

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

World Academy for Total Community Health

High School 19K510

**400 Pennsylvania Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11207**

Principal: Kim Wanliss

**Dates of review: October 22-23, 2012
Lead Reviewer: Karen Watts**

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

World Academy for Total Community Health High School is a high school with 380 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 81% Black, 14% Hispanic, 2% White, and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 4% English language learners and 15% special education students. Boys account for 37% of the students enrolled and girls account for 63%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 81.3%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is Developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school aligns its curriculum to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), so that students engage in cognitively challenging tasks to promote students' learning. (1.1)
 - The school provides comprehensive standards based curricula enabling students to take courses that end in Regent exams. A wide variety of health electives satisfy the requirements of the school's Career and Technical Education, (CTE), nursing assistant program and health education theme. Furthermore, students participate in varied courses in the arts and physical education including the Reserve Officers Training Corps, (ROTC). Advanced placement biology and psychology, and college level courses through a partnership with Syracuse University allow students to take courses that end in Regent exams. The administrators and faculty develop units of study and rigorous tasks using tools from the Literacy Design Collaborative Framework, which are designed to ensure that students produce argumentative, informational, and explanatory writing products. The health electives provide an opportunity for students to critically analyze, read, think, discuss and write about timely civic and health issues. In addition, through a partnership with the Brownsville Multifamily Health Center, students receive curriculum that is aligned to their internships and community service placements. This comprehensive curriculum promotes the development of higher order skills to close the achievement gap, and prepare college and career ready students.
- The principal's strategic use of resources, and staff and student time supports the school's instructional goals so that academic performance increases. (1.3)
 - The principal leverages partnerships with Brooklyn College's College Access Program and Syracuse University to ensure that students graduate college ready and with college credits. A strategic partnership with Brownsville Multi-Family Health Center ensures that students participate in quality internships linked to their areas of interest. Additionally, the principal has hired an additional assistant principal to support the special education reform initiatives, as well as literacy across the curriculum to ensure alignment to the CCLS. She also has hired literacy and math coaches to work directly with teachers in the classroom so that teachers observe model lessons and receive targeted one-on-one mentoring. Funding has been allocated to a comprehensive afterschool program that includes online and elective courses, thus students receive tutoring and recover or accumulate credits towards graduation. The principal's investment in Smart boards, computers, and textbooks support student learning. Additionally, teachers meet twice weekly in grade and subject area teams to develop curriculum, unit plans, and academic tasks that engage and challenge students, resulting in practices that support the school's goals of improving instruction and students' academic performance.
- The school has a safe and nurturing environment that creates an inclusive culture to promote students' academic achievement. (1.4)
 - The school has embraced Respect for All to make certain that all students feel welcomed, supported, and included in all activities. The parents report that the school values the students and that graduation and college is a priority. The school has an efficient coordinator of student activities who manages a calendar of activities in which students participate. In addition, the senior class committee is active in selecting the activities and events for the twelfth graders. There is strong student voice through the student government and students' participation on the school leadership team, students choose their electives and request that electives are offered in their areas of interest. Additionally, all seniors are assigned to a mentor and receive advisement regarding completion of high school requirements and application to colleges and as a result, more students are applying to and attending college. Students with low attendance rates are each assigned to a mentor through the Mayor's Initiative and students in the lowest third are given a teacher mentor through the grade-level inquiry team. These practices create a safe and nurturing environment that enhances the

teaching and learning process leading to improvements in students' academic achievement as evidenced by the overall grade of B on the school's 2012 Progress Report.

What the school needs to improve

- Strengthen the alignment of teaching practices and strategies to the curriculum to promote the development of students thinking skills so that learning is further improved.(1.2)
 - Teacher teams and teachers develop week-at-a-glance and daily lesson plans that are aligned to the curriculum and incorporate strategies and activities that develop student thinking such as tasks for reading and analyzing complex texts, holding classroom discussions, and writing argumentatively. The school has established a rubric for checking how well teachers' lesson plans incorporate these strategies/activities. Additionally, teachers have attended workshops on differentiation of instruction, questioning techniques and flexible grouping. However, the school has not yet implemented an articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best and as a result, there are inconsistencies in implementation of the aforementioned strategies across classrooms, negatively impacting student engagement, the quality of classroom discussions, and student work products, thereby limiting further improvements in students' learning.
- Ensure that assessment practices include common assessments, ongoing checks for understanding, and students' self-assessments, to monitor academic progress leading to academic success. (2.2)
 - The school wide grading policy attributing 40% to class work, 40% to tests/quizzes, 10% class participation, and 10% homework, is used by all teachers and these values are locked in Skedula, the school's electronic grading system. Teachers and students use standards-based rubrics to grade homework, class participation, and class work, so that students receive feedback to improve their work. Teachers also provide feedback to students via the results of tests and quizzes. Teachers conduct item analyses of their classroom exams so they can determine areas of challenge to be addressed in future lessons. Teachers have all received professional development on the use of Skedula so that they can provide progress reports with next steps for students to ensure that they pass each marking period. However, the practice of content-area teachers who teach the same course using common assessments to determine student progress or adjust curriculum or instruction is not yet embedded across the school, limiting effective adjustments to curriculum to impact student learning. Additionally, although students use rubrics and complete exits slips in some classrooms, this practice is also not yet embedded school wide limiting students' understanding and self-reflection on what their next learning steps are in each lesson, hindering academic success.
- Provide differentiated professional development based on targeted feedback to teachers that improves instructional effectiveness and students' academic outcomes. (4.1)
 - The school is in the Teacher's Effectiveness Pilot (TEP) and uses the Danielson framework for low inference observations that provide feedback to teachers about their instructional practices. The Danielson framework provides clear expectations of good practice and the observation reports to teachers capture their instructional strengths and weaknesses, however this feedback is only beginning to support teacher development. Administrators create and share a school wide weekly summary of the strengths and challenges in instruction that were observed in classrooms throughout the school, but administrators are only now developing plans to create and implement professional development to meet the needs of all teachers. As a result, an inconsistency in the quality of teacher practice across classrooms hinders capacity building around effective instruction.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: WORLD ACADEMY FOR TOTAL COMMUNITY HEALTH	UD	D	P	WD			
Overall QR Score		X					
Instructional Core							
<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</i>	UD	D	P	WD			
1.1 Design engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula, including the arts, physical and health education, 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 that is informed by a research-based, common teaching framework and is aligned to curricula, engaging and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products?		X					
2.2 Align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessment and grading practices, and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels?		X					
School Culture							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	UD	D	P	WD			
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?			X				
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve them?		X					
Systems for Improvement							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	UD	D	P	WD			
1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet students' learning needs as evidenced by meaningful student work products?			X				
3.1 Establish a coherent vision of school improvement that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are tracked for progress and are understood and supported by the entire school community?		X					
4.1 Use the observation of classroom teaching with a research-based, common teaching framework 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					
5.1 Evaluate the quality of school- level decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school, with particular attention to the CCLS?		X					
Quality Review Scoring Key							
UD	Underdeveloped	D	Developing	P	Proficient	WD	Well Developed