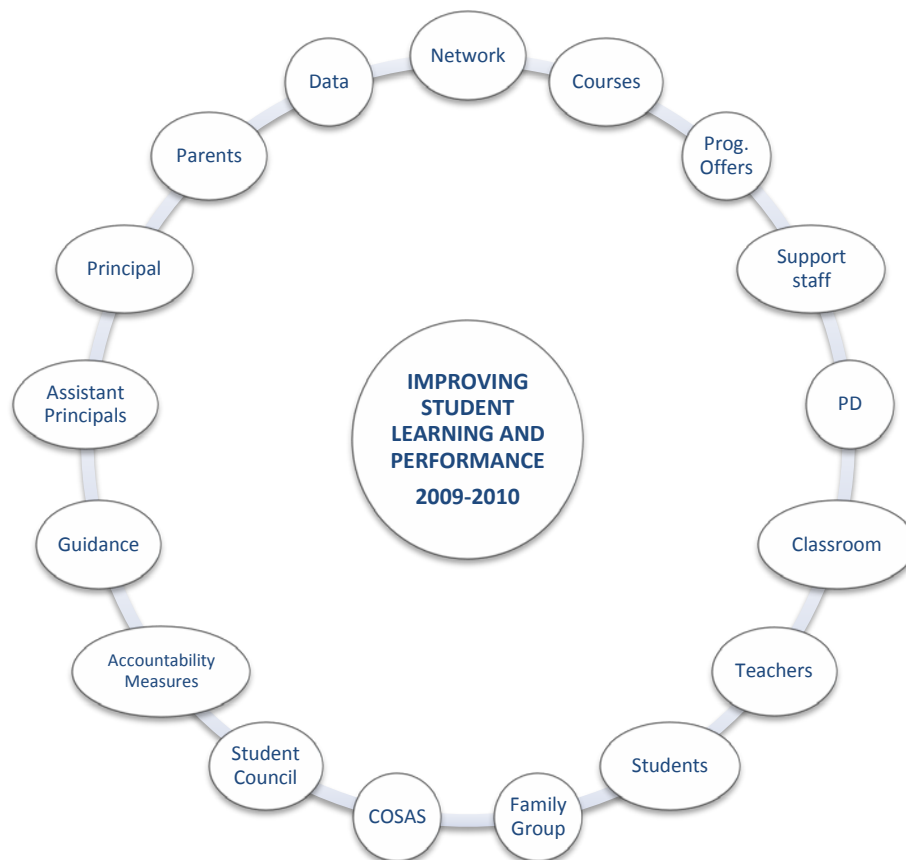

QAHS NEWS BULLETIN

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IMPROVING STUDENTS LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE

As we move forward to help our students improve, it is noteworthy we have a clear understanding of how the work each of us does impacts on students' performance. Our overarching goal this year is: *to improve student learning and performance*. Though easily stated, it will take effort, cooperation, and collaboration on the part of all of our constituencies to create this roadmap. While we do the important work that is ahead of us, it is critical to regularly revisit our mission: *to provide a respectful, nurturing environment of high learning expectations where students, parents and the academic community assume collective responsibility for all outcomes*. Let us keep our mission and vision in the forefront of the work we do with our students. The diagram below shows all of the facets that have an impact in improving students learning and performance in our school. This list is by no means inclusive of all of the things that are done to increase student learning and performance.



TEACHERS - student goals, grading policy, active engagement of students, print rich classroom, standards, specific written feedback using rubrics, , conferencing, involving students in choice learning, rubrics, high quality student work which demonstrates high student expectations, lesson planning, teacher assessment, alignment to standards, Regents, pre and post assessments, student data, conferencing, differentiation, move student learning, guided practice, professional growth (goals), portfolios, attendance, selecting books, selecting projects, homework assignments, learning stations, syllabus, progress forms, manipulatives, hands-on activities, goals based on previous observations.

CLASSROOM - learning environment that is print rich with models of high quality student work, rubrics, portfolios, student contract, students are actively engaged in the learning process and take responsibility for their learning, lessons are standards based, accountable talk, HOT, DI-product → process, interesting lessons which are relevant to students' lives, students assignments are challenging and struggling students are supported, peers work together to accomplish meaningful learning.

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STUDENTS – goal setting by looking at their data, personal responsibility, attendance, school spirit, school preparedness-parent/student calendar, participates in portfolio conferences, actively engaged in their learning, HOT questioning techniques, knows what is needed to graduate from high school, completes assignments, attends AIS services when scheduled, meets with guidance or teachers to keep abreast of their goals.

GUIDANCE — supports student, parents teachers, case conferencing, attendance, parent outreach, action plans for struggling students, AIS, monitoring report cards, transcripts, intake, credit review, mediation, college and career information, student recruitment, teaching students organization skills, study skills, ARIS.

COSAS - works with students to bring extracurricular activities to the school, takes students on trips, facilitates school spirit, arranges and supports prom, senior trip, works with students to enhance school life through student government.

STUDENT COUNCIL - forum for students to voice their ideas, opinions, and solutions to issues as well as take an active role in school life; students take on school and community issues to become active beyond the walls of the school building, community service.

FAMILY GROUP - forum for students to make a personal connection with an adult who can be a “go to” person for them; a place to discuss topics of personal interest that affect every day life, learn from peers how to handle situations, community service learning.

PROGRAMMING OFFERINGS – provide students with choices beyond the academic area, offerings should be of student interests, provide enjoyment, teach a skill for future growth and learning, after school activities – College Now, art, accelerated classes, SAT Prep, on-line courses are ideal to help students work at their own pace, Early Childhood Service Learning, outside partnerships.

COURSES - provide students with required courses to graduate from high school, LSS offers AIS services to students, PLATO provides credit acceleration, College Now offers college or high school credit, PM school classes provides additional opportunity to earn credit, Regents prep courses support students’ learning to prepare for state exams, double block math and Read 180 courses for struggling readers, Rosetta Stone for foreign language

PARENTS-provides materials for students to learn, questions students and school about school life, maintains an open line of communication with school such as: attendance at meetings, reads materials sent home, student handbook, students progress reports, newsletters, notices, participates in QR, supports school initiatives.

PRINCIPAL - establishes high standards and expectations for students and staff, manages human and fiscal resources to support student achievement, oversees staff development, evaluation of staff, curriculum, uses data and accountability measures to improve student achievement, communicates with parents, other community members the importance of student learning, works with network to provide support to increase student performance

ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS – work with the principal to support and uphold the mission and vision of the school, works with teachers to improve student achievement through lesson planning, curriculum development, professional development, observations; reviews and uses data (attendance, assessment, scholarship reports, classroom examinations, students’ grades, state exams, graduation) and accountability measures to promote student performance, supervises all members of the school community to ensure continuity, consistency and accuracy of information, policies and procedures.

NETWORK – provides professional development for principal and assistant principal, organizes principals meetings, intervisitations, meets with principal to provide support in attaining school goals.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT - mentoring, intervisitations, individualized improvement plans, Learningwalks, videotaping lessons, curriculum planning, pacing calendars, lesson planning, classroom management,, physical environment of classroom, using portfolios, differentiated instruction, best practices, formative and summative assessments, reading and writing across disciplines, using data to increase student achievement, demonstration lessons, reading materials, informal and formal observations, workshops, consistent policies and procedures for fundamental matters, webinars.

SUPPORT STAFF – make s connections with students, make calls home, maintain student records, provide instructional support to teachers, works with students outside classroom setting (office aides) to teach life skills, provide support for extracurricular activities – attendance at prom, trips, after school activities

ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES - ARIS, QR, Progress Report, nyStart, ATS, HSST, BEDS, BESIS, Annual School Report Card, Periodic Assessments, Learning Environment Survey, Regents data.

DATA - grades, grading policy, Acuity, Performance Series, ARIS, observations, cohorts, item analysis, student work, surveys, scholarship reports, Regents, exams, sub-group data, accountability measures, formative and summative data.

LAP (Language Allocation Policy) Team

On September 16th, the LAP team met for the first time this year. Sandra, Thomas, Daniel, Justo, Renee (Special Services Manager from our Network) and Bill met to discuss the needs of our English Language Learners. Daniel and Justo helped us understand the committee's work last year. He described how teachers and students were surveyed. That work helped us to understand that students did not always feel supported in their classes. To address students' concerns, the committee had recommended a few strategies, such as using more visuals and holding frequent individual conferences with students. Teachers surveyed indicated that they wanted more professional development geared towards the needs of their ELL populations. Renee discussed professional development opportunities with the committee, highly recommending QTEL training. The committee agreed that teachers should be informed about their ELL students and that classrooms should have resources, such as bilingual dictionaries, to support their instruction. We then discussed the enrollment process, and the challenges of meeting the needs of beginner ELLs. We reviewed briefly testing accommodations normally given to ELL students, and Thomas asked the other teachers if they assess their ELL students any differently than they do their general education students. Dan pointed out that he provides accommodations within reason. The challenge of supporting SIFE (Student with Interrupted Formal Education) students and the question of the distribution of IEPs to teachers was raised. Before adjourning the meeting, we planned for the next one. It was agreed by all that we need to begin with a clear grasp of the data. We agreed to bring the following data to our next meeting: a list of all ELL students, their NYSESLAT scores and levels of proficiency, their Regents exam histories and levels proficiency, their attendance rates, and their transcripts and other important information.

The Assessment Team

Anthony Balone, Jeremy Borenstein, Amy Dayao, Angeleke Lymberatos, Bill Manolios, Derek Phillips, and Beverly Short

On Monday, September 21st, the Assessment Team met. In attendance were Anthony, Jeremy, Amy, Angeleke, Beverly and Bill. At the first meeting, the team agreed to focus on the improvement of the diagnostic assessments given to newly admitted students. We agreed that a reading diagnostic should be included in the assessment process, and Beverly asked if the performance series, which would

provide us with students' reading decile levels, would not be a good choice. Anthony and Bill agreed to research the claim and get back to the assessment team. The team devised a plan for achieving its main goal:

- Create a writing rubric to assess students' writing
- Improve writing assessment by adding a synthesis essay with multiple choice questions to test both writing and reading comprehension
- Contact Scantron to determine if we are able to connect the Scantron machine to a computer to download data into an Excel file
- Create a cover sheet containing a checklist for recording student performance levels on writing, reading comprehension and math assessments
- Improve relevance of math assessment by grouping questions according to areas or sub-skills and using these groups to conduct an item analysis by individual student and by entire groups of students

The faculty of School Leadership Team

Frank De Angeles, Ruth Bryan, Angeleke Lymberatos, and Beverly Short - Derek Phillips will join this team

We discussed the following at our meeting:

- **RECRUITMENT** for leadership team
 - **COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION PLAN** – team members worked on various parts of the plan
 - **CREDIT RECOVERY** – how can we make implement this program year round?
 - **QUALITY REVIEW** – team reviewed handout that will be used for class visitation with focus on accountability
 - Teachers will receive handout of class visitation tool with focus on accountability
 - We joined the Parents Association and discussed further consolidated meetings were proposed and agreed on
 - **PEP RALLY** – an opportunity for both campuses to come together to select a mascot for our school, there will be a DJ, music, and food.
 - **ONGOING FUNDRAISERS** – parents are interested in ideas to help raise funds for the school
 - **C-30 INTERVIEWS** – a brief overview of the C-30 process was explained
- QUESTIONS, ANSWERS, AND SUGGESTIONS**

SIDEBAR

FACULTY MEETING TODAY IN FLUSHING

Good News Phone Calls

We have been posting students' names on the bulletin board who have received a good news phone call. Every teacher should be able to recognize students in their classes who deserve a call. If you have not been able to identify any students, please see me so I can help you. We have some ideas on expanding this incentive program and will share more information with you next week. Thank you.

HIV Lesson 1 is scheduled for Monday October 5th during period 2. Please make sure you complete the certification form after completing the lesson. We need this document for accountability purposes.

Periodic Assessments are scheduled for Tuesday and Wednesday, October 6th and 7th in English and Math. You will receive schedules on Monday afternoon and your materials on Tuesday morning.

Inquiry Team Meetings will begin on Thursday, October 8th. Pooran, Justo, Dan, Barbara, Juan, Jen, Derek, Bill, and Beverly will be members of this team. We will keep you posted of our activities via this news bulletin.

Learningwalk – we will be making our rounds this week to see what students are learning.

School Leadership Meetings dates have been changed to coincide with Parent Association Meetings. We will now meet on the third Wednesday of the month. These are open meetings, anyone can attend.

October 10th - Notebook Check

At this point all students must be prepared for school. If you have already spoken to the student and contacted parents, and the student is still not prepared for school, please submit those names to Derek and Bill.

Free access to resources at Ancestry.com

The DOE is offering middle and high schools free access to the resources at Ancestry.com via the Ancestryinstitution.com Web site. These resources include a wide variety of primary documents—including narratives, oral histories, and archival images—to incorporate into a social studies program. Access is available in schools only (not at home) via www.ancestryinstitution.com. Please note that access to message boards will be read only, and users will not be able to post any information onto the site.

Please don't forget to check the postings in the main office.

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS, AND SUGGESTIONS

- **Do we have a committee to set the school's tone?**

We do not have a committee to set the school's tone. Each of us has a set of school policies and procedures which we must follow. Teachers should have received the school policies and procedures to share with students in their classes. Likewise, all students who come through orientation receive the school policies and they are responsible for following these rules. If for some reason, you do not have these regulations, please speak with your Assistant Principal and we will make sure you receive them. In addition, our staff handbook, which contains a number of Chancellor's Regulations has valuable information which you should follow. Moreover, students will be receiving the Discipline Code which we are required to review with students.

While it is critical to have a set of rules and regulations available, it is more important that we follow these rules consistently. Consistency is usually where the breakdown occurs. Each of us can contribute positively to the tone of the school by making sure we enforce the rules of the school. If for some reason you are having difficulty, please seek out a colleague or your supervisor for assistance. If each campus would like to have school tone committee, I encourage you to take on the leadership role and start this committee to ensure that we are all on the same page.

- **How will the school approach the no cell phone issue?**

Most students comply with the rules and keep their electronics out of sight during the day. When students haven't complied, electronics have been confiscated (as per Chancellor's Regulations) and parents have been asked to come to the school to retrieve these items. We will certainly continue doing this to decrease use in the building. It is also critical for each and every staff member to address this issue should they see a student using an electronic device. More importantly, there can be no exceptions in any classroom as this impacts your colleagues who are following the rules.

- **Why are some treated differently?**

Perhaps the question should be are all people treated fairly? We all have rules and regulations with which we must comply. That is the nature of living in a civil society. While we follow procedures, we also try to look at people as individuals and treat them as such. This may mean making an exception for an individual because they have a personal issue or they have asked for consideration in a matter. We follow rules and regulations, but we will treat our staff and students in a respectful manner which means taking into consideration extenuating circumstances and making modifications to help them whenever possible.