



**Department of
Education**

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report 2008-2009

Manhattan High School

Elementary - High School 035

**317 West 52nd Street
New York
NY 10019**

Principal: Marta Barnett

Dates of review: March 6 - 10, 2009

Lead Reviewer: Louise Kapner

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Manhattan High School is a high school with 270 students from kindergarten through grade 12. The school population comprises 51% Black, 42% Hispanic, 4% White and 3% Asian students. The student body includes 10% English language learners and 100% special education students. Boys account for 68% of the students enrolled and girls account for 32%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2007 - 2008 was 63.4%.

The school's annex, located in Bellevue hospital, serves day treatment and inpatient students in kindergarten through grade 12.

Overall Evaluation

This school is well developed.

Manhattan High School provides a comprehensive program, well focused on academics and vocational training, with strong supports for students with severe emotional needs. What might seem a frenetic environment is one that is highly focused on ensuring that each student feels secure and comfortable while fully participating in a structured learning program. The principal and administrators bring strong leadership and a high level of commitment and compassion to their positions. The valued staff members bring potent skills to teaching with deep ability to relate positively to the students. Extensive partnerships provide very effective services to further support improving students' academic achievement while meeting their individual social needs. The school is continually collecting and reviewing a wide range of summative and formative data relative to student performance and attendance. It uses this well in planning suitable programs, making key organizational decisions and setting realistic school-wide and individual student goals. All students actively participate in setting and regularly reviewing their own goals. Those involved in the inquiry teams' work have an opportunity to self-reflect on their achievements as an effective means of helping to plan for their future. While they do not presently implement this school-wide, leaders and teachers recognize its value and plan to explore ways to extend this to more students.

The school ensures the broad standards-based curriculum is accessible for students and teachers engage them in well-suited activities. The extensive range of electives allows students to participate in courses that prepare them suitably for future employment. Classroom instruction focuses sharply on improving achievement, with students accountable for participating in daily instruction and completing at-home assignments. Although teachers display student work, teacher comments are not always evident and grading is not consistent with report card marks. Staff appreciate the opportunity to participate in on-going collaborative planning and welcome the strong support they receive from their colleagues and administrators. They work tirelessly to look at and revise practices yearlong and year-to-year to meet the needs of their diverse student population. To support the move toward aligning instructional practices with the professional standards, leaders introduced a new observation tool. However, it is not yet refined sufficiently to ensure effective monitoring of all the key instructional strategies.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal and staff work very hard and so create a safe, caring environment where all constituents are valued and respected.
- The school collects and uses a wide range of data to understand and address the learning and behavioral needs of individuals and groups of students with a critical eye on student attendance.
- The school has structured the curriculum imaginatively to give students extensive opportunities to participate in all core subjects and wide-ranging electives.
- Highly effective partnerships extend excellent services to support academic and social needs of students.
- The school's use of data is valuable in informing organizational decisions to improve students' social and academic growth.
- The achievement and success of students is a focus of the whole school community who are fully involved in school planning, setting goals and sharing expectations to improve student outcomes.
- The reflective school skillfully revises practices to meet the needs of its students now and in the future.

What the school needs to improve

- Build on the work of the social studies inquiry team to engage additional students in self-reflection activities to focus them on setting future goals.
- Strengthen teachers' responses to student work to include guiding comments and clear level of performance.
- Refine the teachers' observation tool to ensure that it monitors teaching practice effectively with a clear eye on improving student learning.

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 does an excellent job of collecting and analyzing a wide range of formative and summative data across both sites of the school, by individual, subject and for relevant subgroups to assess students' functional levels and examine their progress comprehensively. The school carefully monitors students' pass rates on subject specific Regents competencies and Regents tests. It effectively disaggregates the results to identify students' specific needs and to inform instruction and school planning. Administrators and teachers frequently access ARIS and make very good use of this information to monitor longitudinal data. They use results from Scantron effectively to assess students' needs and to identify each student's "Standard Item Pool" so their performance is measured relative to grade-level expectations. As a result, computer-based instructional tasks are "instantaneously" developed, and differentiated, to match students' functional levels to improve their learning outcomes. The school places a priority on attendance. It is highly focused on putting monitoring and interventions in place to encourage students to attend regularly and arrive on time. By using a daily-computerized scanning system, color-coded arrival sign-in protocol, daily classroom attendance rosters and auto-dialer for outreach to parents, the school quickly identifies and follows-up on non-attendees. Thus far, this school year attendance has increased by 6%.

Leaders and teachers make a concerted effort to involve and inform parents. Students' transcripts, report cards, and teacher-designed recording systems enable all members of the school community to monitor successfully student and cohort progress toward meeting high school graduation requirements. Parents, along with their child, are encouraged to participate in the annual review conference during which the individual education plan is developed. This information, along with "tons" of mailings, frequent phone outreach and formalized weekly advisories for students leads to an open exchange of information relative to student performance. In this way, the school tracks yearlong trends, which it uses successfully to inform school planning.

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.

The school keenly focuses on providing every student suitable opportunities to graduate with a Regents diploma, so regularly reviews student data in all core subjects and attendance. As a result, recognizes the critical needs of its students, and so sets explicit measurable interim and long-term goals towards meeting this objective. The faculty at both sites embraces these goals and meets regularly by subject area and cohort. In this

way, they collaboratively plan and set realistic grade-level, subject and individual student goals. One teacher at Bellevue carefully creates a daily, individualized “success chart” so students monitor progress towards reaching their identified goal. Specialists at both sites work capably with individuals and with groups of students to support improvement. Academic intervention services engage students in skillfully differentiated activities. Because of intense instruction using the *Wilson* program, students show significant improvement in reading levels. During advisory meetings, high school students reflect on their progress towards meeting yearly requirements and credit accumulation for graduation. They develop their own long- and short-term goals in all subjects, behavior and attendance. Students regularly review their work and transcripts to monitor progress. Consequently, they are now taking ownership in setting next steps to improve. The inquiry team’s use of *Wildest Dreams* provides an additional dimension for students to self-reflect and plan for their future while looking at present day obstacles they have to overcome. As a result, students focus on what they need to do to be successful. This tool is valuable and motivational. However, its use is currently limited to inquiry team students. Parents, students and staff engage in setting goals and sharing expectations during the individual education plan conference. This also helps parents learn how to manage their children outside of school. Students see this as a place to “share information” and to gain an understanding of “what to get out of my class.” The school’s Comprehensive Educational Plan rightly focuses on the school’s priorities. The combined efforts of all constituents reflect a coherent and workable school-wide structure for goal setting and monitoring progress continuously.

The school sets high expectations for its students. The principal emphasizes that, “We will do whatever it takes to keep a child in school so he/she can graduate with a high school diploma.” Teachers motivate students to keep on target. However, the school has yet to develop a consistent grading policy to convey clear reasons for achievement and next steps.

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.

The imaginatively structured curriculum makes suits students’ functional needs and motivates them to attend. To address these distinct student needs, teachers work collaboratively to differentiate curriculum maps for subjects, aligned with State standards. They ensure results from formative and summative assessments inform suitable instruction for individuals and groups of students. Teachers provide challenging and interesting lessons, using varied approaches and materials that engage students. The English language arts teacher’s creative use of the Smartboard absorbs students in reading suitably leveled current events articles from the *New York Times*. The speech teacher’s use of visual imagery and manipulatives helps a student with stuttering tendencies to self-correct. Arts programs and electives incorporate students’ interests, learning styles and talents, which motivate students and prepare them for future employment. An auto-parts store recently hired three students part-time from the auto mechanic class. A valuable sports program provides students with useful team activities.

The principal and faculty carefully review data continually to make organizational decisions, ensuring the school meets its goals. Scheduling is very creative. As a result, students programming reflects needs, offering multiple opportunities to pass courses for

graduation and pursue areas of interest. Electives scheduled first period encourage students to attend. Thus far, this school year attendance has improved 6%.

The school strongly fosters a positive culture that meets the demands of a diverse student population. A six “P” (prepared, prompt, purposeful, proficient, patient, polite) mantra posted around the school sets the tone for the respectful environment that encourages academic achievement and appropriate behavior. A “Living for Young Families through Education,” (LYFE) program provides a safe, nurturing environment for children of students. This allows moms to continue with their schooling knowing their own children are well looked after. Administrators deal with students calmly, know each by name, and recognize the individual social/emotional factors that affect student’s performance. Students appreciate greatly that, “People here care.” Parents unanimously affirm that the school attends to their child’s needs.

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.

The principal values the strengths each member brings to the stable staff, forming a collaborative and effective team. Administrators work diligently to build staff capacity, develop leadership skills and support them in inquiry team work to improve learning outcomes. The new observation tool directly links with *The Professional Teaching Standards* to identify successful instructional strategies and help staff plan next steps to improve their practice. However, currently the tool is cumbersome and does not enable effective monitoring of all teaching practices. Administrators frequently visit classes to ensure students are engaged in learning. Staff members meet in each other’s classrooms, view materials and share best practices. Teachers have many opportunities to participate in self-selected and school-planned professional learning activities to enhance their skills with a clear focus on raising student achievement. The school effectively used the dedicated professional development day in November to bring staff together around team building, interpreting data and improving instruction. Last year’s successful inquiry team helped identified students improve an average of two years in math, prompted this year’s expansion to two teams. Teachers welcomed adding a social component to the instructional support as an opportunity to “work to appeal to the social and emotional needs of students while still addressing academic needs.” As result of this tailored instruction, students show increased motivation to complete their work and have a higher level of trust in their teachers.

The comprehensive approach using school-based services and outside collaborations provides suitable social services to students. School-based clinicians and hospital-based staff offer mandated counseling and ongoing support for students and families. As a result of daily follow-up and weekly case conferences at the Bellevue site, the most fragile students receive excellent support, which address their academic and behavioral issues suitably. The transition coordinator plays a key role in developing highly effective partnerships to support academic and social needs of students. This year, using funding from the National Organization for People with Disabilities, he has successfully developed work-site linkages so that 12 students are engaged in part-time work.

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.

Many structures ensure suitable monitoring of student learning, evaluation of practice and revision of plans as needed. The school disaggregates formative and summative tests continually to provide a benchmark of student performance and inform next steps. It successfully uses this data to reflect on expectations of instructional staff to improve student outcomes. Detailed analysis of Scantron means teachers develop short- and long-term learning objectives for each student based upon identified needs and so create highly individualized lessons across all subject areas. A close look at results from the Regents Competencies and Regents exams enables the school to compare performance on each subsection, and accurately indicates areas to emphasize to improve outcomes. The pass rate on these exams continues to improve. The use of the observation tool supports efforts to identifying specific evidence of good teaching practices and impact on student learning. Each week subject area teachers review effective practice and make necessary changes to their work. As a result, student performance shows improvement, using Scantron.

The school makes astute judgments around organizational decisions to ensure it addresses students' needs adequately. The "Step-In" program, now in its second year, offers students with unique educational and emotional needs a high level of support and transitional services in a small setting. Teachers and leaders regularly review student placement, so this year two students have successfully transitioned into the school's mainstream program. Administrators continually evaluate programming for success and implement modifications as necessary. Consequently, they introduced this year's home arts/English language arts class and honors English after looking at student work and asking "How can we do it better?" The revision of students' programs in February to address issues during change of periods pleasingly resulted in less movement and fewer disruptive behaviors. The principal focuses strategically on the school's future and continually reflects on past and present practice to plan, as conveyed successfully in the self-school evaluation. School priorities are clearly set out, routinely monitored and evaluated. As a result, the highly committed and passionate school community identifies successes and works diligently to continue to meet the needs of its diverse population.

School Quality Criteria 2008-2009

School name: Manhattan High School	△	➤	✓	+
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.

<i>To what extent do ...</i>	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.

<i>To what extent do school leaders...</i>	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.

<i>To what extent do...</i>	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