

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

High School for Law Enforcement and Public Safety

High School 690

**116-25 GUY R BREWER BOULEVARD
Queens, NY 11434**

Principal: Diahann E. Malcolm

Dates of review: January 15 – 16, 2013

Lead Reviewer: Umit Serin

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

High School for Law Enforcement and Public Safety is a high school with students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 74% Black, 15% Hispanic, 1% White, and 9% Asian students. The student body includes 2% English language learners and 17% special education students. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 92.0%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school maintains an inclusive culture that provides a safe learning environment where students and staff feel supported, leading to increased personal growth. (1.4)
 - Parents, teachers, and students state that the school is safe and welcoming and is highlighted by students being supported to be college ready, teachers feeling respected by their colleagues and supported by the principal, and parents citing a school that is safe and welcoming. Additionally, the principal's open door policy provides students the opportunity to voice concerns. After the analysis of graduation data, the administration found that Black and Hispanic male students were lagging behind in four-year graduation rate. To support them, the administration applied to and received the Expanded Success Initiative Grant, which enabled the school to create the ninth grade "Law Enforcement Junior Academy" whereby students are provided with mentoring, guidance, advisement, and college and career exploration through the "intermediaries" that consist of teachers from the school and outside organizations such as National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE), New York City Police Department (NYPD) Explorers and Hip Hop 4 life. As a result of these practices and initiatives, students are creating goals connected to college and career and working towards graduating high school on time as evident in the initial scholarship reports.
- The principal has a clear vision for the school that is focused on attainment of specific goals and evident in action plans that are beginning to drive student learning. (3.1)
 - The analysis of last year's Progress Report and Regents' data revealed that the school needed to focus on two major areas; improving graduation rates for Black and Hispanic males and improving student writing. To tackle the writing issue, the principal, in collaboration with the school leadership team (SLT), has implemented a "Drop Everything and Write Initiative". Students, across subjects and grades, are required to complete a writing project. Content area teachers are supported through professional development sessions by the English department on essay writing to improve student-writing skills. Student writing projects are analyzed during teacher team meetings using a school wide writing rubric. This initiative is beginning to lead to some improvement in student writing as evidenced by students receiving higher grades on their writing projects.
- School leaders and staff communicate high expectations to parents and students and provide supports that promote higher-level student achievement. (3.4)
 - The principal, through planning meetings, faculty conferences, and individual conversations with teachers, students, and parents, and via professional development sessions, communicates a high focus on improving writing across subjects and graduation rate for all students with a keen eye on Black and Hispanic male students to decrease the achievement gap. Administration holds meetings with teachers regarding

findings around formative and summative assessments such as writing assessment results, Regents' test results, and credit accumulation issues. Parents have been introduced to the expectations of Common Core Learning Standards through parent teacher association (PTA) and school leadership team (SLT) structures, and teachers provide additional help to families through one-on-one meetings or phone calls so they can assist their children in meeting the increasing learning demands. Parents indicate that teachers and administrators direct them to resources for academic and personal support and that they regularly receive communication about after school tutoring sessions and extracurricular activities. Similarly, students share that after school tutoring, enrichment, intervention classes, and guidance and advisement support, help them towards meeting the high expectations of Common Core Standards and be college and career ready.

Areas for improvement

- Refine the curricula and academic tasks to cognitively engage all learners across grades and subjects through rigorous learning experiences, resulting in critical thinking and meaningful work products. (1.1)
 - The school is in the process of integrating Common Core Learning Standards in their curriculum this year, with an emphasis on writing across the curriculum, resulting in teacher across grades implementing a planned initiative. Additionally, school leadership and staff use Depth of Knowledge (DOK) as a method for understanding higher order questioning and thinking skills and in some classrooms, there are some examples of students being asked to use evidence from texts to support their thinking. For example in an English class, students were given quotes and asked to explain the quotes and support their explanations using evidence from the novel. However, these practices are not consistently implemented in all classrooms. This results in limiting students in developing rigorous habits and higher order thinking skills to accelerate learning.
- Improve teacher practice so that all lessons are challenging and extend student thinking to maximize learning for all students leading to increased student engagement, higher order thinking and student outcomes. (1.2)
 - The leadership emphasizes the use of writing across curriculum, rigorous tasks, engaging activities, and critical thinking, as essential elements necessary for students to advance in their learning. Although in some classrooms teachers engage students through hands-on activities that require students to support their arguments using evidence from text, most teachers fail to push student thinking by missing out on asking higher level questions and providing multiple entry points for students with varied needs. In a Living Environment class, students, after doing a research on patients on life support, were actively engaged in a debate on whether they were for or against life support. However, in their debate, they failed to use credible evidence from their research. In a math class, though the lesson objective called for students to apply functions learned in real life situations such as calculating compound interest, much of the lesson was dominated by the teacher, leading to lost opportunities for all students to engage in collaborative experiences. In a US History class, students were given a task on industrial revolution where they had to draw a cartoon, write a campaign speech or write an

argumentative paragraph. However, they were not required to site evidence from text. Consequently, not all students benefit from rigorous tasks and units resulting in uneven growth in developing higher-order thinking skills.

- Develop high quality assessments that provide a clear picture of student needs and integrate ongoing checks for understanding during lessons to adjust instructional practices for increased student outcomes. (2.2)
 - Administrators provide teachers with Regents' data on student performance and progress. The use of that data, however, to identify strengths and needs across classes and make adjustments to curriculum and instruction is inconsistent across grades and subjects. Furthermore, students are periodically assessed, including on their writing skills, but results are inconsistently used to adjust curriculum and instruction making it difficult for individual and teams of teachers to track progress and make necessary curricular and instructional modifications to support all learners.
 - Use of ongoing checking for understanding during lessons is inconsistent across classrooms. Some teachers integrate strategies that include exit slips, and oral questioning, to monitor that all students comprehend the lesson, while other teachers fail to check for student understanding, hindering teachers' ability to make timely and effective adjustments to the lessons to meet learning needs.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|----------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| School name: High School for Law Enforcement and Public Safety (Q690) | 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 |