

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

New Millennium Business Academy Middle School

Junior High-Intermediate-Middle

**1000 TELLER AVENUE
BRONX
NY 10456**

Principal: DORALD BASTIAN

**Dates of review: Dec 10, 2012
Lead Reviewer: Holly Reichert**

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

New Millennium Business Academy Middle School is a middle school with 192 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 42% Black, 54% Hispanic, 22% White, and 11% Asian students. The student body includes 18% English language learners and 21% special education students. Boys account for 58% of the students enrolled and girls account for 42%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 87.0%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school's learning environment provides structure and supports so that students take more responsibility leading to improvements in attendance and student performance. (1.4)
 - In year three of implementing Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS), the school attributes its positive, learning tone to this school-wide structure. PBIS has led to greater student accountability and a decrease in behavior-related issues. Teachers monitor and maintain records of behavior and positive class culture. Students are publicly recognized for attendance, behavior, and academic success in weekly town hall assemblies and on hallway displays. Parents state that they have seen social-emotional and academic improvements in their children. One parent said, 'the students show values', referring to students taking responsibility for their actions. Students say that PBIS motivates them to strive for good grades, come to school daily, and to be good leaders. One student summed up the PBIS approach as, "makes us feel proud of what we do". The school has positively shifted its culture to one where students are excited about attending school, learning and striving for success.
 - Student academic and social-emotional development is supported by teachers, the guidance counselor, and the Attendance Intervention Mediation System (AIMS). Each teacher is responsible for students in one class. Homeroom is an advisory class and allows teachers to work with their class on PBIS matters, grades, attendance, and school events. Students say their teachers help them with academics and school challenges. The guidance counselor supports students transitioning to middle school, high school, and students with social and emotional challenges. The school also has five staff members who mentor students with attendance and truancy issues. The principal cited one mentored student whose attendance improved from 80% at the end of 2011-12 to 98% this year. Parents shared that every child is known and supported by the staff, adding that the principal knows every child by name. Attendance has improved as a result of school support for each student via effective structures.
- The school's goals unify the school community around moving student achievement and supporting teacher development so that learning is at the heart of its work. (3.1)
 - School goals focus on raising the number of students at Levels 3 and 4 in English language arts and math and supporting teacher growth. Teaching and learning drives the school improvement plan as indicated by all constituencies. These goals also link to teacher and student goals. Parents and students spoke about the 1000 Steps reading goal and the PBIS reward connected to that goal. Student academic progress is tracked by the English language arts and math department and linked to test performance goals. Teacher teams examine end of unit assessment data for strengths and needs. Teacher goals are tracked via the school's classroom observation and

feedback system. This focus on improving teaching and learning through these goals lead to student academic and social-emotional development.

- The faculty and school community work on school improvement processes, PBIS and specific academic goals to raise student performance in English language arts and math by 10% shaping the schools' positive culture for learning. Teachers focus on specific groups of students they work with and students cite their marking period goals aligned to the unit of study in literacy and math adding that they can track their progress online. As a result of this shared focus the school community has fully committed to accomplishing them.
- Teacher teams track student learning aligned to strategic instructional decisions so that curricular adjustments can be made in order to better address the learning needs of their student groups. (4.2)
 - Teacher teams are composed by grade and specific content levels. Grade teams focus their inquiry work on tailoring instruction for groups of students close to attaining grade proficiency. By analyzing student data, and learning needs, grade teams choose a strategy to support student learning and mastery of content. These are linked to short-term goals citing textual evidence, and Common Core Learning Standard (CCLS) in literacy. The 8th grade team is focused on the strategy, 'canned questions', a specific technique to support English language learners from the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP). Teachers look at student work, and discuss student progress across the content areas. The English language arts team discusses student progress, data of unit pre- and post-assessments, curricula, and future assessments. Student data analysis helps teachers plan tailored instruction for specific student learning needs, strengthening teaching practice, and student learning as tracked by the school's observation process and student performance.
 - Teacher team members of the grade or department take lead roles in the school's work for integrating CCLS and the citywide instructional expectations (CIE). A supervisor oversees the team's work, a teacher facilitates the team, another teacher is the liaison for PBIS work, and the role of record keeper is rotated weekly. All team members come ready with student work and class data. Lead teachers partake in team meetings and connect the team's work to their work as coaches of individual classroom teachers. Teams track student performance with pre/post, and biweekly quiz results colored coded to show students needing additional support. Distributed leadership is aligned to the greater work of the school thus, positively affecting teacher practice and student learning.

What the school needs to improve

- Extend the development and implementation of common core aligned curricula to all content areas so that key State standards and higher order skills are emphasized across the school leading to increased student achievement. (1.1)

- The school revised its English language arts curricula and aligned its math curricula to the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) scope and sequence guidance documents. Full alignment, revising and integration of instructional shifts into curricula is adapted per student learning needs and teacher practice improvement. Students are reading and writing biographical feature articles aligned to CCLS literacy informational text. The first unit of study focused on the number system linked to each grade's specific CCLS alignment. While the school is working on revising their English language arts and math curricula, it has not yet done this work in social studies and science. As a result, the school has not fully integrated the CCLS and CIE instructional shifts across grades and subjects limiting the school's capacity to raise student achievement and promote college and career readiness.
- English language arts units focus on a big idea question, and units of study in math include a driving question for each unit in each grade. However, during classrooms visits, these questions were not evident in student talk protocols. Pacing challenges prevented students from showing their thinking, question the reasoning of others, or build on ideas. The school says the unit pre-assessments in English language arts and math are rigorous and set high expectations for students but when speaking to students about their writing goals as per benchmark results, students spoke of general areas such as grammar, and punctuation. While English language arts and math units and a yearlong curriculum overview are in place, the school has not stressed key State standards, rigorous habits, and high order skills across grades and content areas. Consequently, rigorous curricula focused on higher level skills are inconsistent across the school.
- Develop teacher pedagogy, aligned to the school's chosen framework so that teaching strategies include multiple entry points for all learners and student work products consistently show high levels of thinking and mastery of key standards. (1.2)
 - The school has adopted the SIOP model as a common teaching framework. Teachers are learning the eight components of this model, and are focused on the first two components: lesson preparation, honing on language and content objectives, and building background knowledge. Lesson plans align to the school's framework; but when speaking to students, not all students knew what to do, how to do the task or why they were doing the task. In some classes language and content objectives were unclear and students were unsure about what they should know and do by the end of the lesson. Consequently, planning and execution of instruction lacks clear objectives, hindering the school's capacity to consistently provide instruction that leads to mastery of objectives.
 - Teachers focus on all cognitive areas with round robin table discussion, and partners sharing writing. Time was called before a number of partnerships could share their work. In yet another class, a high-order question was posed to the class; however, it was not written down for students to refer to, and students did not brainstorm the question prior to doing the math task of plotting data. While teachers plan writing and talk strategy protocols, the execution of these

strategies and the flow of the lesson lead to inconsistent levels of engagement and limited opportunities for students to demonstrate critical thinking skills. As a result, teaching strategies lead to uneven access for students to engage in multiple ways of expressing their understanding.

- Students work in pairings and collaborative groups following the lesson objectives that are aligned to student discourse. However, many students did not have written notes or work that they could explain or do independently. Station work was not completed the in the time allotted before the bell rang. In an English language arts class, students spoke of the text they were reading, discussing words that expressed vivid details or showed engaging language. In science, students worked on a lab to identify which liquid was the most/least dense. When asked, students talked and wrote about one liquid as, “the densest” because it weighed the most showing conceptual misunderstanding and misuse of the superlative construction with density. Many samples of student written work did not show deep levels of understanding and discourse. Consequently, students across grades and subjects do not show understanding and mastery of content.
- Deepen assessment practices across content areas so common assessments and data results are used to track progress of key standards, and adjust practice to meet and extend the learning of all students. (2.2)
 - The school has started a new assessment program based on the work, *Driven by Data*. In English language arts and math, students take pre-and post-assessments after every unit. Data collected from their first unit of study revealed that, wording and lack of uniformity of assessment types led to some inconsistent student outcomes. Revision to the process and content of pre- and post- assessments was applied to their second assessment currently underway. This same effort to plan for common assessments in social studies, and science has not yet happened. As a result, the use of common assessments in the content areas is uneven leading to inconsistent student progress across the school.
 - Teachers plan assessment techniques, observing student work during lessons, and exit tickets at the summation of the lesson. However, checking for understanding leading to adjustments of instruction was inconsistent in a math class. Some students struggled with basic computational skills, and could not complete multi-step work problems. The teacher did not check for understanding to adjust instruction prior to sending students off to work independently. In a science class, many students did not understand the difference between density and weight. This was not addressed with individual students or the class when it surfaced during group lab work. Students working on a brochure in their social studies class misunderstood the directions and were writing about present day New York when the task was to write about the colony. Teachers across the school missed opportunities to check student understanding leading to inconsistent adjustments. Consequently, not all learners are meeting lesson objectives.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: New Millennium Business Academy Middle School	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