



**Department of
Education**

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

**Quality Review Report
Office of Accountability
2008-2009**

Quality Review Report 2008-2009

Brooklyn School for Career Development

High School 753

510 Clermont Avenue

Brooklyn

NY 11238

Principal: Yvrose Pierre

Dates of review: March 13,16-17, 2009

Lead Reviewer: Andy McClean

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Brooklyn School for Career Development is a special education high school with 344 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 76% Black, 22% Hispanic, 1.4% White, and 0.3% Asian students. The student body includes 5.8% English language learners and 100% special education students. Boys account for 73% of the students enrolled and girls account for 27%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2007 - 2008 was 68.4%. The school is not in receipt of Title 1 funding.

The school occupies a main site, an inclusion high school site and ten work sites.

Overall Evaluation

This school is well developed.

The principal delivers to all members of the school community a very determined and clear vision of opportunity and success for all. Students and adults understand that their task is to take responsibility and be accountable for their own achievements and success. Well-embedded lines of communication ensure students understand their role in maintaining a safe and stimulating school environment where challenges from outside school do not distract them from academic, social and behavioral progress. A wide array of contemporary data is generated and used most effectively to produce challenging individual education plans. Student goals are regularly updated to ensure sequential progress across a wide variety of academic and social targets. As a result of many changes to the school day, curriculum and work related learning opportunities, student attendance continues to rise, with student drop out rates falling substantially over a 4 year period. Students receive strong messages of support in their perseverance to succeed. Attendance levels continue to challenge the cabinet as it strives to improve and enhance students' daily experiences, particularly those students who exhibit the poorest attendance. Innovative classes such as retail shop, cosmetology and construction technology provide students with greater motivation to attend due to their relevance to the school's prime directive of career development.

Teachers and paraprofessionals show great sensitivity in their quest to provide female students with a wider variety of stimulating courses that have relevance to their aspirations. Students display commendable relationships with their peers and teachers. This results from the daily example of adult role models in school. They treat all students with respect and dignity, at the same time as challenging them to make the most of their academic potential. Identification of student learning styles linked with very regular assessments of performance enables teachers to produce challenging work that is differentiated according to individual need. Use of technology and a wide variety of assessment tools provides teachers, students and parents with up to date measures of performance with suggested areas for improvement. The principal is aware of the need to develop greater parental participation to assist their children's academic progress. Students testify readily to the many ways in which they are treated as mature adults with teachers and guidance staff showing great tact and confidentiality in dealing with emotional issues. Underpinning the bond of trust between all parties is the school's drive to provide each of its students with not only enhanced reading, writing and number skills, but many real life skills pertinent to their progress towards the world of work.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal's drive and determination communicates a vision of positivity to faculty, parents and, above all, students.
- Carefully structured approaches to address unacceptable behavior and poor academic performance result in increasing attendance and falling drop out rates.
- A dedicated and collegial faculty provides students with a very safe and stimulating learning environment, enhanced by exemplary role modeling.
- A wide and carefully focused curriculum, delivered to meet differentiated student needs, motivates students to greater participation and progress.
- Very good communication of the school's strategic goals, addresses areas of challenge identified through a profound debate on instructional practice.
- Exemplary collection and use of a wide array of data leads to challenging individual learning and behavioral goals for all students that are regularly updated.
- The school delivers many opportunities for all students to benefit from appropriate real life work experience, at the same time as enhancing their basic reading, writing and number skills.

What the school needs to improve

- Extend the good work of the cabinet in the use of data to identify and support those students with attendance and lateness problems.
- Expand current curriculum initiatives to cater for the needs and interests of female students.
- Develop methods of communication that lead to greater parental contact and participation in their children's school life to assist in their academic progress.

Part 3: Main Findings

How well the school meets New York City's evaluation criteria

Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, generate and analyze information on student learning outcomes and use it to understand what each student knows and can do and to monitor the student's progress over time.

This area of the school's work is well developed.

The school uses a wide array of data collected on a very regular basis from all core subjects to ensure every faculty member has a contemporary understanding of every student's progress and challenges. Added to this is the daily scrutiny of attendance and lateness statistics to ensure the continuation of the positive increase in student attendance and the substantial decline in drop out rates. The principal and cabinet meet regularly to scrutinize data and are fully aware of the need to further increase attendance figures. A data specialist employs a variety of means of communication with faculty and paraprofessionals to track and target those students in need of most support. This is particularly effective in the measurement of each student's reading and writing skills. Students are grouped according to capability levels to ensure better differentiation for individual difference and greater consistency in planning for all subjects. Such data enables a vibrant United States history class to center on complex political cartoons describing the Monroe Doctrine, where all students comprehend the vocabulary involved and participate enthusiastically.

The school analyzes progress of its minority group of female students to understand their interests. Leaders now plan to further extend the curriculum to motivate this sub group to attend and develop their social skills which will assist in their chosen careers, such as in areas of art and design. All faculty members communicate successfully with their students to ensure every member of the student body is aware of their targets across all subjects, as well as behavior and attendance goals. Students understand their current levels of performance and what their next steps are to gain further credits. Individual education plans that outline robust and challenging goals for all students are regularly revisited and upgraded. Teachers demonstrate great acumen in placing students in appropriate classes in their desire to match each student with work that is commensurate with their ability level.

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use data to understand each student's next learning steps and to set suitably high goals for accelerating each student's learning.

This area of the school's work is well developed.

Innovative practice results in a rigorous, tri-weekly review of the impact of instruction by principal, cabinet and lead teachers. Arrangements at the start of each of three weekdays, enables teachers to meet and discuss individual student programs of support. At the same time, teachers can confer about successful measures that motivate individual students and apply them accordingly to differentiate each student's learning. Courses for the improvement of functional life skills underpin the curriculum

and receive regular and frequent review. Such courses are designed to make the best possible contribution to the school's culture of developing talents that result in appropriate employment for students. As well as having challenging academic goals, to encourage and to increase the rate of students returning to general education, students have individual behavioral goals. All this serves to improve on an existing, well-established and positive learning environment. Whole school goals, to raise attendance and increase graduation levels, drive all actions. Regular evaluation by cabinet, the inquiry team, as well as departments and individuals, maintains the drive towards greater student achievement. Leaders understand the need for consistent enforcement of school safety regulations to reinforce a vibrant learning environment. Students talk freely and positively about their comprehension of what they must do to improve life skills, as well as knowledge and understanding of areas of academic progress that they need to improve.

Students are proud of their role in moving the school forward through school government meetings. Parents also testify to the great efforts made on their behalf by staff, to deal with the difficulties their families are presented with. The principal, through many means of communication, letters, e-mails, phone calls and bulletin boards, ensures that everyone understands the rigorous demands the school makes on all students to seize new opportunities in school. Students know they have a voice in school. They profess to the openness and availability of staff to assist them in moving forward. Many students speak glowingly about the confidentiality of conversations with principal and teachers. Teachers and guidance staff show unswerving loyalty to their students, addressing unacceptable behaviors on an impersonal level at the same time as giving students pointers for improvement.

Quality Statement 3 – Develop Coherent Instructional and Organizational Strategies: The school uses rigorous curricula, teaching and organizational decision making to engage students and faculty in meeting all students' learning goals.

This area of the school's work is well developed.

A wide and carefully focused curriculum is delivered to meet the individual needs of all students. The school regularly evaluates its curriculum, according to data, from a variety of sources. School leaders analyze absence patterns to deduce which students need to be challenged to attend specific classes and work with certain teachers. This is pre-eminent in providing challenging individual goals to improve the core skill of reading proficiency. As lack of skill in this aspect is a major barrier to student learning and a key source of their frustration, teachers do their utmost to assess daily progress in reading levels, using technology to give both themselves and students an immediate update of progress. Students receive regular feedback to enable them to internalize what their next learning goals are and how they can achieve them. Differentiation of instruction in all classes, with teachers having a lucid comprehension of individual education plans, results in their students' positive engagement. Such good practice is seen in a construction technology class, where a great deal of hands-on fabrication of model houses is married successfully with individual programs for all levels of ability to translate plans into actual scale models.

The principal makes regular strategic decisions to change classes and groups where progress is hampered by difficulties in personal relationships, both between students and students and staff. Such is the staff experience that they have a clear understanding that what is best for the student is of paramount importance rather than their own personal feelings. This positivity contributes greatly to teachers' enthusiasm

for instruction. They provide excellent role models for their students who recognize the depth of planning, the variety of teaching and an over-riding desire of their teachers to cater for individual needs. Extension of technology resources, reading materials, opportunities for trips and real life job opportunities result in an evolution of the curriculum to best meet student needs. The pinnacle of the school's direction is increasing reintegration of students, many with very troubled histories, into mainstream education and into the world of work. A very structured and consistent instructional program has led to a significant number succeeding in this aim. The mutual support of all staff in the creation and maintenance of a wholly safe environment, with exemplary cleanliness in the building, a zero tolerance of anti-social behavior matched by an overt system of rewards and praise, gives students a thirst for school. They want to succeed and make the most of the myriad of opportunities their teachers give them a choice to accept. Students who work with great independence at a nearby food distribution center, show great pride in what they have achieved and understand the relevance of such experiences as stepping stones to future careers.

Quality Statement 4 - Align Capacity Building to Goals: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school's goals for accelerating student learning.

This area of the school's work is well developed.

Individualized professional development goals for all staff ensure the faculty succeeds as a learning community. The principal, through her presence and availability within and after the school day, demonstrates her determination that all staff have the tools to address the difficult challenges each individual student presents. New teachers to the school testify to the support given them from allocated school mentors, colleagues and through daily access to the principal and cabinet. Fear of failure is non-existent due to an acceptance by everyone that no one staff member has the answer to the complexity of students' problems. A robust program of class observations, with a specific focus identified beforehand, together with daily walkthroughs by the principal and school leaders, results in an open climate of pedagogical debate. Veteran teachers support their less experienced colleagues and vice-versa. A very well informed inquiry team uses contemporary data to successfully identify target groups for immediate intervention, including students in need of further support for graduation and those students with reading difficulties. Weekly bulletins to the faculty encourage a dialogue that addresses the school's major challenges as do daily discussions of departmental plans, including seeking ways to differentiate learning for all their students.

The principal uses budgets well to develop the talents of teachers with the expectation that better instructional methods will be turn-keyed to colleagues. One fortunate staff member has been successful in his application to join a NASA summer camp, to enable the school to enhance its science curriculum.

External support services work hand in hand with teachers to assure better attendance. Despite great efforts, the school understands there remains a major challenge of improving parental participation to assist students in their progress. Teachers make strenuous efforts to communicate students' successes to parents. The whole faculty already has begun to extend methods of linkage with parents through out of school trips for them, workshops to guide them in assisting their children's progress to work and electronic messaging.

Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for monitoring and evaluating each student's progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.

This area of the school's work is well developed.

Very well embedded systems exist to examine the progress of individual students in all content areas. Foremost among these is the daily scrutiny of student attendance and lateness. The principal ensures students and their families appreciate that non-attendance means no learning progress. All students have measurable interim goals that are assessed and adjusted on a regular basis. Teachers assess students' levels and progress of reading competency and comprehension on a very regular basis. Targets are revised and, where necessary student groupings are changed to place them in a more appropriate setting to overcome such barriers. Teachers in all subjects now ensure greater student comprehension of the vocabulary to be used in specific classes. Differentiated reading material is present in all classes to appeal to the wide variety of ability levels.

Through student government and regular discussions on an informal basis, the principal, cabinet and faculty take note of what is helping and what is hindering students' progress. Modifications are then made both to classes and systems that help the school run so calmly and smoothly. Data showed that certain times of the day and areas within school were "hotspots" for trouble. Supervision for these areas was changed, with a consequent fall in incidents and accidents.

The principal shows great openness to any change that will improve students' lives. All members of staff demonstrate that they must play as a team to ensure the safety of students and continual academic progress. An obvious flexibility to change is evident throughout school, due to the challenges many students present. Frequent assessment of plans and goals results in such alterations. Teachers embrace the use of new technology for themselves and students, as a major tool to assist student progress. Teachers motivate their students to develop routines and structures to make academic progress and improve their life chances. A significant percentage of students is sufficiently motivated by their experiences at school to make a successful move to general education. Many of their peers, in keeping with the school name, develop successful starts to their careers in the world of work.

School Quality Criteria 2008-2009

School name: Brooklyn School for Career Development	△	▶	✓	+
Overall QR Score				X
Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, generate and analyze information on student learning outcomes and use it to understand what each student knows and can do, and to monitor the student’s progress over time.				
<i>To what extent do school leaders and faculty regularly...</i>	△	▶	✓	+
1.1 collect and analyze actionable information, including assessment results and attendance data, to provide a complete view of the learning outcomes and needs of individual students and groupings of students?				X
1.2 focus analysis on the learning outcomes and needs of all sub-groups of students?			X	
1.3 engage in an open exchange of information with students and families about students’ learning needs and outcomes, including assessment results and attendance data?				X
1.4 design or adapt tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize and analyze student performance, identify trends and inform instructional and organizational decisions, and to enable students and their families to assess and track each student’s progress?				X
Overall score for Quality Statement 1				X
Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use data to understand each student’s next learning steps and to set suitably high goals for accelerating each student’s learning.				
<i>To what extent do school leaders and faculty...</i>	△	▶	✓	+
2.1 use collaborative and data-informed processes to set measurable, actionable and differentiated learning goals in core subjects for individual students and groupings of students and develop differentiated plans and timeframes for reaching these goals?				X
2.2 use collaborative and data-informed processes to develop the school’s Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP)?				X
2.3 ensure that the achievement of learning goals, and the implementation of plans and timeframes for reaching these goals, is the central focus of school leaders, faculty, students and families?				X
2.4 communicate high expectations to all students and families, and involve students in developing their learning goals and plans and in taking their next learning steps?				X
Overall score for Quality Statement 2				X

DEFINITIONS

“**Analyze**” or “**analysis**” includes, but is not limited to, comparisons of:

- the current and past outcomes of . . . individual students, administrative groupings and sub-groups of students and the school itself in core subjects;
- the outcomes of different classrooms and sub-groups in the same grades and core subjects; and
- the school’s Progress Report and other outcomes to those of peer/other schools

“**Assessment results**” include student outcomes on summative assessments (e.g., state ELA, math, science and social studies tests, NYSESLAT, Regents Exams, and Performance Based Assessment Tasks) and formative assessments aligned to the school’s curriculum (including Periodic, DYO, and teacher-developed Classroom Assessments).

“**Core subjects**” are ELA, math, science, social studies/history, the arts, foreign language, and physical education/health.

“**Data-informed processes**” include analysis of Progress Report, Quality Review, Learning Environment Survey, Inquiry Team findings, assessment results and attendance data

“**Groupings of students**” include classrooms, grade levels and high school cohorts.

“**Organizational decisions or strategies**” refer to a school’s use of budget and resources, staffing, planning, scheduling, grade structure, departments and teacher teams and other aspects of the school’s structure and organization that can affect student outcomes.

“**Sub-groups of students**” include special education students, English Language Learners, the other NCLB sub-groups, boys, girls, and other groups significant to the school.

Quality Statement 3 – Develop Coherent Instructional and Organizational Strategies: The school uses rigorous curricula, teaching and organizational decision making to engage students and faculty in meeting all students’ learning goals.

To what extent do ...	Δ	➤	✓	+
3.1 school leaders and faculty deliver challenging and engaging curricula in core subjects, including the arts, that are aligned to state standards?				X
3.2 teachers plan and teach lessons that are differentiated to meet the needs of individual students and student groupings and are designed to enable all students to reach their learning goals?				X
3.3 school leaders make strategic organizational decisions to support a coherent and rigorous instructional approach that enables students to reach their learning goals?				X
3.4 school leaders maintain a culture of mutual trust and respect and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?				X
Overall score for Quality Statement 3				X

Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building to Goals: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school’s goals for accelerating student learning.

To what extent do school leaders...	Δ	➤	✓	+
4.1 use their own observation of classroom teaching and the analysis of student outcomes to implement an explicit, differentiated strategy to improve each teacher’s instruction, with a special focus on new teachers?				X
4.2 encourage teachers to take part in Inquiry Teams and other structured professional collaborations (informed by the examination of student work, assessment outcomes and their own peer observations) and share in the instructional leadership of the school with the goal of improved student learning?				X
4.3 provide professional development that encourages teachers to continuously evaluate and revise their classroom practices to improve student outcomes?				X
4.4 utilize youth development, support services and partnerships with families and outside organizations to accelerate the academic and personal growth of students?			X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 4				X

Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for monitoring and evaluating each student’s progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.

To what extent do...	Δ	➤	✓	+
5.1 the school’s plans for improving student outcomes and its strategies for improving each teacher’s instructional practices include measurable interim goals and suitable time frames for evaluating success and making adjustments during the year?				X
5.2 school leaders and faculty use interim checkpoints and data to inform lessons, improve curriculum, differentiate instruction and revise student learning plans throughout the year?				X
5.3 school leaders use data to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of and modify organizational decisions, structured professional collaborations and teacher improvement strategies?				X
5.4 school leaders and the school community have a clear vision for the future development of the school and implement procedures and systems to support academic, personal and professional growth?				X
Overall score for Quality Statement 5				X

Quality Review Scoring Key							
Δ	Underdeveloped	➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features	✓	Proficient	+	Well Developed