of what the most struggling students know and don't know. In addition, there is an inconsistent use of ongoing checks for understanding across classrooms. This inhibits teachers' ability to truly ascertain the strengths and weaknesses in students learning and use that knowledge to make adjustments to instruction, thus limiting student growth.
- Ensure that feedback teachers receive clearly articulates expectations for instructional practices that leverage student outcomes. (4.1)
 - School leaders periodically observe teachers and provide feedback on strengths and weaknesses in practice and identify next steps. However, this practice is not consistent across administrators and teachers. In addition, the school is just beginning to connect teacher feedback to their chosen framework for teacher practice. As a result, teachers are developing a clearer understanding of what they do well and need to improve and what "effective" practice in their school looks and sounds like. Thus, teacher practice and student outcomes are beginning to improve.
- Ensure that action planning includes interim goals and benchmarks for all plans in order to make adjustments and accelerate student growth. (5.3)
 - While the school routinely analyzes data to inform the curriculum and instruction—and teachers and students know there is an overall goal to meet by June—the school lacks a system for identifying trends in student progress and performance throughout the year. This hinders the school's ability to make timely adjustments to school-wide initiatives and goals, thus minimizing the impact on student outcomes and performance.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: New Millennium Business Academy Middle 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 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
-----------	-----------------------	----------	-------------------	----------	-------------------	-----------	-----------------------