

# Quality Review Report 2011-2012

**Jane Addams**

**High School X650  
900 Tinton Avenue  
Bronx  
NY 10456**

**Principal: Sharron Smalls**

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Lead Reviewer: Carolyn Yaffe**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Jane Addams High School for Academic Careers is a High school with 1038 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 37% Black, 60% Hispanic, 0% White, 2% Asian students and 1% other students. The student body includes 11% English language learners and 21% special education students. Boys account for 29% of the students enrolled and girls account for 71%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 79.6%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is underdeveloped.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school is working to align resources, including the way staff and student time is organized, to effect desired change. (1.3)
  - This year the school has begun to more carefully align course offerings, teacher assignments and student programs with identified needs connected to credit accumulation and Regents exams. In addition, the school has carved out regular time for teacher teams to collaborate in an effort to improve curriculum and instruction.
  
- The school is building a system for the effective evaluation of classroom teaching that can provide a clear picture of instructional strengths and weaknesses as well as promote professional growth and improve pedagogy across classrooms. (4.1)
  - Using elements of Danielson, school leaders are developing a bar for acceptable instruction to inform assignment and tenure decisions; this is evidenced by the large number of unsatisfactory ratings (15) given at the close of 2010-2011 year, as compared to the 7 given the previous year.
  - The school has chosen several domains, including 1e and 3b, from a common teaching framework and is focusing informal observation feedback through that lens. As a result, the school community has a foundation to develop a common vision of those key domains to improve instructional practices across classrooms.
  
- The school is putting systems in place to evaluate policies for grading, organization of data and sharing of information with students and families so that greater coherence and clarity are in place across the school. (5.2)
  - As the result of a review of scholarship data, a school-wide grading and homework policy called RIP (Review in Practice) was recently put into place across the school. Students appreciate the new structure, which provides one to two long assignments throughout the week, as opposed to several discrete assignments and teachers report that higher numbers of assignments are being completed. In a review of data practices, the school instituted the use of a school-wide database that holds attendance, academic and anecdotal behavioral information in the same place. As a result, this data is accessible to teachers and school leaders for decision-making.
  
- The integration of youth development services is supported through a variety of external partnerships and internal programs in order to accelerate the growth of students (4.4)
  - The school has put some structures in place to provide post-secondary guides for students such as creating a partnership with Upward Bound , which offers college advisory services to seniors. The school has also dedicated a compensatory time position to college advisement several

periods as a day. As a result, some students report feeling supported in their decision-making connected to college.

- Several partnerships, such as the LYFE Program, which supports teen parents, and Build-On, a community service program for academically at-risk students, provide opportunities for students in need of support to learn skills and focus on academics. Thirty-seven out of fifty students in the Build-on program demonstrated some growth on cumulative grade point averages from pre- to post- program involvement.

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

- Develop a clear standard for and vetting process of rigor and scaffolding for curriculum maps, units and tasks so that all students are consistently asked to engage cognitively at a higher level. (1.1)
  - Although the school has done some work to identify key standards across grades and subject areas such as writing arguments and written expression in mathematics, there is currently no defined acceptable standard for the development of curriculum maps, units or tasks or a vetting process to ensure that tasks are rigorous before being implemented in the classroom. As a result, there are major holes in curricula across grades and subject areas and most of the classroom tasks observed did not require cognitive engagement by students. This inhibits students' ability to develop the appropriate critical thinking skills as they move through their high school career.
- Continue to build on the emerging set of beliefs that define effective pedagogy so that students consistently experience engaging instruction that meets the needs of various learners and results in meaningful work products. (1.2)
  - Despite most school constituents stating that high level questioning, rigorous tasks and differentiated instruction are the shared beliefs of the school, across classrooms there was a lack of each of these elements. In many cases, there was a lack of coherence between the stated aim or objective and the actual learning experiences designed for students. Questions posed to students and responses from students remained at low levels and work products shared did not demonstrate critical thinking. As a result, there are many missed opportunities to develop students' critical thinking skills.
- Develop a clear vision and structure for teachers and teacher teams to use data to set learning goals for students that drive classroom instruction. (3.2)
  - In some individual classrooms there are class goals such as "pass the course" and across some of the teacher teams there are goals for students connected to credit accumulation. What is not currently in place are goals based on data and connected to the curriculum so that individual teachers and teacher teams have a frame of reference to adjust curricula and target instruction for maximum student movement. As a result, student growth is hindered.

- Align assessments to curriculum across all subject areas so that information gathered from this practice is useful for adjusting curriculum and instruction at the classroom level. (2.2)
  - Although administrators shared that Performance Series assessments and Regents examination data will be used to make curricular and instructional decisions, this has not yet taken place for this school year and there is currently no structure in place for teachers to purposefully examine this data and use it for refinement of curriculum and instruction. Other than the tracking of particular students regarding credits, there was no evidence of trends that have surfaced for student sub-groups based on the examination of data or accompanying instructional decisions. This hinders teachers' ability to design instructional experiences to meet the needs of a variety of students.
  
- Structure common planning time so that the teacher teams' work is clearly focused on building curricula and exploring effective pedagogy that lead to improvements in classroom instruction and student achievement. (4.2)
  - All teachers are scheduled for structured professional collaboration and teacher teams cite the use of tuning protocols as one essential activity that is the focus of the work. There are not currently clear goals or products for any of the teacher team work, nor is there a system for tracking either student progress or the impact of shared pedagogical decisions; as a result the teacher team structure is underutilized to impact student achievement.
  
- Build a sustained and coherent set of professional development experiences for teaching staff that focus on key levers to improve classroom practices and learning outcomes. (4.3)
  - Although there are venues for professional development, including whole staff and teacher team collaborations, there is not currently a clear scope and sequence of learning activities designed for the staff to increase capacity on key instructional or curricular design moves connected to the school goals. Teachers cite lack of support in implementing effective practices connected to questioning, differentiation and the design of high quality tasks. As a result, implementation of said practices is highly uneven across classrooms.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

<b>School name:</b>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
<b>Overall QR Score</b>	<b>X</b>			
<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>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
1.1 Design engaging, rigorous and coherent curricula, including the Arts, for a variety of learners and aligned to key State standards?	<b>X</b>			
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?	<b>X</b>			
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?		<b>X</b>		
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?		<b>X</b>		
<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>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
2.1 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the school level?		<b>X</b>		
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?		<b>X</b>		
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?		<b>X</b>		
2.4 Engage families in school decision-making, activities and an open exchange of information regarding students progress toward school and class expectations?		<b>X</b>		
<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>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
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?		<b>X</b>		
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?	<b>X</b>			
3.3 Ensure the achievement of learning goals by tracking progress at the school, teacher team and classroom level?		<b>X</b>		
3.4 Communicate high expectations to staff, students and families, and support students and families to achieve them?		<b>X</b>		

<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>