

Back on
Track



JOBS FOR THE FUTURE

BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL POSTSECONDARY PREPARATORY PROGRAM AT A BACK ON TRACK SCHOOL

A JOBS FOR THE FUTURE CASE STUDY

BY SAM SEIDEL

JULY 2013



JOBS FOR THE FUTURE

Jobs for the Future works with our partners to design and drive the adoption of education and career pathways leading from college readiness to career advancement for those struggling to succeed in today's economy.

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Jobs for the Future's **Back on Track Through College Designs** represent the next generation of schools, programs, and pathways that reengage youth and young adults who are off track to graduation or disconnected from school and work. The three-phase Back on Track model—Enriched Preparation, Postsecondary Bridging, and First-year Support—puts youth and young adults on a path to achieving their postsecondary and career aspirations. The Back on Track model is one of JFF's Early College Designs, which blend high school and college in a rigorous and supportive program.

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INTRODUCTION

Lainey Collins and Winston McCarthy, leaders of the North Queens Community High School (North Queens), sat together at a small round table in McCarthy's office, discussing their plans for the coming year. It was August of 2008 and their school was entering its second year of operation.

Then, as now, North Queens served approximately 200 students, who were 16-20 years old, as they strived to reach their personal and academic goals. All students at North Queens have previously been enrolled in high school elsewhere and are over-age and undercredited. Small class sizes, student-centered support, and an accelerated credit acquisition program help North Queens' students get back on track toward earning a high school diploma. North Queens was started in partnership between the New York City Department of Education and SCO Family of Services, a child and family services agency offering programs at over 100 sites across New York City. Through "Learning to Work," an initiative of the NYC Department of Education Office of Postsecondary Readiness, many transfer schools benefit from this type of partnership, which couples a Department of Education faculty committed to working with over-age and undercredited students with staff members from a community-based organization to provide the blend of academic and social/emotional supports needed by many students who have struggled in traditional schools.

McCarthy serves as school principal and Collins as program director responsible for youth development and the provision of social supports to students. The two leaders share leadership and collaborate closely in all the critical areas of program development and decision-making. This collaboration has been evident as they worked together to build a college going culture at North Queens over the last four years.

As they sat and talked about the semester ahead, Collins and McCarthy reflected on the end of the school's first year of operation. The year had begun with so much to figure out. In a period of ten months, they had seen students with major obstacles make their way to graduation. Collins and McCarthy were proud to have handed Regents diplomas to 18 students. But this achievement had raised a haunting question for the school's two leaders: What had happened to those 18 students who graduated the first year? Their graduation was a wonderful achievement for them and all of the staff, but where had they gone once they left North Queens Community High School?

Collins and McCarthy left the meeting determined to find the answer to this question. As they learned more, they grew concerned for their former students. They didn't find any that were enrolled in college. Some had jobs, others were struggling to find opportunities as a result of being undocumented citizens, and one was pregnant. What would these students' futures hold? The school had helped them earn their high school diplomas, but perhaps that was not enough.

The staff at North Queens had recently reviewed students' transcripts and identified 60 likely graduates for the coming year. Determined not to send graduates into the world unprepared, Collins and McCarthy realized there were two fundamental questions they had to answer: "Where do we think our students should go after high school? And what will it take to prepare them?"

YEAR ONE

TAKING ACTION

The first thing Collins and McCarthy did to shift North Queens from a school focused on high school graduation to a school focused on postsecondary success was to create a dedicated staff position for a College and Careers Specialist. They moved a member of their staff, Joyce Basbas, to this position. There was initially a grant that helped support this new position, but eventually it required the school to shift its budget. Other staff members had to share more work in order to make this position possible in perpetuity.

See **Tool One: College Specialist Job Description**.

As the College and Career Counselor, Basbas was responsible to work with all the students who were on track for graduation within the year. Her job was to make sure that each and every one of them had a postsecondary plan that aligned with their career goals. Her first step was to enroll all of these students in a class focused on career exploration and postsecondary planning. The class met three times each week and the curriculum consisted of career exploration, looking at prospective schools, filling out applications, crafting resumes, going on college visits, and other aspects related to preparing students for postsecondary educational opportunities. Basbas' goal was that all students would apply to CUNY prior to their high school graduation. The school identified resources to pay application fees, which helped ease the application process for students. Basbas convinced the students who did not want to go directly to college to apply, so that they could have the option open later, in case they wanted it. In addition to working intensively with students who were approaching graduation, Basbas developed a one-page questionnaire about future goals that all students who entered the school were required to fill out. Along with the work of the College and Career Specialist, all the Advocate Counselors¹ began to incorporate focused conversations about career

interests and postsecondary plans with the students on their caseload.

See **Tool Two: College & Career Student Profile** for an example of the one-page questionnaire that all incoming students at North Queens complete.

Good Shepherd Services introduced Collins and McCarthy to the At Home In College (AHIC)² program at the City University of New York (CUNY). Through AHIC, North Queens was able to offer an English course specifically designed to prepare students for CUNY's placement test, to help students place out of remedial noncredit-bearing college courses. AHIC also helped North Queens launch a College Going Culture Committee, which met with a facilitator 10-12 times during the year. The committee, which included Basbas, a guidance counselor, and a social studies teacher, started with an assessment of the school's college preparation practices. Based on the results of the assessment, the committee developed the following goals for the year:

1. Implement more activities for potential graduates
2. Increase the extent to which all adults in the building interact with students about college
3. Increase the visibility of college in the building (i.e. banners, view books, recruiter visits)

The initial actions taken by Collins, McCarthy, and their staff had exciting results: 100 percent of the Spring 2009 graduates visited colleges before graduation and, even more impressively, 100 percent were accepted to college for the following year.

As Collins and McCarthy sat together at the end of the year, they celebrated these successes, but they continued to ask themselves tough questions: Were their graduates actually going to the colleges to which they were accepted? And if so, how did they fare?

YEAR TWO

EMBEDDING POSTSECONDARY PREPARATION THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

In the fall of 2009, the College Going Culture Committee facilitated an interactive meeting for their colleagues at North Queens. This was the first time many staff members heard in detail about the work of the committee. The meeting focused on how the school's graduates were doing in the CUNY system. As an example, the Borough of Manhattan Community College had an 18 percent graduation rate. It seemed North Queens graduates were following this trend. They were getting in, but most weren't matriculating, or were quickly leaving. This meeting got staff engaged and many took action. Some teachers started talking about college frequently in their classes and day-to-day interactions with students. The staff started "t-shirt days," on which they would all wear shirts from their alma maters.

The College and Career Counselor worked with colleagues to continue to develop the one page questionnaire she had created for incoming students into a more robust intake process. They added questions like "After you graduate from high school, what would you like to do?" and "If you are interested in going to college, which are you considering?" The discussion at the initial home visit served as the beginning of ongoing conversations that Advocate Counselors would have with students on their caseload throughout their time at North Queens.

When students visited the school and met with one of the co-leaders or the assistant principal, the administrators began telling students and their families that all North Queens students were expected to apply to college and have a plan for after high school. Many students responded by saying that no one ever asked them about their postsecondary plans. In many cases

they would be the first in their family to graduate from high school, so just putting college on their radar was an important step. Parents always seemed enthusiastic when the possibility of college was introduced.

The College Going Culture Committee developed a graduation plan template, which the advocate counselor completed with every incoming student. The template included everything the student would need to do to get their high school diploma. This plan—and the act of filling it out—served to raise students' awareness of their own academic trajectory and immediate next steps.

See **Tool Three: *Graduation Plan*** for the most recent version of North Queens' Graduation Plan.

The College Going Culture Committee also developed a yearly calendar that listed important activities that staff needed to carry out each month in order to keep all potential graduates on track for graduation, college application, and enrollment. The committee generated a separate "College/Career Planning Tool" for all potential graduates to follow, which requires students to complete mycareerzone—an interest inventory to identify potential areas of career interest—and then identify possible postsecondary training opportunities that lead to that career field.

See **Tool Four: *Potential Graduates Calendar*** and **Tool Five: *College/Career Planning Tool*** for the most recent versions of these tools.

YEAR THREE

ENGAGING EVERYONE & PILOTING OUTCOMES-BASED GRADING

Collins and McCarthy were pleased with the data they were seeing from their graduates. In the fall of 2010, they saw a 25 percent drop in the number of their graduates who needed math remediation upon entering CUNY. The results for writing were similar at 24 percent. Not only were students doing better on the CUNY tests, more students than ever before were passing the Math Regents test on their first try. Collins and McCarthy were also hearing more stories of alumni matriculating and persisting in community college. They were confident that these positive changes were direct results of the AHIC English course and the College Going Culture Committee's work changing the school's culture and practices to explicitly emphasize postsecondary planning.

Despite a decline in funding for the AHIC program, Collins and McCarthy were determined to expand the reach of its success. Although there was no longer room in the budget for a facilitator of the College Going Culture Committee, the committee continued. There were only resources from CUNY for 25 North Queens students to officially participate in the AHIC program, but CUNY was willing to let the school use the curriculum from their English courses. Rather than being restrictive about who could take AHIC courses, which is how some other high schools approached this opportunity, Collins and McCarthy made these courses the desired culmination of their English course progression for all students at North Queens. In practice, the only differences between students in the AHIC program and others was that CUNY waived application fees for students who were officially in AHIC, and gave them the opportunity to take specially scheduled placement exams earlier in the school year—this gave AHIC students who could not pass the exams a clear indication of where they needed to improve so

that they would be able to pass when they retook the exams later in the year.

The College Going Culture Committee understood that if they were committed to getting all students prepared for postsecondary success, they needed to have everyone in the school community onboard. The first step was to make sure that all students knew their own status. By fully rolling out the graduation plans that had been created the previous year and checking in regularly with students about their progress on their plans, counselors were able to ensure that all students knew exactly what was left for them to complete in order to graduate. The committee also made sure to let all faculty and staff members at the school know which students were on track to graduate. The entire staff of the school was encouraged to talk regularly with students about their post-graduation plans. Finally, parents were brought into the loop. The College and Career Specialist sent a letter home to families of all potential graduates at the beginning of the year. The letter informed families that their student was on track to graduate and initiated a dialogue with the family about postsecondary options and preparation.

See Tool Six: [Letter to Parents for the most recent version of North Queens' beginning of year letter to parents of potential graduates.](#)

The dialogue with families about postsecondary plans continued through periodic evening sessions run by the College and Career Specialist. In addition to providing essential information to families about the college and financial application processes, the meetings were intended to get families excited about the possibilities for their students' futures. To ensure that all families—regardless of internet access—were able to participate in the college selection process, at one of the college nights the school gave every family a thick guidebook of colleges to take home and peruse together.

While the College Going Culture Committee was busy scaling up the successes from the previous years and the College and Career Specialist was working closely with students and increasing family engagement, Collins and McCarthy began talking with each other about making some changes to the school's grading policy. The co-leaders felt that the traditional numerical grading system that their teachers used was not the most effective in preparing students for college level work. There were three particular challenges they saw with the traditional system they had in place:

1. Grades were more reflective of students' content knowledge than whether they had developed skills.
2. Grades were not given specifically enough to allow for nuanced conversations between students, teachers, and counselors about midcourse corrections that should be made by students.
3. There tended to be a "drop off" for students who realized partway through the semester that they would not get a high enough number grade to pass. This set students who were already behind even further back.

McCarthy proposed an alternative model for assessing students' work: Outcomes-Based Grading. This approach would forego the single numeric grade that each student received for each course they were enrolled in and instead replace it with a multi-level rating system, which would be applied to students' mastery of specific competencies within any given subject area.

See **Tool Seven: Outcomes-Based Grading Outline** for an explanation of the six levels of mastery.

Outcomes-Based Grading would provide frequent opportunities for students to receive targeted assessments of their progress. For every task within a course, there would be between two and four outcomes on which they would be evaluated. This created many more specific opportunities for teachers, counselors, and other staff members to discuss students' performance with them.

The four teachers on the Instructional Leadership Team at North Queens launched a pilot of Outcomes-Based Grading on certain assignments in their classes. Newer students liked the system and the frequent feedback it provided. Students who had been at the school for two or more years had some challenges making the shift.

They found that they no longer simply had to worry about handing in enough assignments or recounting the main points of a text to get a passing grade. They now had to demonstrate their ability to use higher order thinking skills to perform tasks like, "Uncover an author's bias." Outcomes-Based Grading demanded that students develop—and show—abilities to think critically and create original material. Through conversations in advisories and individual interactions, staff supported students in adjusting to these changes and emphasized the importance of this shift in preparing students for their futures.

YEAR FOUR

INTRODUCING NEW COURSES & INCREASING STUDENT LEADERSHIP

In August of 2011, North Queens' staff went on an overnight retreat. During the retreat, the Instructional Leadership Team introduced their work on Outcomes-Based Grading to the rest of the faculty. Then, in department teams, the teachers developed desired outcomes for each of their courses. Each course adopted seven competency-based outcomes and the entire faculty agreed on three school-wide outcomes that would be assessed in every class: Writing to Persuade, Reading for Information, and Decision-Making that Leads to Successful Learning. Throughout the year, the faculty implemented this Outcomes-Based Grading system in all courses.

For an in-depth report on the implementation and results of Outcomes-Based Grading at North Queens, see **Tool Eight: Outcomes-Based Grading at North Queens Community High School End-of-Year Report** prepared in July of 2012 by Eskolta, LLC.

In addition to shifting to Outcomes-Based Grading, the staff added an AHIC class as the culmination to their course progression in math. They also added two new classes designed to better prepare students for postsecondary options. The first was a "Gateway course," in which all students were required to enroll during their first semester at North Queens. This course was designed to introduce students to the college going culture of the North Queens school community and teach terminology like "syllabus," "rubric," and "outcomes," as well as vocabulary that students find on the English Regents test. The Gateway course was also designed to assess students' skill levels, and the staff found that it was more accurate than relying on credits earned prior to attending North Queens to place students in subsequent classes. The course intentionally built in some early opportunities for success for

students. Given that North Queens had become much more rigorous than many of the schools that students were coming from, it was important to make sure students didn't get discouraged by failures in the first few weeks.

The other new course that was introduced in the fall of 2011 was designed to come later in students' tenure at North Queens. This class was intended to serve as a pilot bridge to postsecondary experiences. It was an ELA class that was designed as part of CUNY's College Now program.³ CUNY provided funding to hire an instructor for the class, which was helpful, but the staff at North Queens was disappointed that the program did not actually get students onto community college campuses. Only about a third of the students completed the course—some had schedule conflicts, some lost interest once they had finished all their high school requirements—but those who finished the course gave it very positive feedback. All students who completed the course received three college credits.

In partnership with a nonprofit organization, College Access: Research and Action (CARA)⁴, through an initiative coordinated and funded by Learning to Work, North Queens added a youth leadership component to their postsecondary preparation programming. CARA offers training directly to student leaders and provides coaching to school staff on how to integrate the student leaders into the school's existing work to create a college going culture. North Queens initially sent three students to the CARA training, conducted in partnership with Goddard Riverside's Options Institute.⁵ Two students completed the training and upon returning to North Queens they set up a "college corner," led visits to college campuses for their peers, and helped their peers apply to and prepare for college. Their work as peer counselors served as these students' "internship placements" under the Learning to Work initiative.

The following summer, North Queens received funding from the NYC DOE Office of Postsecondary Readiness to hire an alumna from two years earlier, and another youth leader who had just graduated and started at Hunter College, to take on a caseload of graduates. The two alums reached out to recent graduates through cell phone, email, and Facebook, and began to help those who were attending college navigate their new campuses and do everything necessary to stay on track through their first semester.

LOOKING FORWARD

In the fall of 2012 Collins and McCarthy once again found themselves sitting around the small round table in McCarthy's office discussing their progress and challenges. They had started to hear reports from their alumni staff members about how their graduates were doing. Some were in community college, some were working, and some were not yet doing either. Some of the students who had made it through their first year in college had switched into four-year schools.

More students from North Queens were going to CUNY, and the data the school had collected from CUNY was encouraging. The number of students requiring remedial courses upon arrival at CUNY was declining each year.

See **Tool Nine: CUNY Postsecondary Data Snapshot** for data on North Queens' students' need for remediation by subject.

Collins and McCarthy were pleased with the progress the North Queens community had made in the four years since they initiated a school-wide focus on postsecondary success. At the same time, there was still a lot of work to do. As they discussed the year ahead, the school's co-leaders identified a range of improvements they hoped to tackle, including:

- 1. Creating "legacy projects" that each student would be required to complete before graduation.** This would become a culminating ritual for students and a way for them to leave a piece of themselves at the school.
- 2. Expanding staff and student knowledge of career options.** While the school had made strides in college preparation, Collins and McCarthy were concerned that their staff had not been paying enough attention to what students "best bets" were when it came to the local labor market. Organizing a career fair could help introduce students to potential fields of work and specific employers. Collaborating with another high school in close geographic proximity could make organizing such an event easier.

- 3. Continuing to improve the implementation of Outcomes-Based Grading.** While Collins and McCarthy were pleased with the progress the school's staff had made with Outcomes-Based Grading, they wanted to continue to align the outcome levels across teachers.

- 4. Increasing college visits.** Students seemed to gain a lot from visiting campuses. Organizing more college visits would boost students' motivation to apply to and attend college, and help them make good decisions about which schools to attend. To the extent possible, they wanted to begin to differentiate between introductory college visits for students in their first year at North Queens and more focused visits for students closer to graduation who were thinking more specifically about where to apply.

- 5. Developing programming for students "in the middle."** North Queens' staff members had developed strong interventions in their intake processes to induct students and families into the college going culture of the school, and they had made strides in building ramps to postsecondary education for students as they approached graduation. However, for students who were at North Queens for two years or more, there was still a period of time in between their initial enrollment and their approach to graduation during which they were not engaged in much postsecondary preparation. Collins and McCarthy felt it would be ideal to develop more programming for students in the middle of their time at North Queens.

There was still much to do to ensure that all of their future students graduated prepared for success. Nevertheless, after four years of consistent work, North Queens was well on its way to creating a successful postsecondary preparation program.

DESIGN ELEMENTS

THE ABCDE'S OF BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL POSTSECONDARY PREPARATORY PROGRAM AT A BACK ON TRACK SCHOOL

The following five design elements are derived from the case study of North Queens Community High School. While the case study tells the story of how the school's postsecondary preparation program developed over the past four years, these elements distill several essential aspects of the school's postsecondary preparation program. The case study is in many ways particular to the time and place at which the leaders of North Queens Community High School found themselves as they initiated the creation of their postsecondary preparation program. The design elements are intended to be more universal, able to be applied to a range of schools and in a variety of contexts.

Assessing Success: There is no way to understand whether current programming is effective and what changes may need to be made without tracking all graduates after graduation. High schools can partner with community colleges to obtain data and keep up with students through phone calls, emails, surveys, and social media. Hiring recent graduates to spearhead these initiatives can be an effective—and affordable—approach.

Broad-Based Integration: Creating a successful postsecondary preparation program requires integration across all elements of programming at a school. Academic courses must be geared toward preparing students for college level work; counseling must help students address the social and emotional challenges they need to overcome to be prepared for the lifestyle of a college student; dedicated sessions on how to apply to college and for financial aid must be offered—whether during an advisory period, the school day, or after school hours.

Cultural Shift: Before arriving at Back on Track schools, students have often been told explicitly and implicitly that they will not attend college or have successful careers. In order to get on track for postsecondary success, they must believe that success is part of their future—and this requires a shift in the culture of many schools. All staff at these schools must be given the opportunity to examine their own assumptions and values regarding what is possible for the future of the students with whom they are working. The leaders of schools working to build a college going culture must work with their staffs to address the ambivalence some may have about what is truly possible for their students and to build genuine buy in amongst staff about their students' ability to succeed in college. Once all staff believe that students can and will succeed after high school, they must find as many ways as possible to visibly demonstrate this belief. From decorating classrooms with college paraphernalia to regularly asking students about their postsecondary plans to engaging parents in conversations about what to expect when their children go to college, all school staff can play a role in creating a school culture with an explicit focus on students' futures.

Dedicated Personnel: While everyone in the school community must be involved in order for postsecondary preparation to be successful, there also needs to be dedicated staff at the school, who can drive the development and implementation of programming. This person—or team—can conduct research on best practices, forge partnerships with colleges and employers, and coordinate the planning of events and activities related to postsecondary preparation. They should be trained in postsecondary counseling and have accurate, up-to-date knowledge about financial aid, college entrance requirements, and strategies for making successful college matches.

Evolving Programming: The postsecondary education landscape is continually changing, the labor market is constantly shifting, and every student's needs are different; this means that a postsecondary preparation program that was successful one year with one cohort of students may not be successful the next. Schools committed to preparing their students for success beyond high school must be flexible and open to ongoing development of their postsecondary preparation programs.

TOOLS

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TOOL 1

COLLEGE SPECIALIST JOB DESCRIPTION



Extraordinary reach.
Unconditional care.
Life-changing results.

JOB TITLE: College and Career Specialist

DEPARTMENT: Transfer Schools

LOCATION: North Queens Community High School

Exempt Non-Exempt

DESCRIPTION: North Queens Community High School (NQCHS) is a community transfer school serving over-age and undercredited youth. It is operated through a partnership between SCO Family of Services and the NYC Department of Education. NQCHS focuses on providing students, ages 16-20, who have become excessively truant or have dropped out of high school, the opportunity to re-engage in school and graduate with a high school diploma. Each student is supported in this process by an Advocate Counselor who works with students to create a plan for graduation as well as for postsecondary opportunities. Small classes and student-centered instruction creates an individualized learning environment for each student.

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION: The College and Career Specialist works in conjunction with SCO and DOE staff at NQCHS to develop and implement successful college and career access strategies and services for students and develop a culture that embraces college as a viable option after high school. This is accomplished through individual and group college readiness activities, parent outreach activities, and the development of partnerships with colleges and universities.

REPORTS TO: Director of NQCHS

SUPERVISES: n/a

I. SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

- > Collaborate with school staff to offer college readiness activities and groups to students at NQCHS to create a culture of college readiness at the school
- > Participate in regular staff meetings and develop partnerships with key staff in the school who work on college and career readiness
- > Develop activities that encourage the exploration of college as a postsecondary option and provide assistance to students with college choices, exploration, and the completion of college applications
- > Plan and implement parent workshops on financial aid and college choice to engage parents in college as a viable option for students

- > Regularly update student contact information and maintain a social networking site for alumni to track and maintain data on post secondary education and employment for graduates after they leave NQCHS
- > Work with Advocate Counselors to ensure that each graduate of NQCHS has a clear and attainable post-graduation plan
- > Partner with local CUNY colleges and have knowledge of how students can apply to FAFSA, SEEK, EOP, HEOP, and College Discovery
- > Plan college trips at local, upstate, and out of state colleges and chaperone students on trips

II. QUALIFICATIONS

- > Bachelor’s degree in related field. Master’s degree preferred in related field.
- > Prior experience working with adolescents required.
- > Prior workshop/seminar development and implementation experience, preferably centered on college and career counseling
- > Driver’s license required

III. RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS

In addition, employees need to possess the following characteristics:

- > Be team players.
- > Have a strong sensitivity to cultural differences present among staff and clients within our organization.
- > Possess a strong belief in people’s ability to grow and change; forge a mutually respectful partnership with persons served and their families.
- > Ability to set limits and maintain helping role of practitioner and to intervene appropriately.

Employee’s Signature _____ Date _____

Print Name _____

Prepared by:	Name	Job Title	Date Prepared
APPROVALS	Name	Job Title	Date
	Name	Job Title	Date
FOR HUMAN RESOURCES ONLY	Name	Job Title	Date
Date(s) Revised			

TOOL 2
COLLEGE AND CAREER STUDENT PROFILE



North Queens Community High School

Name: _____ Date: _____

Advocate Counselor: _____

Current Number of Credits: _____

Expected Graduation Date: _____

Email Address: _____

PLEASE CHECK THE BOX THAT CORRESPONDS TO YOUR ANSWER:

When are you planning to start college? January 2013 Summer 2013 Fall 2013

Are you a U.S. Citizen (*This is confidential and is needed to determine if you qualify for financial aid*)?

Yes No Unsure Undocumented

Have you taken the SATs or ACTs at NQCHS or your previous school? (*SAT/ACT are required if you plan on applying to any 4-year college/universities*) Yes - Date: _____ No Unsure

What is the highest level of education your parents completed?

Mother

Father

Master's Degree

Master's Degree

Bachelor's Degree

Bachelor's Degree

Associate's Degree

Associate's Degree

High School Diploma

High School Diploma

GED

GED

Middle School

Middle School

Unknown

Unknown

List all possible majors that interest you: (what you plan to study in college)

List at least 3 colleges you plan on attending (*Note: Even if you go to a community college, what schools are you considering to transfer to*). If you plan on enrolling in a certificate program, please list the schools.

What are your future plans?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding college, please write it below:

TOOL 3
GRADUATION PLAN



North Queens Community High School

Students Last, First Name: _____ Today's Date: _____

Cohort: _____ Anticipated Graduation Date: _____

2005 pass 2 out of 5 2006 pass 3 out of 5 2007 pass 4 out of 5 2008 pass all Regents with 65

<p>REGENTS SCHEDULE:</p> <p>January 2012: _____</p> <p>June 2012: _____</p>	<p>NOTE: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Advocate Counselor: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p>	<p>Guidance Counselor: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p>
<p>Program Facilitator: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p>	<p>Assistant Principal: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p>

Transcript that was reviewed must be attached to this Prospective Graduation Programming Plan.

Date of printed transcript: _____				Total amount of credit on transcript: _____		
CREDITS EARNED AND NEEDED TO GRADUATE						
English (8)	History (8)	Math (6)	Science (6+1)	For. Lang. (2)	Phy Ed (8)	Elect. (7)
<input type="checkbox"/> English 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Global 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Algebra 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Liv Env A	<input type="checkbox"/> Language 1	<input type="checkbox"/> PE 1-4.06	<input type="checkbox"/> 1___/ <input type="checkbox"/> ___
<input type="checkbox"/> English 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Global 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Algebra 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Liv Env B	<input type="checkbox"/> Language 2	<input type="checkbox"/> PE 2-3.48	<input type="checkbox"/> 2___/ <input type="checkbox"/> ___
<input type="checkbox"/> English 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Global 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Algebra 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Liv Lab C		<input type="checkbox"/> PE 3-2.90	<input type="checkbox"/> 3___/ <input type="checkbox"/> ___
<input type="checkbox"/> English 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Global 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Geometry 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Earth Sci A	Fine Arts (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> PE 4-2.32	<input type="checkbox"/> 4___/ <input type="checkbox"/> ___
<input type="checkbox"/> English 5	<input type="checkbox"/> US His 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Geometry 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Earth Sci B		<input type="checkbox"/> PE 5-1.74	<input type="checkbox"/> 5___/ <input type="checkbox"/> ___
<input type="checkbox"/> English 6	<input type="checkbox"/> US His 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Geometry 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Earth C	<input type="checkbox"/> Music/Art	<input type="checkbox"/> PE 6-1.16	<input type="checkbox"/> 6___/ <input type="checkbox"/> ___
<input type="checkbox"/> English 7	<input type="checkbox"/> Part. In Gov		<input type="checkbox"/> Other Sci 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Music/Art	<input type="checkbox"/> PE 7-.58	<input type="checkbox"/> 7___/ <input type="checkbox"/> ___
<input type="checkbox"/> English 8	<input type="checkbox"/> Economics		<input type="checkbox"/> Other Sci 2		<input type="checkbox"/> Health	
CREDITS NEEDED -----	CREDITS NEEDED -----	CREDITS NEEDED -----	CREDITS NEEDED ----- + LAB _____	CREDITS NEEDED L _____ A _____	CREDITS NEEDED PE _____ H _____	CREDITS NEEDED -----
Regents				RCTs		TOTAL NUMBER OF CREDITS NEEDED TO GRADUATE: _____ + LABS: _____ TOTAL CREDITS NEEDED: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Liv Env. _____		<input type="checkbox"/> *Geometry _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Writing		
<input type="checkbox"/> Algebra _____		<input type="checkbox"/> *Earth Sci _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Reading		
<input type="checkbox"/> Global _____		<input type="checkbox"/> *Language _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Math		
<input type="checkbox"/> US History _____				<input type="checkbox"/> Global		
<input type="checkbox"/> English _____				<input type="checkbox"/> US History		
				<input type="checkbox"/> Science		

PROGRAMMING MAP FOR PROSPECTIVE GRADUATES

Students Last, First Name: _____ Today's Date: _____

Cohort: _____ Anticipated Graduation Date: _____

CYCLE ONE	CREDIT
1)	
2)	
3)	
4)	
5a 1/2 Credit) Advisory	
5b 1/2 Credit)	
6)	
Exd)	

Note: _____

CYCLE TWO	CREDIT
1)	
2)	
3)	
4)	
5a 1/2 Credit) Advisory	
5b 1/2 Credit)	
6)	
Exd)	

Note: _____

CYCLE THREE	CREDIT
1)	
2)	
3)	
4)	
5a 1/2 Credit) Advisory	
5b 1/2 Credit)	
6)	
Exd)	

Note: _____

Advocate Counselor's signature: _____ Date: _____

Student's signature: _____ Date: _____

TOOL 4
POTENTIAL GRADUATES CALENDAR



North Queens Community High School

AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	JANUARY	FEBURAY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
<p>Compile a list of graduates, and what Regents they require</p> <p>Plan PD for Advocate-Counselors on CUNY applications</p> <p>Make a college trip calendar for the year</p> <p>Review and modify/publish guidelines: re: credit recovery</p> <p>Letters to parents of potential graduates</p>	<p>Review of transcripts</p> <p>Pullout during student orientation-check list, etc.</p> <p>Review graduation plans</p> <p>Individual meetings with students around college</p> <p>College trips</p> <p>Share prospective grad list with entire school staff</p> <p>Activity for prospective grads (Adventure Course)</p> <p>Potential grads dinner with parents</p> <p>ONGOING-AC's review benchmark data</p>	<p>Senior Meeting</p> <p>Review of transcripts</p> <p>Transcripts are printed out after all corrections are made</p> <p>CUNY worksheets completed</p> <p>Parent workshop- Choosing a College</p> <p>PSAT for all students</p> <p>College Trips</p> <p>Review 2nd benchmark data</p>	<p>Parent workshop</p> <p>College Trips</p> <p>Review 4th benchmark data</p>	<p>Early-Senior social activity</p> <p>Senior meeting</p>	<p>Review 2nd benchmark data.</p> <p>Parent event/dinner</p>	<p>Review of transcripts</p> <p>College trips</p> <p>Review 4th benchmark data</p> <p>Parent workshop on . . .</p> <p>College fair</p> <p>Senior meeting</p>	<p>College trips</p> <p>Parent workshop - Financial Aid</p> <p>Mid-Late March-Senior social event</p>	<p>Review 2nd benchmark data</p> <p>Senior meeting</p> <p>CUNY mock placement test</p>	<p>Review 4th benchmark data</p>	<p>Final transcript review</p> <p>Awards dinner</p>

TOOL 5
COLLEGE/CAREERS PLANNING TOOL

BASIC INFORMATION:

Student Name:	Advisor/Counselor:
Current Number of Credits:	Expected Date of Graduation:
Student's Email Address:	OSIS #:

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Parent/Guardian Name:	Current Occupation:	Highest Level of Education:
Parent/Guardian Name:	Current Occupation:	Highest Level of Education:
Any family members that have attended college:		

INTEREST AND SKILLS EXPLORATION:

<input type="checkbox"/> Completed a Skills/Interests Inventory

Short Term Postsecondary Training/ Educational Goal(s):	Action Plan:
Long Term Postsecondary Training/ Educational Goal(s):	Action Plan:

COLLEGE SUPPORT NETWORK:

<input type="checkbox"/> I have identified the following people within my college support network who promote the goals within this plan		
Name:	Relationship:	Contact Info:
Name:	Relationship:	Contact Info:
Name:	Relationship:	Contact Info:

What are your strengths as a student?
What are your weaknesses as a student?

SELF-DISCOVERY:

QUALITY	BELOW AVERAGE	AVERAGE	GOOD	EXCELLENT	EXCEPTIONAL
Academic Motivation					
Academic Achievement					
Extracurricular Involvement					
Commitment to Service					
Leadership Ability					
Ability to interact with different groups					
Respect given to me by my teachers					
Respect given to me by my peers					

COLLEGE DISCOVERY: RESEARCH

<p>Type of College:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private</p> <p>-----</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Urban <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban <input type="checkbox"/> Rural</p>	<p>Type of Degree:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Certificate (Vocational/Trade)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Associate's Degree (AA)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's Degree (BA/BS)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Master's Degree (MA/MS)</p>
<p>Living Arrangements:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Live on Campus</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Commute</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Stay Close to Home</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Move Away</p>	<p>Size:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Small (<2,000)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Midsize (2,000-15,000)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Large (>15,000)</p>
<p>Any Special Interests:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Single Sex</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic Serving Institutes (HSI)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCU)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Religious-affiliated</p>	<p>Have you identified a specific major or course of study?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Specify: _____</p>

College Exploration Activities:		<input type="checkbox"/> Attended College Fairs	<input type="checkbox"/> Attended College Tours/Visits
Visited/met with the following schools:	Interested in visiting/meeting with:		
_____	_____		
_____	_____		
_____	_____		
Final College List:		Requested Info packet/application:	
Top 3 School Choices - <i>Realistic</i> :			
_____			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
_____			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
_____			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Top 3 School Choices - <i>"Dream/Reach"</i> Schools:			
_____			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
_____			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
_____			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Top 3 School Choices - <i>"Safety"</i> Schools:			
_____			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
_____			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
_____			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes

STANDARDIZED TESTING:

<input type="checkbox"/> PSAT Date: _____ Scores: Math _____ Verbal _____ Writing _____	<input type="checkbox"/> SAT Date: _____ Scores: Math _____ Verbal _____ Writing _____
<input type="checkbox"/> ACT Date: _____ Scores: Math _____ Verbal _____ Writing _____	

APPLICATIONS:

Personal Statement/Essay: <input type="checkbox"/> Explored topics with Advisor/Counselor <input type="checkbox"/> First Draft on file <input type="checkbox"/> Final Draft reviewed by Advisor/Counselor	Recommendations: <input type="checkbox"/> Identified teachers/counselors to request from _____ _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Recommendations completed and received
<input type="checkbox"/> Application Submitted School: _____ Date Sent: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Application Submitted School: _____ Date Sent: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Application Submitted School: _____ Date Sent: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Application Submitted School: _____ Date Sent: _____

FINANCIAL AID:

- Created Professional Email Address - _____
- Requested PIN for FASFA Completion - PIN# _____
- Completed FASFA (www.fasda.ed.gov - after January 1 of year of matriculation) Date: _____
- Completed TAP (for attendance at NYC colleges only) Date: _____

Applied for HEOP, EOP, SEEK or College Discovery Programs at the following schools:

ACCEPTANCES:

Accepted to: _____ _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Sent reply to college <input type="checkbox"/> Sent deposit to college
Attending: _____	Matriculation Date: _____

I, _____, a student of _____ am committed to exploring, applying and following through with my goal to attend a college/university/postsecondary training. I will seek out guidance from my college support network and fulfill all responsibilities outlined in this plan. I believe postsecondary education and training is possible for me and I am committed to developing a sounds plan for reaching this goal.

Student's Signature

Date

Advisor/Counselor's Signature

Date

TOOL 6

LETTER TO PARENTS

September 7, 2011

Dear Parents:

I am writing to introduce myself as the new College and Career Specialist at North Queens Community High School. I have been at North Queens since it opened in 2007, as an Advocate Counselor and have recently moved into this new position as of August.

I will be working with your son/daughter this year to apply to college and develop a post-graduation plan. I look forward to working with students to help them build the best possible college and career plans.

In addition to providing at-risk youth with a second chance to earn a high school diploma, we seek to prepare them for college and/or careers. We place an intense focus on goal setting—both long and short term—so that students learn to recognize their innate talents and abilities and take responsibility for their own success. Each student that graduates from our school does so with a viable post-graduation plan for the future.

During this upcoming school year, I will be conducting college visits, taking students to college fairs, and facilitating college readiness workshops in order to expose your student to the world of college. I will also be providing a series of parent workshops that focus on choosing the right college and financial aid. I hope that many of you will attend.

I am looking forward to getting to know your children and working directly with them to facilitate their exploration, discovery, and learning about college. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

College and Career Specialist

TOOL 7

OUTCOMES-BASED GRADING OUTLINE

Mastery Level: You are using the text provided as a starting point to create something much larger in thought. You are using the four previous levels to create some kind of evaluation of facts, ideas, principles, etc., while using your own ideas.

Proficient Level: You are using your own ideas to analyze the situation(s), idea(s), etc. Your thoughts are used to compare and contrast different sides of the material.

Capable Level: You are using mostly your own words and showing that you are thinking about the answer/question. You are using the information you've read to apply the material to a situation or idea outside of the text.

Developing Level: You are taking specific information from the text and restating it in your own words. Your work shows some thought but is still mostly based on the specific answer from the text.

Emerging Level: You are copying work from the text as an answer. You are not showing any thought, you are showing that you were able to copy from the text. Your information is correct, but does not show any thought.

Insufficient Level: You have not provided enough evidence for the teacher to make a determination about where you stand in the class.

To get to the higher levels, keep asking yourself "Why?" "How?"

Outcomes-Based Grading at North Queens Community High School **End-of-Year Report**

Prepared by Eskolta, LLC
July 12, 2012

During the 2011-12 school year, NQCHS put into place a new system of grading based on students' demonstration of mastery on competency-based outcomes. The following report includes analysis of how the new system has impacted credit accumulation, pass rates, and Regents results at NQCHS; how it has affected specific groups based on IEP status, attendance bracket, gender, and year in school; and which teachers have had more or less success in moving students towards mastery on school-wide outcomes. The report also includes reflection from teachers, ACs, and students on lessons learned as well as strategies for implementation.

Highlights from the Data:

- Students earned 2.8 credits on average in T3 of this year, up from 2.5 in the same term last year and up from 2.3 in T2.
- In T3 of this year, 17% of students earned 6 or more credits towards graduation.
- NQCHS grades in T3 were a very strong predictor of how students did on the June Regents in each subject, and particularly in ELA and Science.
- About a third of students (31%) made gains of at least one letter-grade on the school-wide outcome Reading for Information from T2 to T3.
- Nearly half (45%) of students in Keith Walter's class in T3 scored at least one letter-grade higher on Writing to Persuade than their average score across all classes in T2.

Outcomes-Based Grading at NQCHS

NQCHS is a NYC transfer school, serving approximately 180 over-age and under-credited students who have struggled with traditional schooling in the past. NQCHS undertook the transition to Outcomes-Based Grading in order to raise the rigor of teaching and learning in the school; to further develop students' higher-order and critical thinking skills; to deepen the conversations students have with adults around learning; and to better prepare students for post-secondary success.

Competency-Based Outcomes. After designing and piloting the OBG system with a small group of teachers in 2010-11, NQCHS rolled it out to the full staff in August of 2011. In department teams, staff developed 10 competency-based outcomes per class, such as *Proving Historical Positions with Evidence* or *Uncovering an Author's Bias*. Some subjects chose department-wide outcomes, while others chose outcomes unique to each class. The school settled on 3 school-wide outcomes to be assessed in every class: *Writing to Persuade*, *Reading for Information*, and *Decision Making that Leads to Successful Learning*.

Bloom's-Aligned Grading Policy. NQCHS designed a grading policy for assessing student mastery of outcomes that was aligned to Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning. A grade of "Developing" aligns to the Understand level of Bloom's, while "Capable" refers to students' ability to Apply what they've learned. "Proficient" is given to students who demonstrate the ability to Analyze, and "Advanced" or "Mastery" align to the Creative level. In order to receive credit for a class, students must demonstrate on at least 3 occasions that they are "Capable" or better on 7 or more of the 10 outcomes.

Outcomes-Level Assessment. Each task or activity a student performs is aligned to approximately 2 to 4 outcomes. Rather than receiving an overall grade for an assignment, students receive grades for each outcome. Teachers and Advocate Counselors therefore ideally have the opportunity to discuss performance with students at a more nuanced level than in the past, one that is focused on competencies and specific skills rather than numbers.

The following pages show how students performed at NQCHS under the Outcomes-Based Grading system this year, as compared to the traditional system of grading last year. Findings include:

- Credit Accumulation, Course Passage, and Regents Results (Overall and By Group)
- Change in School-wide Outcomes (Overall and By Teacher)
- Reflections from Students, Teachers, and ACs

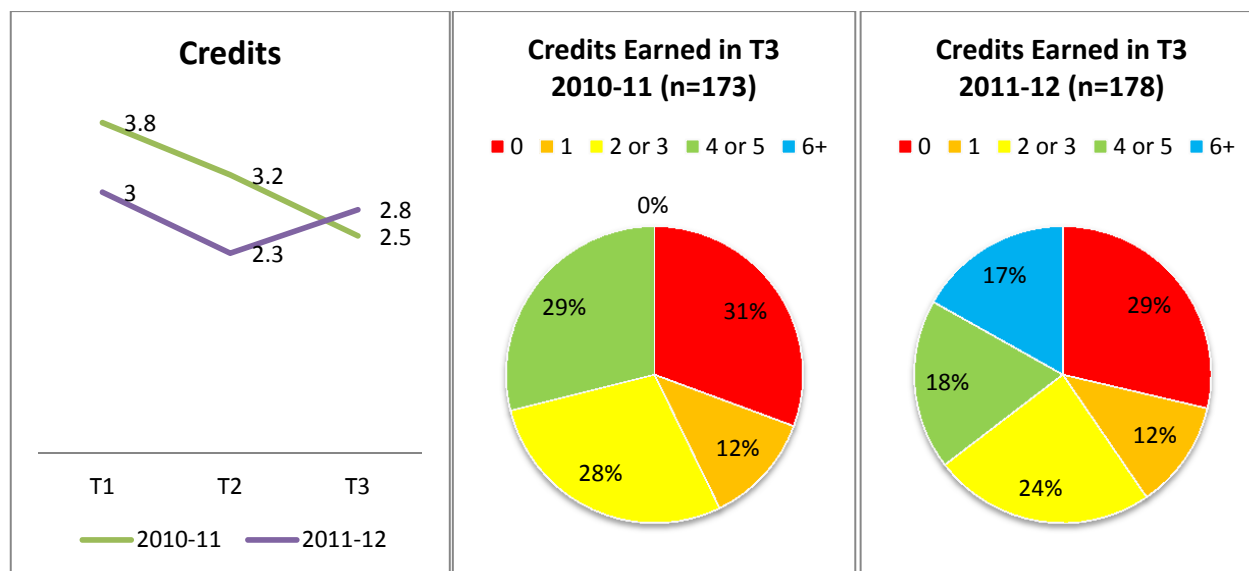
Nearly all of the data to follow derive from the PowerSchool database, with the exception of Regents exam scores, which came from DOE sources.

Overall Findings

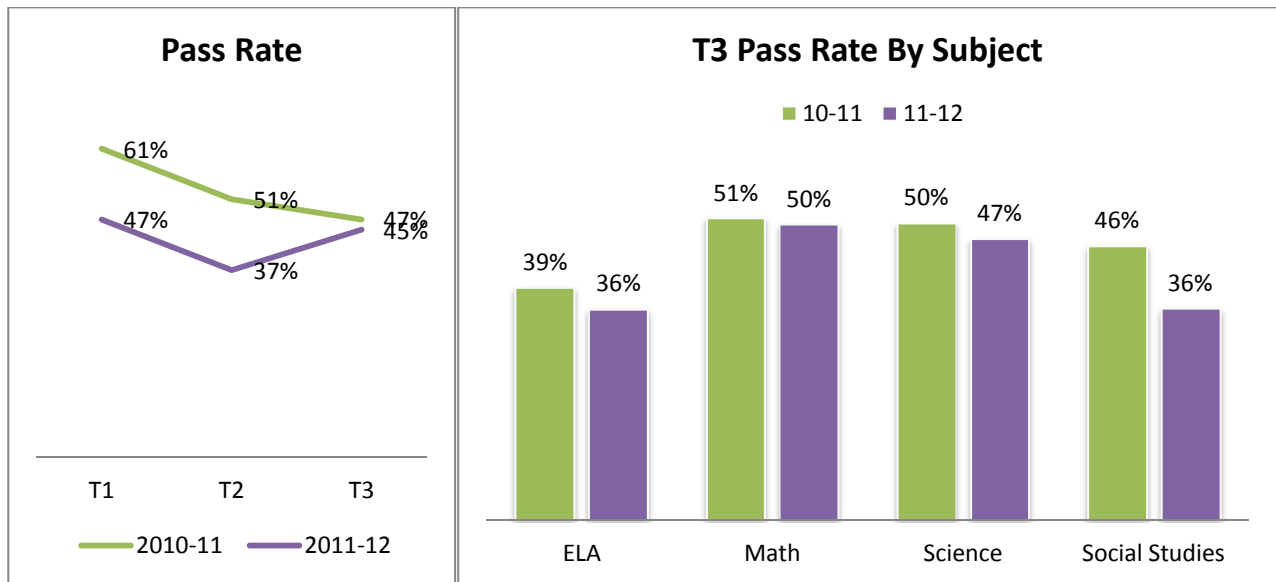
While, in the first two terms, credit accumulation and pass rates were distinctly lower this year than the same terms last year, this trend appears to have corrected itself in Term 3 with increases in both credit accumulation and pass rates. Regents remained about the same, if not slightly lower than in the previous year.

	2010-11			2011-12		
	Credits	Pass Rate	Regents	Credits	Pass Rate	Regents
T1	3.8	61%		3.0	47%	
T2	3.2	51%	61	2.3	37%	61
T3	2.5	47%	66	2.8	45%	63

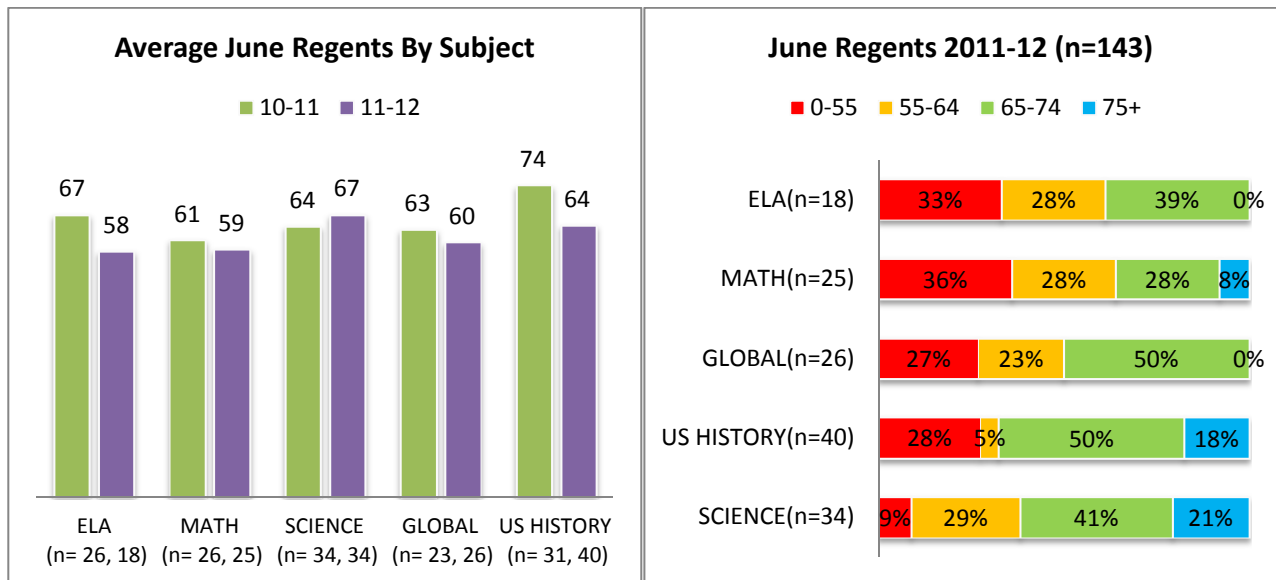
Credit Accumulation. Students earned 2.8 credits on average in T3 of this year, up from 2.5 in the same term last year and up from 2.3 in T2. The pie charts below show the percentage of students who fell into different credit-earning brackets. In T3 of this year, 17% of students earned 6 or more credits towards graduation.



Course Passage. The average student passed 45% of the credits they attempted in T3 of this year, up from 37% in T2 and about the same as pass rates for T3 last year. The column chart below shows department level pass rates in T3 of this year and last. In Math, 50% of students passed in T3, about the same as last year, while in Science 36% passed, down 10 percentage points from last year.



Regents Results. Students scored an average of 63 across all Regents exams for which they sat in June of this year, compared to 66 last year. The chart on the left below shows an average score of 67 in Science this year, up from 64 last year. The chart on the right shows what percentage of students fell into different grade ranges. Notice that 62% of the 34 students who sat for a Science exam passed, with 21% scoring 75 or better.



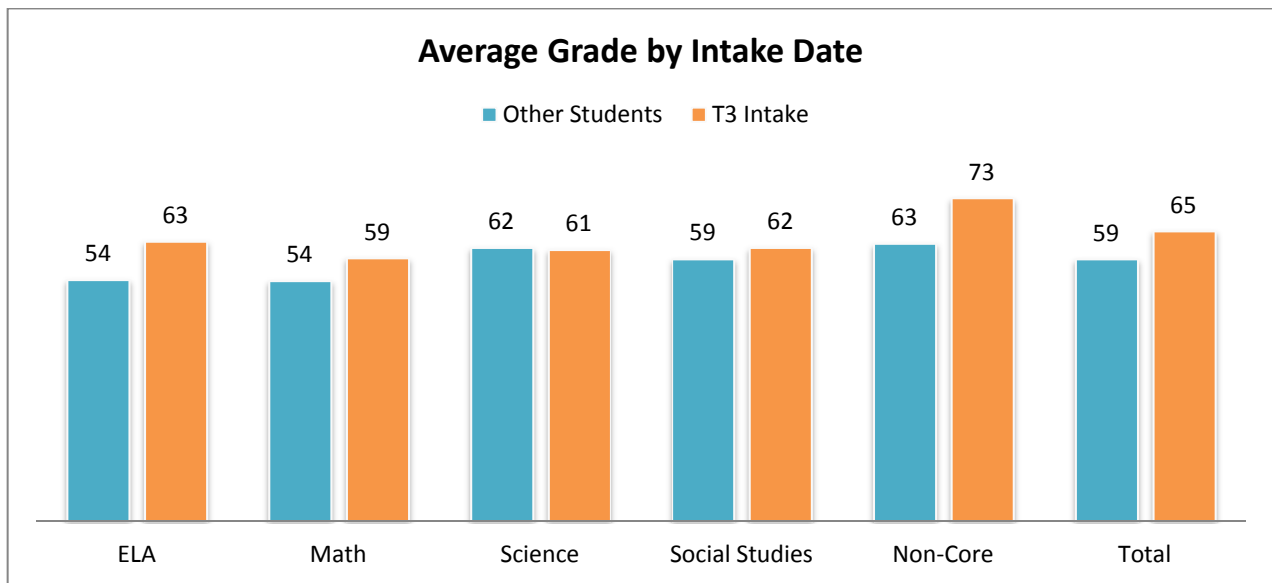
Correlation Between NQCHS Grade and Regents Score. This year, there was a very strong correlation (0.85) between T3 grades in ELA and June scores on the ELA Regents exam. Correlations between T3 grades and related Regents scores were also strong in Science (0.73), Math (0.57), and Social Studies (0.52). This means that NQCHS grades in T3 were a very strong predictor of how students did on the June Regents in each subject, and particularly in ELA and Science. Last year, T3 grades were only a weak predictor of June Regents scores.

Findings by Group

Gender. There was no significant difference between male and female student performance on T3 grades this year or last year. Male students did significantly better than females on the Math Regents this year, but there was no difference in other subjects.

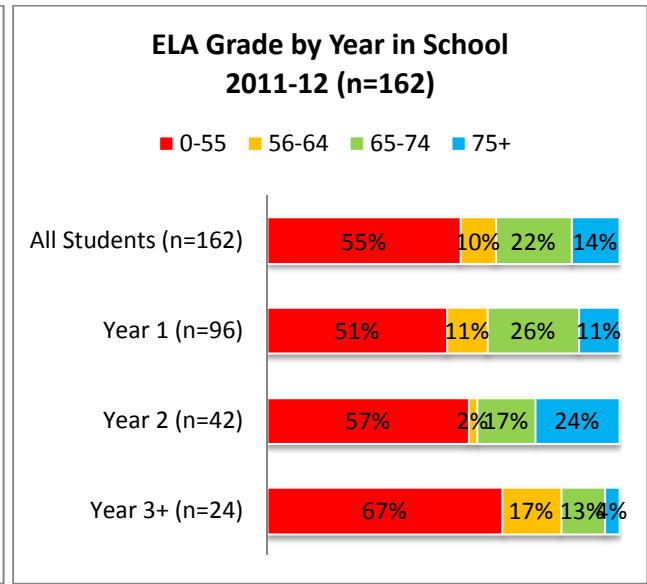
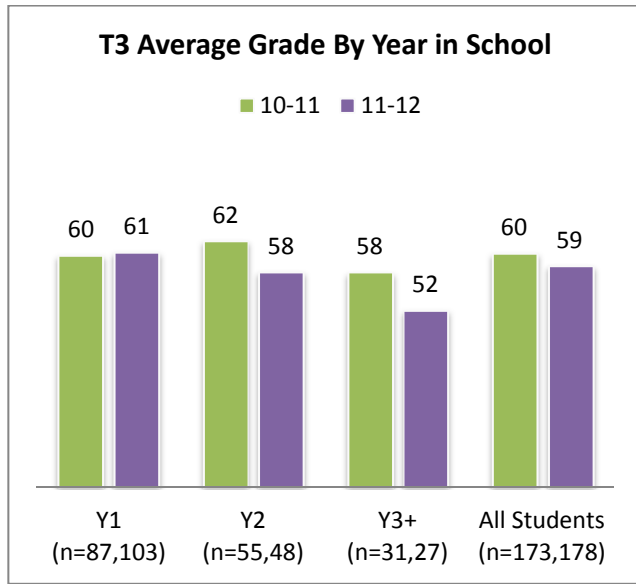
IEP status. On average, no significant difference in course grades or Regents scores based on IEP status, this year or last. The one exception is in Science, where students without IEPs were slightly more likely to perform better in their coursework, both this year and last year.

T3 Intake. Students who entered NQCHS in March of this year were moderately more likely to perform well in their T3 coursework, though there was no significant difference on Regents exams. The chart below shows the average grade in each subject. Notice that students who were part of this year's T3 intake performed better on average in ELA, Math, Social Studies, and Non-Core courses.

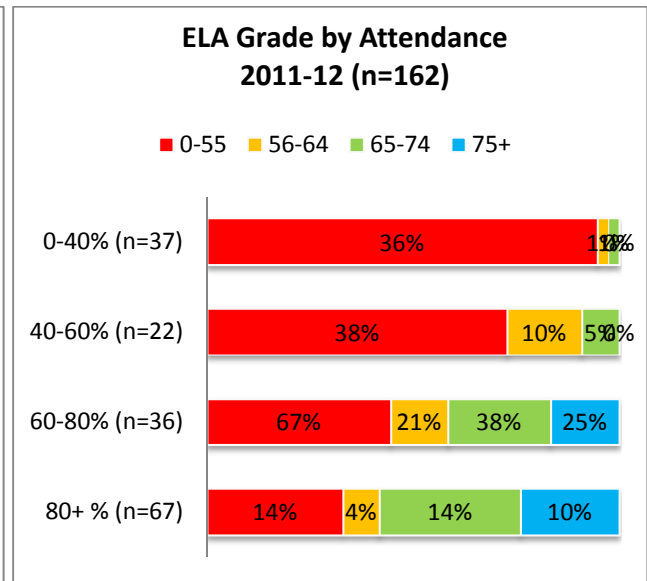
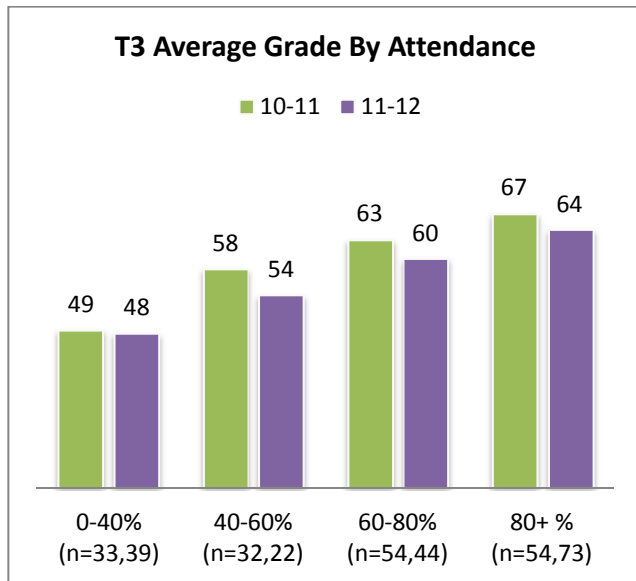


Year in School. There was a moderate negative correlation (-0.29) between a student's year in school and their average T3 grade across all courses at NQCHS, and specifically in ELA and Science. This means that students who have been at NQCHS for a shorter time were more likely to perform better in their coursework this year. Last year, this was true only in Math.

NQCHS: Outcomes-Based Grading End-of-Year Report



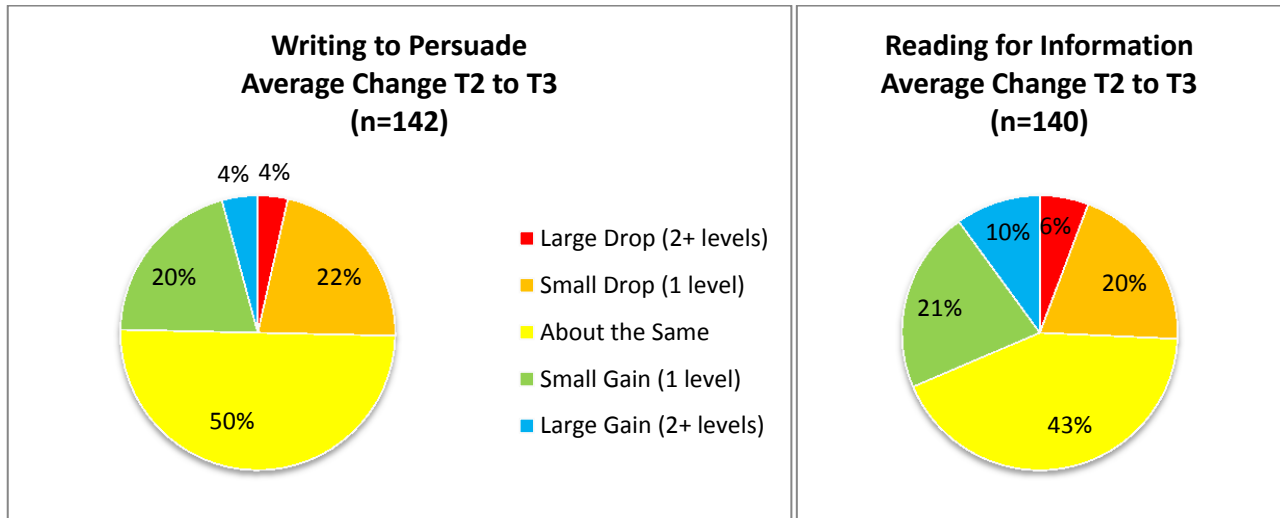
Attendance in T3. There was a strong positive correlation between student attendance in T3 of this year, and their average T3 grade at NQCHS (correlation of 0.51), suggesting that students who attended more frequently were highly likely to perform better in school. Last year, the relationship was also strong (0.59). Interestingly, the relationship between attendance and Regents performance was significant only in ELA and Science.



-

Two of the three school-wide outcomes, Writing to Persuade and Reading for Information, were assessed in all three terms, offering the opportunity to track student growth on those outcomes. The charts below show the percentage of students making growth between Term 2 and Term 3. Note that Term 1 is not used as a starting point, since the grading policy was still being normed at that time. One level of growth is considered as a gain in one letter-grade of the grading policy, for example moving from a C to a P.

Overall, there was an even spread: some students made gains, others did not, with the largest group maintaining their grade from one term to the next. About a third of students (31%) made gains of at least one letter-grade in Reading for Information.

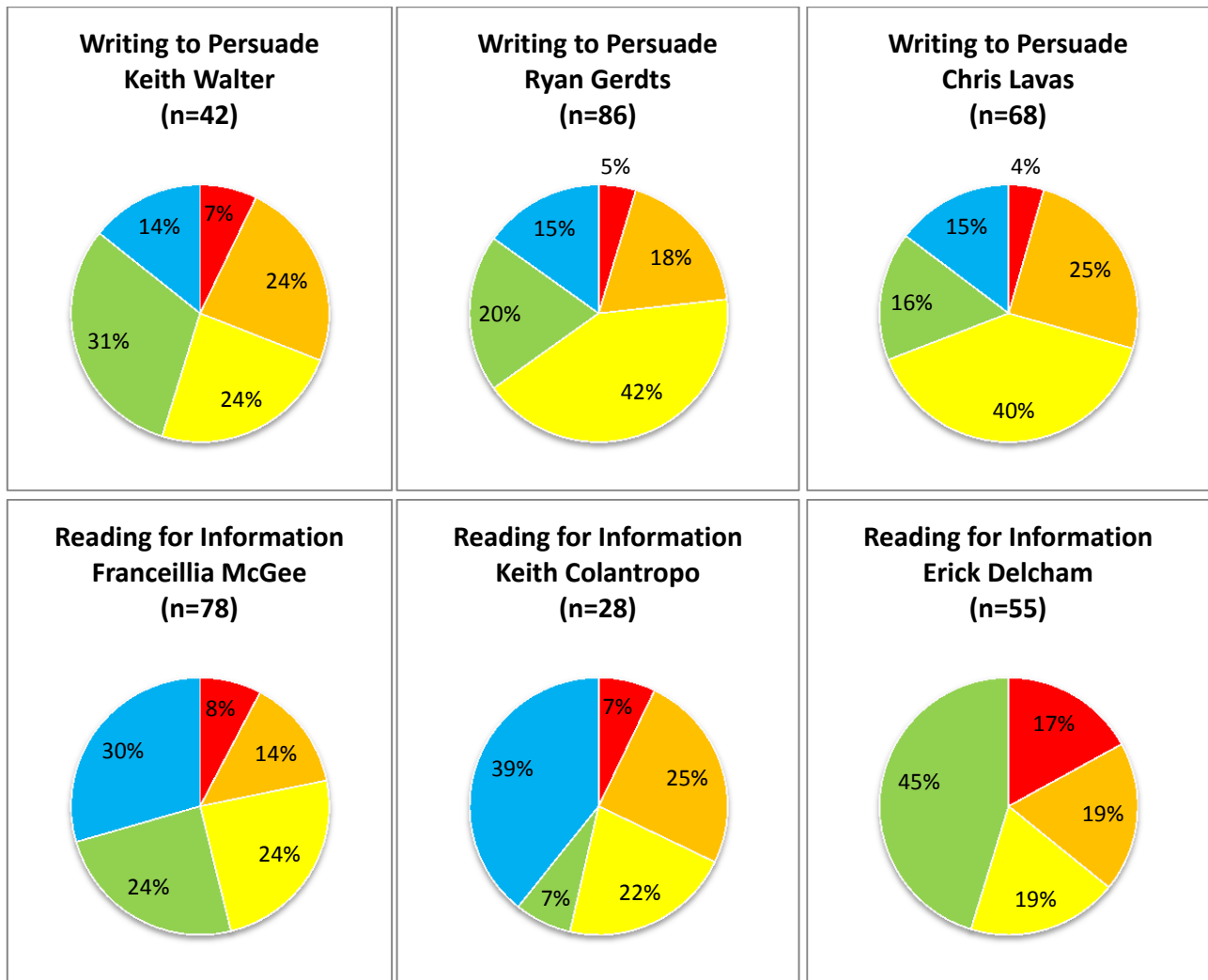


Change in Outcomes by Teacher

Assuming consistency in grading policy across teachers and departments, some teachers were better able to move students up the levels towards mastery than others. The charts below show student growth on each outcome for different teachers, using each student’s average T2 grade as a baseline.

Moving students up the levels towards mastery. A large portion of students scored at least one letter-grade higher in these classes in T3 than they did on average across all their classes in T2.

- Nearly half (45%) of students in Keith Walter’s class in T3 scored at least one letter-grade higher on Writing to Persuade than their average score across all classes in T2.
- Over half (54%) of students in Francellia McGee’s class in T3 scored at least one letter-grade higher on Reading for Information than their average score across all classes in T2.



■ Large Drop (2+ levels) ■ Small Drop (1 level) ■ About the Same ■ Small Gain (1 level) ■ Large Gain (2+ levels)

Reflections from Students, Teachers, and ACs

In order to provide a fuller picture of how Outcomes-Based Grading has impacted teaching and learning at NQCHS this year, Eskolta interviewed 5 teachers and 2 Advocate Counselors, and held a focus-group discussion with 7 students. Below are some broad takeaways from these discussions.

An Emphasis on Quality over Quantity

Both staff and students noted that the move to Outcomes-Based Grading required of them a shift in thinking to focus more on *quality* of work over *quantity* of work. Says one teacher of students: “They’re starting to understand the difference between quantity and quality – the conversation has changed from ‘You owe me this many things’ to ‘You need to show me you can perform at this high of a level.’” Through the outcomes, students are increasingly asked to demonstrate higher order thinking, analysis, and metacognition. “It’s forcing them to analyze their work and be more proactive,” one teacher reflected. “[We’re] getting them to think about how they’re thinking. It’s actually helping students to move on a higher level of thinking.”

Students noted an increase in the quality of work demanded of them. “It’s harder to pass now. I have to put more effort into my work,” said one student. “[Teachers] always ask ‘why, why, why?’” For some students, particularly those who were struggling to get by, the shift to Outcomes-Based Grading has been a struggle. One AC shared that “for some kids it doesn’t work, especially older kids. They’re like, what do I do? I was making it before – how do I get out?” One teacher commented that “we have an attrition of students who would have graduated but won’t because they get frustrated and drop off. I think what we’re doing is right, but everything is a double-edged sword. Do we prepare kids to college and beyond and graduate less kids, or do we graduate more kids?”

Strategies to Support Students in Reaching Mastery

When asked how they were able to move students up the levels towards mastery, teachers shared a range of instructional strategies, from scaffolding to real-world application.

- Scaffolding: Bridge activities, Break it down
- Modeling, exemplars
- Rubrics to show students where they need to go
- Providing a variety of ways to access content
- Asking students to articulate their thinking
- Application to personal and real-world experiences

Highlighting Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Teachers all mentioned that their conversations with students had moved beyond discussion of passing or failing and towards a more multi-dimensional look at both a student’s strengths and weaknesses. “On every assessment, there isn’t just one grade – there are five outcomes and five grades. They have a P in schema and

a D in inferring, so they can feel good about their success in one area and work on something. They don't just see that they failed and throw it away."

Teachers also felt that the outcomes enabled them to target their instruction to individual student needs. "With the outcomes, I know what they need to work on, to make up the skill gap. I'm more specific and targeted. It helps for differentiation."

The Importance of Reliable Systems for Tracking Progress on Outcomes

However, while teachers were able to have more nuanced conversations with students this year, ACs were limited in their conversations by the lack of access to specific assignment-level data on outcomes. "I don't talk to them about grades that much anymore. It's messy and they get really anxious and upset." This AC was referring to issues with the system that produced sometimes inaccurate averages of the outcomes grades on benchmark progress reports. "The report card is a disaster" said another AC. In order to maximize the benefit of having strengths-based outcomes-level discussions around student progress, the system for tracking progress should be revisited in the coming year to ensure ACs have easy access to assignment-level data.

Challenges in Assessment

When asked what they knew now about teaching and learning in an outcomes-based system that they wish they'd known in September, several teachers spoke of assessments. One common theme was in finding the right number of outcomes to attach to each assessment. "If we attach multiple outcomes to every assignment, it becomes quantity. If the kids know they hit their outcomes, then they stop [trying] because they've hit their outcomes and they get credit." This teacher was referring to the grading policy, which requires a student to achieve a level of Capable on at least 3 assessment points for 7 out of 10 outcomes in order to pass the course. If there are too many opportunities for a student to "hit" an outcome, the student may lose motivation, but if there are too few, it may be difficult to see how students have grown over the term. One teacher recommended spacing assessments of each outcome out over the term to create opportunities for measuring student growth.

Another issue is that assessments in the outcomes-based system have relied more heavily on writing than students have been accustomed to in the past, particularly in courses like Math or Science which were not traditionally writing-heavy. Says one AC: "They struggle to write, and now they are graded only on that."

Some students are highly motivated by the shift to Outcomes-Based Grading. According to one first-year student, "It's better to learn this now than to get to college and not know how to do the work and you're paying for it." He recommends that students "throw everything out about the previous grading system and study this one. There are a lot of ways you can use this system to your advantage... you can get an E and you can do it over and do it better. In other schools, you don't have that advantage."

TOOL 9
CUNY POSTSECONDARY DATA SNAPSHOT



**CUNY Postsecondary Data Snapshot
North Queens Community High School**

The following report was produced by CUNY's Office of Collaborative Programs with the goal of helping high schools understand the postsecondary experiences of graduates who attend CUNY. It includes data on 2008, 2009, and 2010 graduates of North Queens Community High School who enrolled at CUNY in the subsequent fall semester as freshmen.

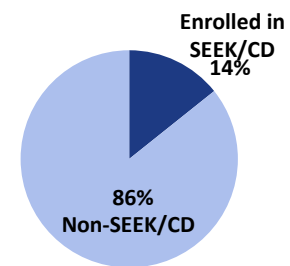
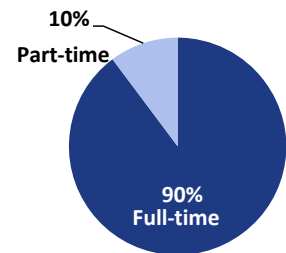
Of the 23 students who graduated from North Queens in 2008, 7 entered CUNY as Fall 2008 first-time freshmen; of the 40 graduates of 2009, 16 entered CUNY in Fall 2009; and of the 65 graduates of 2010, 26 students entered in Fall 2010.

Enrollment of High School Graduates in CUNY Degree Programs						
	Fall 2008		Fall 2009		Fall 2010	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Associate Degree Programs	7	100.0	15	93.8	24	92.3
Bachelor's Degree Programs	0	--	1	6.3	2	7.7
Certificate Programs	0	--	0	--	0	--
Total	7	100.0	16	100.0	26	100.0

- For all three entering cohorts combined, the most-attended CUNY college was Queensborough; for Fall 2010, the most-attended CUNY college was Queensborough, followed by LaGuardia and BMCC.
- The majority of students (90%) were studying full-time during their first semester.
- Fourteen percent of students (7 out of 49) were enrolled in SEEK/College Discovery.¹

Enrollment by College			
	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010
Baruch College	0	1	0
Brooklyn College	0	0	0
City College of New York	0	0	0
College of Staten Island	0	0	0
Hunter College	0	0	1
John Jay College of Criminal Justice	0	0	0
Lehman College	0	0	0
Medgar Evers College	0	0	1
NYC College of Technology	0	1	0
Queens College	0	0	0
York College	0	0	1
Total Senior Colleges	0	2	3
BMCC	0	4	4
Bronx Community College	0	0	0
Hostos Community College	0	0	0
Kingsborough Community College	0	2	0
LaGuardia Community College	5	6	4
Queensborough Community	2	2	15
Total Community Colleges	7	14	23
Total	7	16	26

Enrollment Status
Fall 2008 through Fall 2010



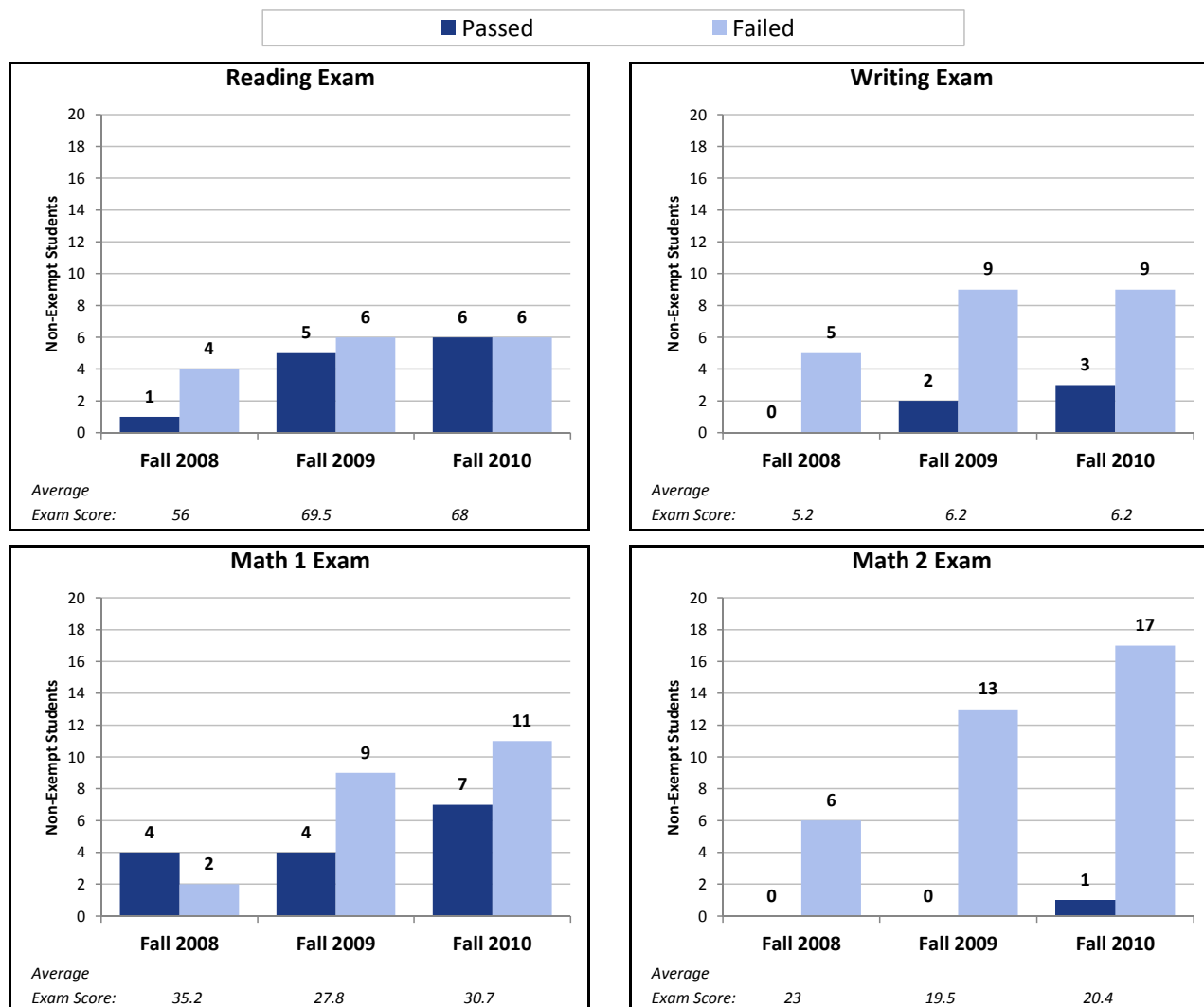
¹ SEEK (Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge) and CD (College Discovery) are two CUNY higher education opportunity programs designed to assist high potential, low income students who otherwise might not be able to pursue a college degree because they are not academically well prepared for college level work. Located on each of the 17 undergraduate campuses, SEEK and CD offer an array of counseling and academic support initiatives to students who meet the University and New York State guidelines for admission.

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Graduates in Need of Remediation by Subject ¹			
	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010
Need Remediation in Reading	67%	40%	24%
Need Remediation in Writing	83%	60%	36%
Need Remediation in Math	100%	93%	68%
Need Remediation in Any Subject	100%	93%	76%

- For the Fall 2008 entering cohort, all students required remediation in at least one subject; they failed to meet Regents/SAT criteria and/or pass the associated CUNY initial basic skills exam(s).
- For the Fall 2009 entering cohort, 1 students (7%) did not require any remediation.
- For the Fall 2010 entering cohort, 6 students (24%) did not require any remediation.

Initial CUNY Basic Skills Exam Results²



¹ CUNY defines students as in need of remediation prior to their first semester enrolled based upon their Regents, SAT, and CUNY basic skills exam performance. Students do not require remediation if they: 1) Score 75+ on the associated Regents Exam; 2) Score 480+ on the associated SAT; 3) Pass the CUNY basic skills exam.

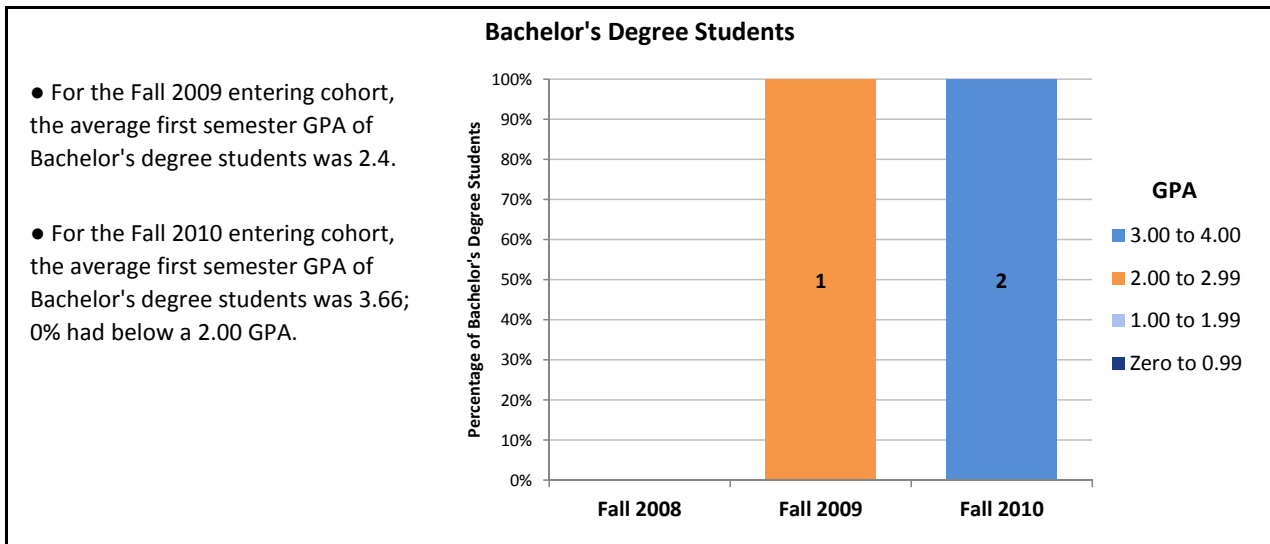
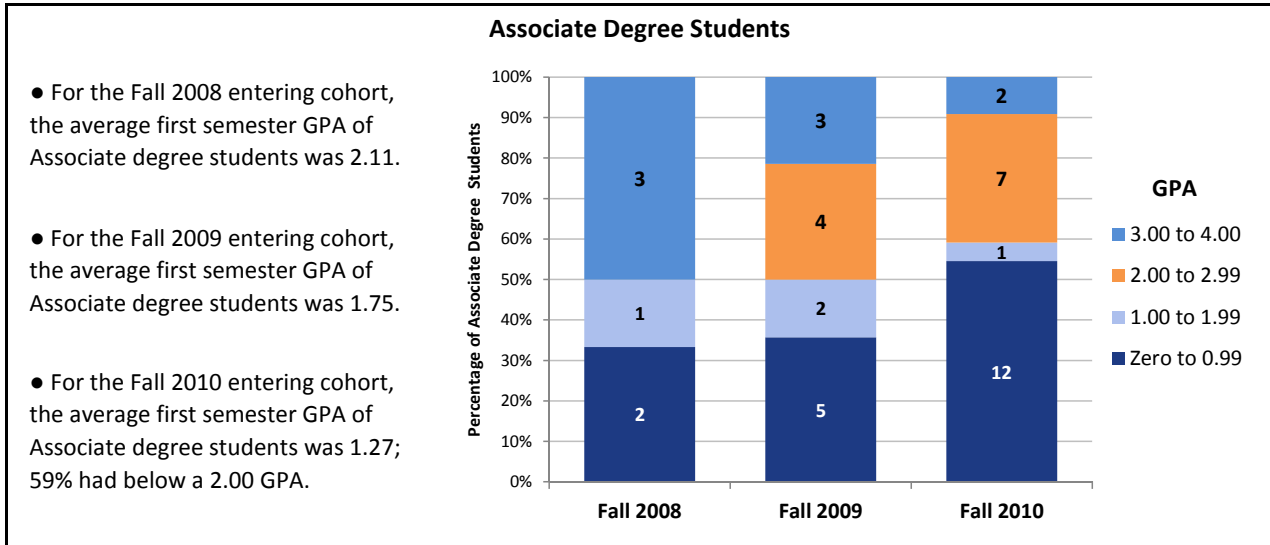
² Passing scores for Exams are 70 for Reading, 7 for Writing, and 30 for Math 1 and Math 2. Pass/fail rates and average scores are for non-exempt test-takers only; data on scores for exempt student are not available.

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Credits Attempted/Earned in First Semester (Full-time Students Only)

	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010
Associate Degree Students			
Average Credits Attempted	4.9	6.7	9.3
Average Credits Earned	4.4	4.6	4.2
Percentage of Credits Earned (%)	90%	69%	45%
Bachelor's Degree Students			
Average Credits Attempted	15.0	12.0	13.0
Average Credits Earned	12.0	11.0	11.3
Percentage of Credits Earned (%)	80%	92%	87%

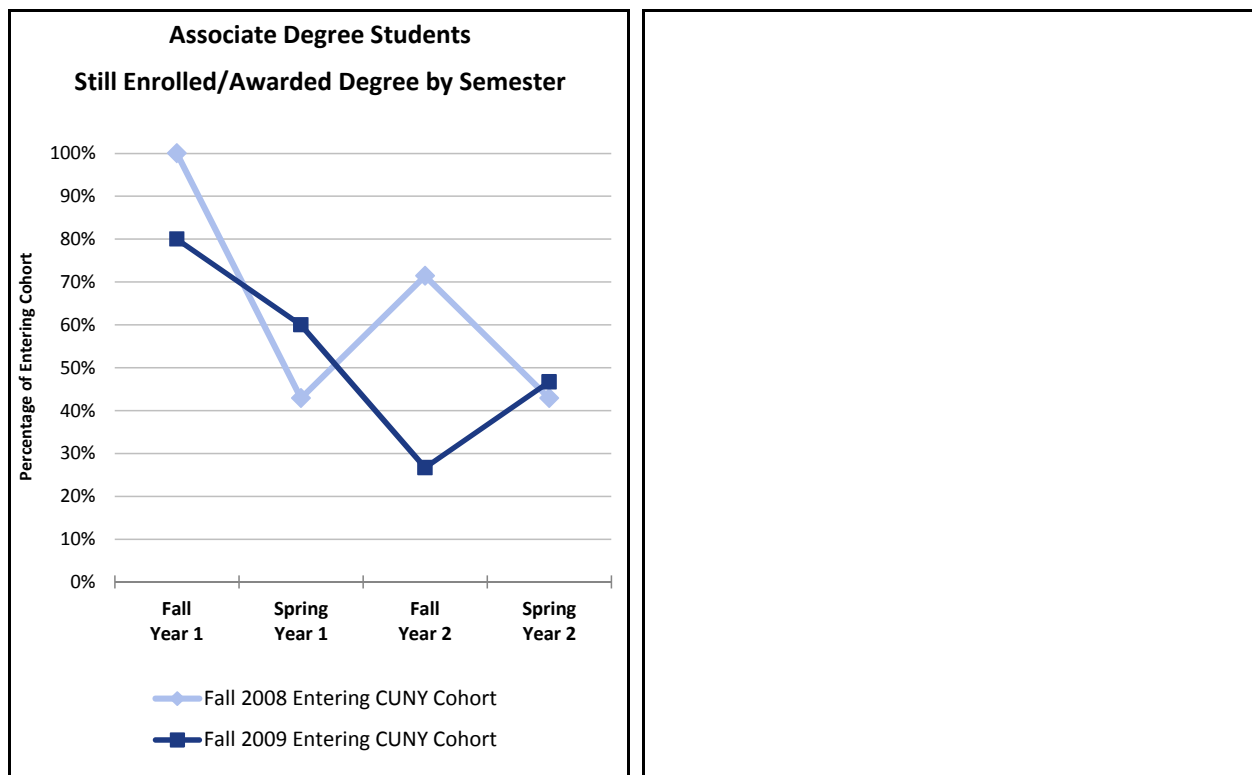
GPA in First Semester



CUNY Postsecondary Data Snapshot North Queens Community High School

CUNY System Retention and Graduation Rates ¹			
	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010
Associate Degree Students			
Entering Fall Cohort (N)	7	15	24
% Still Enrolled After One Semester	100%	80%	79%
% Still Enrolled After Two Semesters (1 Year)	43%	60%	50%
% Still Enrolled After Three Semesters	71%	27%	
% Still Enrolled After Four Semesters (2 Years)	43%	47%	
% Awarded Degree After Four Semesters (2 Years)	0%	0%	
Bachelor's Degree Students			
Entering Fall Cohort (N)			
% Still Enrolled After One Semester			
% Still Enrolled After Two Semesters (1 Year)			
% Still Enrolled After Three Semesters			
% Still Enrolled After Four Semesters (2 Years)			

CUNY System Retention and Graduation Rates Over Five Semesters

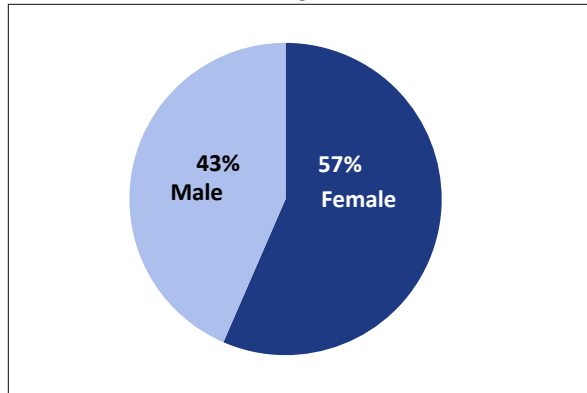


¹System retention rates are calculated as the percentage who are still enrolled at any CUNY college in the subsequent fall term(s) and have not yet earned a degree. System graduation rates are calculated as the percentage earning a degree at any CUNY college any time prior to the start of the subsequent fall term(s). Students earning a degree, even if lower than that originally pursued, are counted for that degree and not as still enrolled, even if they are still enrolled in the subsequent fall term.

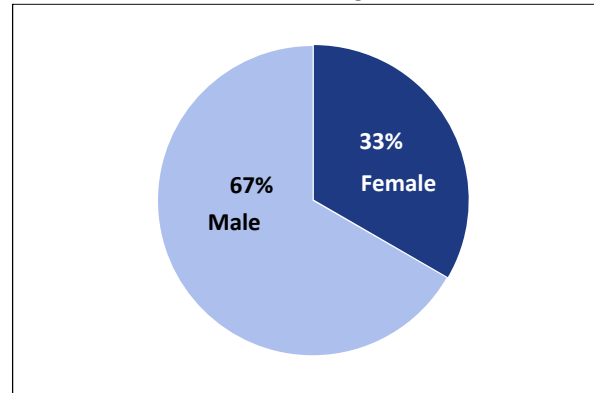
CUNY Postsecondary Data Snapshot North Queens Community High School

Enrollment of High School Graduates in CUNY by Gender						
	Fall 2008		Fall 2009		Fall 2010	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Female	2	28.6	12	75.0	13	50.0
Male	5	71.4	4	25.0	13	50.0
Total	7	100.0	16	100.0	26	100.0

Associate Degree Students by Gender
Fall 2008 through Fall 2010

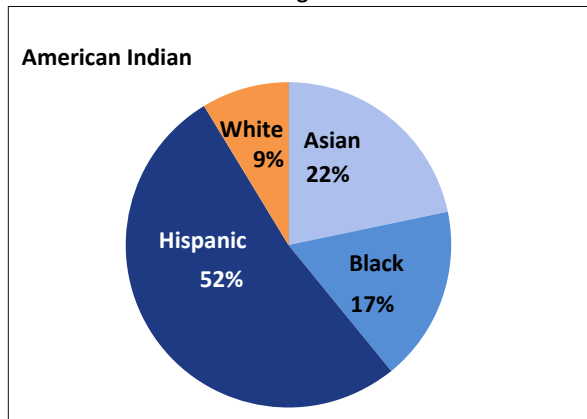


Bachelor's Degree Students by Gender
Fall 2008 through Fall 2010

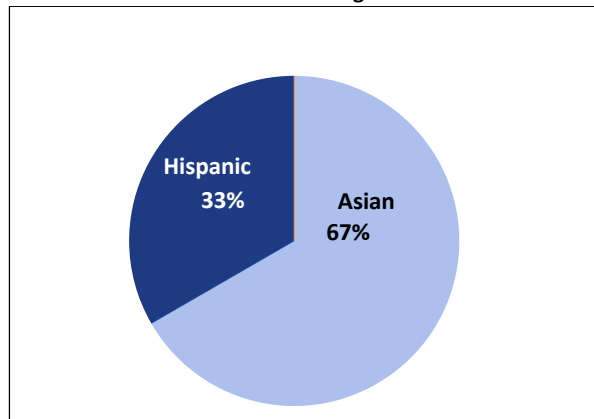


Enrollment of High School Graduates in CUNY by Race Ethnicity						
	Fall 2008		Fall 2009		Fall 2010	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
American Indian/Native Alaskan	0	--	0	--	0	--
Asian/Pacific Islander	2	28.6	3	18.8	7	26.9
Black	0	--	4	25.0	4	15.4
Hispanic	5	71.4	8	50.0	12	46.2
White	0	--	1	6.3	3	11.5
Total	7	100.0	16	100.0	26	100.0

Associate Degree Students by Race/Ethnicity
Fall 2008 through Fall 2010



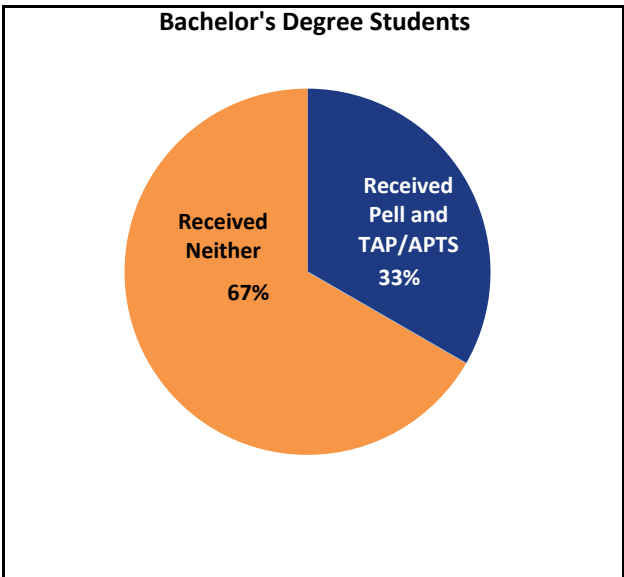
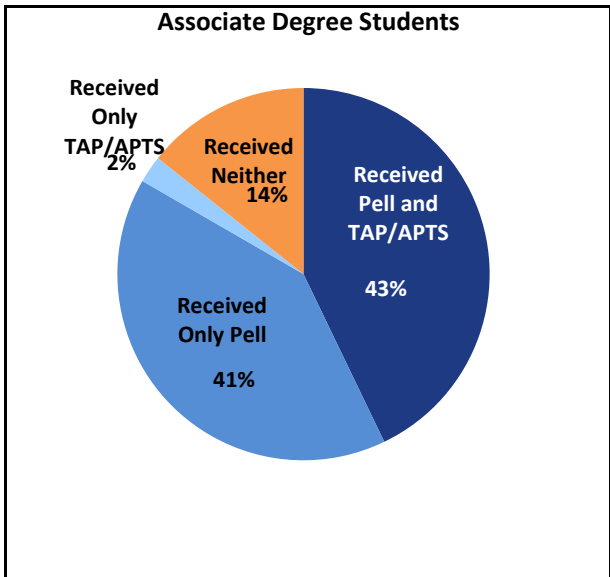
Bachelor's Degree Students by Race/Ethnicity
Fall 2008 through Fall 2010



CUNY Postsecondary Data Snapshot North Queens Community High School

In order to receive a Pell grant or TAP/APTS (NY State Tuition Assistance Program), students must be a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or an eligible non-citizen, i.e., U.S. permanent resident with an Alien Registration Card. In addition to residency requirements, students must complete the FAFSA and be enrolled in a degree program.

Percentage of Eligible Students Receiving Financial Aid <i>(Eligibility Based on Residency Status)</i>			
	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010
Associate Degree Students			
Received Federal Pell Grant	86%	77%	83%
Received TAP/APTS	57%	38%	43%
Bachelor's Degree Students			
Received Federal Pell Grant		100%	0%
Received TAP/APTS		100%	0%



For Additional Information

The following report is based on student-level data made available through an agreement between the New York City Department of Education and the City University of New York.

For additional information about data contained in this report, please contact Drew Allen, Director of Research & Evaluation for Collaborative Programs, at 718-254-7191 or drew.allen@mail.cuny.edu.

ENDNOTES

¹ Through funding from the NYC Department of Education Learning to Work initiative, along with funding from the Robin Hood and Tiger Foundations, each student in the school is paired with an Advocate Counselor who serves as the student’s chief advocate and primary support person. Advocate Counselors work with students one-on-one and by facilitating peer support groups.

² At Home in College (AHIC) is a college transition program that is run by the City University of New York (CUNY). AHIC offers high school students math and English courses designed to prepare them for success in college level credit-bearing courses, fee waivers for CUNY application, college access activities, and other assistance to help ensure that students enroll and succeed in college. For more information on AHIC, please see: <http://cuny.edu/academics/k-to-12/at-home-in-college.html>

³ College Now offers dual enrollment and college-readiness programs to high schools throughout New York City. For more information, please visit: <http://collegenow.cuny.edu>

⁴ CARA offers a range of programs designed to increase access for first-generation college-bound high school students. For more information on CARA, please visit: <http://caranyc.org>

⁵ Goddard Riverside Options Institute trains high-school-based guidance counselors to help prepare students for college success. For more information, please visit: <http://goddard.org/our-programs/education-college-access/options-institute/>

Back on Track Through College tools and other resources are available from
Jobs for the Future online at www.backontrackdesigns.org



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