

# Quality Review Report 2012-2013

**Bronx Community High School**

**High School 08X377**

**1980 LAFAYETTE AVENUE  
BRONX, NY 10473**

**Principal: Flora Greenaway**

**Dates of review: Dec 11-12, 2012**

**Lead Reviewer: Carron Staple**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Bronx Community High School is a transfer high school with 200 students from grades 9 through 12. The school population is comprised of 32% Black, 63% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 5% English language learners and 5% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 64.1%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is proficient.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school aligns curricula and performance tasks to State standards and makes strategic choices on how to integrate the common core learning standards into units of study across all content areas, ensuring that all students are exposed rigorous and engaging instruction that prepares them for college and careers. (1.1)
  - The school has revised their curriculum to align common core standards with every subject area across all grade levels, with a focus on informational text and argumentative writing to support the writing stamina of their students. Teachers regularly meet to plan and revise units of study to ensure the instructional shifts they are making have appropriately embedded tasks that promote higher-order thinking and meet the needs of all learners and subgroups. School leaders ensure that teachers receive the support they need by providing internal and external professional development and coaches, thus ensuring that the teachers' integration of standards is strategic, rigorous and engaging.
- Across all content areas, students are engaged in rigorous projects and performance tasks that that results in meaningful work products and increased student engagement. (1.2)
  - The school shares a common belief around how students learn best, which begins with the excellent lesson-planning and attention to all students and subgroups, and those who may be coming back from an absence, creating an atmosphere where all students are planned for regardless of their level. Across all classes, teachers provide multiple entry points such as AVENTA, the online credit recovery system, Achieve 300, a literacy program geared for English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities (SWD), tiered lesson plans and to engage their students and scaffold learning which lead to students thinking at high levels, while participating with their peers and teachers in a manner that holds everyone accountable for learning. The students expressed that the real-world performance tasks they are required to complete are challenging and rigorous and push them to be persistent as they know they are being prepared for the world beyond high school.
- The school provides a safe, caring, inclusive and positive learning environment where students feel respected, valued and prepared for college and careers. (1.4)
  - The school has a created a culture where students who were not successful in prior educational settings, now feel welcomed and encouraged to continue their education in a smaller setting that affords every student a youth advisor and adult mentors who provide daily support and motivation in helping them meet their academic and personal goals. Students attribute their success not only to the individualized attention they receive from multiple adults and advisors, but to the unique way the school pairs the learning-to-work component with academic cycles where they can accumulate credits faster, thus making the road to

graduation and ultimately college, a challenge they believe is attainable. The combination of daily check-ins, community and parent meetings where everyone has a voice in decision-making, the frequent family outreach and routine rituals for self-monitoring, aligned with each student's specific academic program, positively impacts the students and ensures a renewed resilience and strong persistence to complete school. The Options Institute Student Assessment Tool assesses all social/emotional and academic areas of a student's life, with a major area of focus around post-secondary and college interests which allows students and teachers to engage in learning targets that are collaborative and aligned to the students' post-secondary goals. This has a positive impact on students as they are more prepared for college and careers at this school because of the tasks and assessments they are engaging in, making them feel confident among their peers.

- Across all classrooms, teachers use common rubrics, assessments, and grading policies that yield information to determine student progress and next steps for improved student performance. (2.2)
  - Common assessments, rubrics and grading policies as well as routines and rituals for submitting student work are consistent across the school. Students are regularly assessed through daily checks for understanding, questioning, projects, performance tasks, pre- and post- tests, benchmark assessments and individualized conferences which support students in assessing themselves. This information is analyzed by teacher teams and administrators to identify trends, areas of strength and weakness in particular content areas, and strength of coursework where demonstration of intellectual curiosity and perseverance is needed, particularly in advanced placement and other college level courses. As a result, adjustments to curricula, unit plans, and pacing calendars are made to ensure that students receive targeted instruction needed. This is noted in the 24% of additional students who accumulated 5 or more credits in the Fall semester as compared to last year.

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

- Increase the consistency of providing actionable feedback to teachers with targeted next steps, using the current research-based framework, to elevate teacher practice. (4.1)
  - Although all teachers have been observed using a research-based framework, the feedback provided in some of the post-observation reports was minimal and did not provide time specific or targeted next steps for improvement in alignment with the school's chosen competencies that focus on questioning, engagement and planning. The informal observation tracking system currently in place is not providing administrators with the necessary information to develop targeted professional development to meet the identified needs of both individual and groups of teachers. Thus, the lack of consistently clear expectations for teacher practice, and the supports to move performance.
- Refine the process and practice of how teacher teams examine and evaluate student work, and adjust their instructional practice to support the needs of all students. (4.2)

- Although teacher teams were both examining student work, they did not use the same protocol, which demonstrated an uneven approach towards how teams were supporting students. One team specifically analyzed student work and pointed out areas of challenge and discussed how best to support the students, which resulted in a clear action plan and next steps for improving student performance. The other team began with a focus on a particular student, but then switched the focus on how the teacher could improve his "aim" to write a better plan, which placed the bulk of the session on the teacher, rather than the student whose work was being analyzed. Therefore, no targeted discussion for improving this particular student's outcome occurred. While it is important that teachers have discussions with their peers and team leaders around their instructional practice to strengthen their capacity, the inconsistent use of a clear protocol to support students with targeted interventions limits stronger teams to support teacher pedagogy and student improvement simultaneously.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: Bronx Community High School	UD	D	P	WD			
<b>Overall QR Score</b>			X				
<b>Instructional Core</b>							
<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				
<b>School Culture</b>							
<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				
<b>Systems for Improvement</b>							
<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 <b>inquiry approach</b> 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				
<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>