

# Quality Review Report 2011-2012

**The Angelo Patri Middle School**

**Middle School X391  
2225 Webster Avenue  
Bronx  
NY 10457**

**Principal: Graciela Abadia**

**Dates of review: November 29 – 30, 2011**

**Lead Reviewer: Sonia Menendez**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

The Angelo Patri Middle School is a middle school with 633 students from six through grade 8. The school population comprises 24% Black, 74% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 28% English language learners and 25% 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 89.1%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is developing.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal carefully makes organizational decisions and strategically directs resources to support the school's improvement plan resulting in improved student outcomes. (1.3)
  - The school schedule allows for teacher teams to meet weekly by grade and subject area. Meetings are facilitated by content area master teachers who also model lessons in lab sites. Teacher teams develop common unit and lesson plans with aligned assessments, as well as review student work and discuss next steps for students and teachers. As a result, student writing across all content areas shows improvement as assessed by teacher-developed rubrics.
  - The school is organized into small learning communities within which teachers share responsibility for meeting the needs of a small cohort of students. Teachers take leadership for all student activities including celebrations and provide a focused advisory period to support social/emotional development. In addition, the principal strategically assigns teachers using a looping system so that they get to know not only their students' social/emotional needs but their academic strengths and deficiencies as well. As a result of these staff and student groupings, teachers effectively identify the next learning steps for students that lead to improved progress as evidenced by a decrease of students in Level 1 in English language arts and math.
- Leaders effectively collect and analyze a comprehensive range of relevant data to gain an overview of the school's strengths and needs. (2.1)
  - Data from summative and formative assessments, student writing samples and teacher conferring notes lay the ground work for discussion at cabinet meetings, grade level meetings, common planning sessions and parent-teacher conferences. Teacher teams met during the summer months to review the information gathered from the various data sources. As a result of this analysis, the leadership and teacher teams identified writing as a school-wide need which is now a focus in every content area. Consequently, student writing demonstrates improvement as compared to September baseline student samples in all content areas.
  - In addition to data from periodic assessments, the school tracks individual and subgroup student progress in reading using the 100 Book Challenge. Students use logs to keep track of their independent reading time. Teachers confer with students to assess mastery of specific deficient literacy skills such as main idea, inferring and vocabulary. The results are strategically displayed on a Data Wall allowing leaders and teachers to monitor each student's independent reading level and how well they are progressing to the next level. As a result, students state that they are reading more and teachers cite an increase in students' reading stamina as well as improvement in benchmark assessments.

- Leaders use performance data and regular classroom observations to provide extensive feedback that promotes self-evaluation and leads to improved quality of instruction. (4.1)
  - The administrative team has embraced the use of the Danielson framework to provide feedback and monitor the quality of instruction. Supervisors conduct frequent formal and informal observations to assess teachers' strengths and areas of need which become the basis of professional development. From their observations, the administrative team identified differentiation as an area that requires further development and has planned after school training to address this need. As a result, teachers state that they are provided with specific feedback to improve their practice.
  - Teachers receive extensive support via coaches, master teachers and consultants. In the beginning of the school year, teachers participated in a self-reflective survey identifying their professional development needs. School leaders use this information and student data to organize professional development on topics such as lesson planning and differentiation. Consequently, teachers benefit from professional development tailored to their varying needs.
- The school has effectively developed partnerships with families and community based organizations to support students' needs. (4.4)
  - The principal recognizes the importance of developing linkages with outside resources to support the social/emotional needs of students. Therefore, the school has a wide range of partnerships with arts organizations, social agencies and local universities that provide after school activities such as theater, music, and dance. Consequently, students feel that the school cares about them and is "like their second family." As a result, student suspensions have decreased and attendance improved to 90.65%.
  - Teacher training includes sessions on how to offer students strong support via focused advisories. Teachers and staff work with Turnaround for Children and other community based organizations to enhance students' academic and personal development and to help create an environment that promotes calm, purposeful learning. This contributes to a safe and inclusive school culture.
- The staff's high expectations for all students and good collaboration with families are key levers to improve performance and contribute to positive responses on the School Survey. (3.4)
  - The school persistently encourages parents to support its strategies for improvement and to become active partners in their child's education. Parents are invited to attend the "Caregiver's Circle" which is an open forum for parents to engage in counseling sessions concerning their child's academic or social/emotional progress. Effective outreach by the school including Curriculum night, a phone messaging system, and a monthly calendar of events supported by an active Parents Association, all result in increased attendance in school sponsored programs. As a result of this inclusive environment, parents state that they are a vital

part of the school community and share in the school's commitment to improve student performance.

- High expectations are present throughout the school. Statements of expectations such as “It is all about the learning ... own it” or “Some people dream of success ... while others wake up and work hard at it” and samples of model student work with rubrics are displayed in classrooms and hallways. Students state, “The expectation is that we can achieve and our teachers help us to do better.” To support the ethos of high expectations, the principal invites staff to participate in an Extended Leadership Team. This forum meets daily before classes begin with no set agenda and is open to all interested staff members to come and engage in conversation on topics leading to school improvement. The overarching question for each session is “How does \_\_\_\_\_(action, thoughts) help with students’ achievement.” The success of this dialogue is reflected in the improved practice of many teachers.

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

- Improve the consistency in differentiation of instruction based on data so that lessons provide high levels of appropriate challenge and multiple entry points for all students to maximize their learning. (1.2)
  - Some teachers provide differentiated lessons including intentional grouping with varied tasks and questions. However, differentiation of instruction is not a consistent practice school-wide. As a result, the needs of all students are not always sufficiently met as evidenced by a decrease in Levels 3 and 4 in English language arts and by subgroup populations not making Annual Yearly Progress.
  - In several classrooms, instruction includes lessons aimed at promoting depth of thought. Teachers in these rooms actively engage students with lessons that allow for students to work collaboratively on a variety of tasks that foster problem solving. However, this is not practiced in all classrooms and some classes are much more teacher centered with limited student interaction. As a result, there is an uneven level of student thinking and engagement across classrooms.
- Build on the chosen curriculum to offer a wide range of rigorous academic tasks that cognitively challenge all students in order to increase achievement. (1.1)
  - Over the summer, the school worked diligently to develop its curriculum based on the work of Heidi Hayes Jacob and aligned it to the Common Core Standards. Some teachers are not yet sufficiently skilled in implementing differentiated, rigorous learning opportunities for all students as outlined in the curriculum. Lessons do not consistently challenge higher performing students or provide necessary scaffolds to English language learners and students with special needs, which contribute to these subgroups not making annual yearly progress.
  - Teachers meet during common planning periods to prepare unit maps, detailed lesson plans, rubrics and review student work. However, not all teachers are adequately skilled in implementing lessons and questioning techniques to meet the diverse needs of all students. As a result, lessons

are not consistently matched to students' levels of knowledge and understanding.

- Evaluate the impact of professional development on instructional practice and student progress in order to make immediate revisions to support student achievement. (5.4)
  - Teacher teams meet weekly to look at student work, keep track of students' progress and discuss next steps for students and instruction. However, the school is still developing systems on evaluating the effectiveness of these professional collaborations. As a result, leaders and faculty are not yet responding rapidly to make necessary modifications in a timely manner.
  - The principal and various teams within the school community have developed a clear vision for how they want to improve student outcomes. This includes developing teacher leadership and increased collaboration. Structures using data to ensure effective monitoring of student learning, evaluation of teacher practice and revision as needed are not yet fully in place. Consequently, data from formative assessments show that, as a result of these missing structures, student progress continues to lag.
- Strengthen teachers' use and development of assessments as well as the analysis of the data in order to consistently monitor student mastery and adjust instructional practice accordingly. (2.2)
  - Common planning time enables teachers to meet together weekly to examine student work products and assess quality using a rubric. However, some teachers are not yet secure in using this information to identify strengths and needs of student subgroups and next steps for instruction. As a result, instruction is not sufficiently differentiated to meet the specific needs of subgroup populations, leading to these groups not making Adequate Yearly Progress.
  - Across classrooms teachers are held accountable for the achievement of their students. Teachers use rubrics and conferring to monitor student progress. However, not all teachers use this data to adjust instruction to meet the specific needs of all students. As a result, current data from formative assessment indicates that over 74% of the students are below benchmark for their grade.
- Sharpen school improvement planning by identifying specific interim and long term goals with measurable outcomes against which progress can be measured, adjustments made and success evaluated. (5.3)
  - This year the school implemented the 100 Book Challenge which supports goal setting with students. Each student has a long term goal of how many books they are expected to read with benchmarks along the way to track their progress. However, this goal setting practice is not as secure in other content areas. As a result, students lack a clear understanding of benchmarks they need to meet throughout the year in content areas other than English Language Arts.
  - School leaders are developing systems for tracking teacher and student progress towards meeting school-wide goals. The revised curriculum and

units of study have assessment and evaluation as key components. However, a gap exists between the analysis of the data and making needed adjustments. As a result, instructional strategies and unit plans are not rapidly modified to ensure increased student academic achievement.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: The Angelo Patri Middle School	UD	D	P	WD
<b>Overall QR Score</b>		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	
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**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