

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

ACADEMY FOR HEALTH CAREERS

High School 751

**150 ALBANY AVENUE
BROOKLYN
NY, 11213**

Principal: Deonne Martin

**Dates of review: Dec 13 - 14, 2012
Lead Reviewer: Karen Watts**

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Academy for Health Careers is a high school with 228 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school's population comprises 81% Black, 14% Hispanic, 1% White, and 4% Asian students. The student body includes 8% English language learners and 15% special education students. Boys account for 27% of the students enrolled and girls account for 73%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 86.3%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is Developing.

What the school does well

- The principal strategically uses the school's resources to implement its health careers theme and to support its instructional goals to improve students' academic outcomes. (1.3)
 - The principal leverages the expertise of coaches from Ramapo, the NY Math Project, and the school's Children First Network to provide professional development and support to her teachers. She has purchased software such as Achieve 3000 to increase students' reading levels, Castle Learning to prepare her students for Regents' exams, and Career Cruising to help students prepare for health careers. She has also invested in many technology resources such as document cameras, LCD projectors, SMART boards and a virtual medical room, and has fully stocked the science lab with materials to ensure that teachers and students have what they need for effective instruction. Hiring of a part time assistant principal and a full time guidance counselor, along with teachers who are strong in their content area and in some aspect of the school's theme supports the development of the school. Classes are purposefully kept small thus providing time for teachers to meet during the school day and on Wednesday afternoons, and scheduling allows for coverage of classes enabling teachers to visit classrooms in other schools as well as within the school to observe best practices to improve instruction. Closely with the schools community based organization, Brooklyn Queens Long Island Area Health Education Center, the school is able to facilitate trips for students to colleges and medical facilities. As a result, more students are passing classes and earning credits to fulfill their graduation requirements.
- The school provides adequate guidance and academic supports that foster an orderly learning environment and a respectful culture so that youth development and students' academic success increases. (1.4)
 - The principal and teachers have an open door policy and students share any concerns they might have. Teachers stand in the doorways of their classrooms during passing to usher students into class. The guidance counselor provides workshops on Respect for All to eradicate bullying at the school. Students receive Academy for Health Careers, (AHC), dollars as incentives for good behavior that are used to purchase supplies at the school's store. All students are required to wear uniforms and if needed the school gives students polo shirts and T-shirts, thus projecting a harmonious school tone and culture. Students who attend advisories once or twice per week with advisors who know them well are able to discuss expectations around academic issues such as note taking and test taking strategies, and students are made aware of their progress in school by looking at their transcripts, report cards, and progress reports. The school also provides a handbook to all students with specific expectations and graduation requirements. The school offers a variety of activities including PSAL sports available on the Paul Robeson Campus, participation on the Red Cross Club where all students are trained in CPR, the Explorers Club that takes students on trips to various businesses, and Global Kids that offers awareness of global issues through various trips and help students develop leadership skills. These practices positively support the development of students' social-emotional growth and their involvement in the Health Careers theme of the school and have resulted in more students exhibiting successful behaviors and academic success.

- The principal uses an observation process based on the Danielson's Framework for Teaching to provide feedback to teachers and design and implement targeted professional development to improve teachers' practice. (4.1)
 - The school's participation in the Teacher Effectiveness Pilot, (TEP), supports the principal's efforts in providing frequent feedback with next steps to all teachers regarding their instructional practice. Teachers receive a least four mini and two full period observation reports each semester in addition to frequent oral feedback regarding their instructional practice. Schools leaders use the information gathered from cycles of observations and frequent analyses of student work and performance data, including scholarship reports, percent of students in each cohort on track to graduate, credit accumulation, and Regents' exams pass rates, to plan professional development (PD) to address areas of deficiencies, providing teachers support via coaching in literacy, math, and classroom management. During Wednesday PD sessions teachers use the resources of the TEP in ARIS to develop their questioning techniques and during lessons their assessments to improve students' engagement in lessons. As a result, schools leaders are observing less teacher-centered lessons, entry points into the curriculum for more students, more flexible grouping of students based on classroom level student data, and varied methods to assess students' progress and needs during lessons. These practices are improving the quality of the delivery of instruction and students are achieving at higher levels.

What the school needs to improve

- Revise the Common Core Learning Standards aligned units to include the Citywide instructional shifts relative to rigorous academic tasks to develop higher order thinking skills to further improve students' academic performance. (1.1)
 - The high School for Health Careers currently has ninth and tenth grade students and a very small eleventh grade. It offers the required mandated courses in grades 9 to 11, along with art and Financial Literacy, a requirement of the school's Career and Technical Education program. The school is also developing its CTE sequence of courses and is offering forensics, physics to its eleventh graders. The school aligns its curriculum maps and unit plans to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) using the Literacy Design Collaborative modules and the Common Core bundles. It also has developed interdisciplinary Health Projects, and has identified the development of literacy skills as a standard to work on this school year to ensure that students are prepared to take certification exams in Medical Laboratory, Medical assisting, and Nursing Assisting. Teachers are including higher-level questions on academic tasks, however academic tasks are not sufficiently rigorous and do not consistently promote the development of higher order skills and implementation of the required CIE instructional shifts, thus limiting the full alignment to the Common Core and hindering increasing further students' academic achievement. Additionally, the school is only now developing the curriculum for advanced placement, language, and CTE courses, and only now exploring the offering of college level courses thereby limiting college and career readiness in all grades.
- Enhance questioning techniques so that students answer more open-ended questions in written work and during classroom discussions to encourage demonstration of higher levels of student engagement and learning. (1.2)
 - The school believes that students learn best through hands-on student centered activities that incorporate research strategies and the use of technology by both students and teachers. Students are reading and

analyzing more nonfiction text to find evidence to support their claims in argumentative writing. Teachers ensure that articles and non-fiction text at various reading levels are available to students so that they can all access the lesson. Students are afforded opportunities to choose activities so there is some differentiation to meet students' interests and needs. Students are encouraged to think-pair-share while working through group activities. However, the incorporation of open-ended questions that promote deep analysis of complex text and build higher order thinking skills is only now starting to take place and rich classroom discussions among students and good quality student essays is not yet evident, thereby limiting improving students' learning outcomes.

- Further develop assessment practices to include ongoing checks for understanding and students' self and peer-assessments so that teachers effectively adjust instruction to meet learning needs of all students. (2.2)
 - The school's grading policy is based on tests, projects, class participation, labs, and homework. The school uses diagnostic testing with Achieve3000 and Acuity to assess the reading and beginning performance level of students in reading and math. Pre-and post- assessments are given at the beginning and end of each unit to see how much the students learned during a particular unit of study. The results of common assessments every three weeks are analyzed at the teacher team level, adjustments are made to unit plans, and decisions are made to re-teach areas with which students struggle. A final exam is administered in each subject area and mock Regents' exams assess students' progress in preparation for Regents exams in January and June. During lessons, teachers assess student learning by asking questions, listening to discussions within groups, and by analyzing students' summaries, exit tickets, and homework assignments. However, students have no methods for quickly informing teachers of their understanding of a lesson so that teachers make immediate and necessary adjustments to instruction. Although there are rubrics for writing argumentative essays, rubrics are not routinely used by students to improve their work or to assess a peer's work, limiting the development of students' ownership of their work.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: ACADEMY FOR HEALTH CAREERS	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	