# Level 5 Schools 2016–17 Quarter 2 Report: UP Academy Holland

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| **School Information** | | | **Student Enrollment and Demographics** | |
| **Location** | Boston, Massachusetts | **Total SY 2016–17 Enrollment** | 759 | |
| **Current Status** | Level 5 | **Percentage SWDs** | 13% | |
| **Receiver Name** | UP Education Network | **Percentage ELLs** | 33% | |
| **Year Designated Level 5** | 2013 | **Percentage Black** | 43% | |
| **Year Designated Level 4** | 2010 | **Percentage Latino/Hispanic** | 42% | |
| **Grade Span** | PK–5 | **Percentage Asian** | 5% | |
| **Number of Full-Time Staff in SY 2016–17** | 86 | **Percentage White** | 4% | |
| **Percentage Multirace** | 6% | |
| **Priority Areas** | | | | |
| **Priority Area 1:** Transform the culture of the school into a culture of urgency, high expectations, accountability, excellence, and achievement.  **Priority Area 2:** Enhance the rigor of the curricula, improve the effectiveness of instruction, and strengthen the utilization of assessment data.  **Priority Area 3:** Expand the school day and school year, build in time, deploy resources, develop programs, and create identification and tracking systems to ensure that all students, especially students with disabilities and English language learners, receive the academic and other supports they require to learn and succeed.  **Priority Area 4:** Recruit and hire extraordinary leaders, teachers, and support staff, and build and utilize systems to evaluate, develop, promote, reward, and retain this staff over the long term.  **Priority Area 5:** Fully engage all of the school’s families in the learning of their children. | | | | |

*Source.* Content provided by UP Education Network.

## Executive Summary

UP Academy Holland continues to refine its practice as it seeks to ensure that “all students acquire the knowledge, skills, and strength of character necessary to succeed on the path to college and to achieve their full potential.” Since the beginning of the school year, the school’s professional development and strategic focus has primarily focused on establishing a stable school culture as defined by the UP Education Network Teaching Pathway. As the school trends toward stable, the leadership team has shifted its focus to Clear Instruction, pushing teachers to deepen content knowledge and focus on intentional intellectual preparation. The school continues to use Dovetail Learning as its primary social and emotional learning curriculum. Since the beginning of the school year, the school has hosted two successful family events: a Back to School barbecue and an immersive UP Academy Holland Curriculum Night.

## Updates on Priority Areas

**Priority Area 1:** Transform the culture of the school into a culture of urgency, high expectations, accountability, excellence, and achievement.

* **Highlight:** Since the beginning of the school year, the bulk of school professional development and teacher coaching has focused on establishing a stable classroom and school student culture. This focus has had a positive impact on teaching staff performance. Based on observations, 70% of teachers had achieved stable culture in their classrooms on the teaching pathway.
* **Highlight:** This year, the school adjusted its culture team staffing model to include one Dean of Students, four School Culture Specialists, and one Board Certified Behavior Analyst. The school’s culture team is high functioning, with strong systems and rapport, which has had a huge impact on and has allowed the school to be more proactive in its approach. The success of the school’s culture team has contributed to markedly lower suspension numbers. Currently, the school is at 4% suspended, whereas last year it was just under 12%.
* **Highlight:** Seventy percent of UP Academy Holland classrooms meet the UP Education Network definition of stable culture, with the remainder trending towards stable. The remaining classrooms are being coached intensely and strategically by the Deans of Curriculum and Instruction.
* **Challenge:** The school has a number of teachers new to the profession who require additional coaching and intervention. The school’s Deans of Curriculum and Instruction have designed specialized coaching plans for their respective caseloads to ensure that those teachers most in need of support are receiving frequent and consistent coaching.

**Priority Area 2:** Enhance the rigor of the curricula, improve the effectiveness of instruction, and strengthen the utilization of assessment data.

* **Highlight:** From January 11 to February 8, the school will focus on developing Clear Instruction (as defined by the UP Education Network Teaching Pathway). As a part of this strategic focus, teachers will further develop their content knowledge and purposefully lead students to mastery through mistake-free lessons.
* **Highlight:** The school continues to refine and improve its approach to Drop Everything and Plan. During this daily planning block, teachers meet in content teams to talk through lesson exemplars and identify potential student misconceptions and key learning moments in each lesson. The school’s Deans of Curriculum and Instruction join these sessions to provide additional coaching and guidance as needed.
* **Highlight:** According to the school’s focus on Clear Instruction, teachers continue to work on ratio or pushing more of the lesson thinking time back on students. Students are becoming increasingly more comfortable with “productive struggle” during lessons.
* **Challenge:** After review of its STEP data, the school has identified certain grade levels of concern. As a result of this information, grade level teams will shift to working on independent reading so that teachers can make the most effective use of guided reading and conferencing time. Teams also will take part in guided reading and effective conferencing professional development.

**Priority Area 3:** Expand the school day and school year, build in time, deploy resources, develop programs, and create identification and tracking systems to ensure that all students, especially students with disabilities and English language learners (ELLs), receive the academic and other supports they require to learn and succeed.

* **Highlight:** UP Education Network’s Director of ELL and Director of Special Education (SPED) and Intervention have partnered with the UP Academy Holland Dean team to provide coaching to co-teachers in the school (both ELL and SPED). The network and the school are designing professional development that defines “stable culture” with two adults in the classroom.
* **Highlight:** Social and Academic Remediation (SAR) classrooms have solidified classroom management systems, which has allowed teachers in these classrooms to focus more on curriculum planning.
* **Highlight:** The school’s Deans of Curriculum and Instruction delivered a number of professional development sessions focused on collaboration between ELL, SPED, and content teachers. In addition, ELL and SPED teachers joined Drop Everything and Plan sessions. A renewed commitment to co-planning is embedded in the school’s culture.
* **Challenge:** Three of the school’s five English as a second language (ESL) teachers are new either to the profession or to teaching ESL. There are several things being done to improve their ESL-specific skills, such as being coached by a Dean of Curriculum and Instruction who is a former ESL teacher, engaging in an ESL-specific clear instruction PD series from January 11 to February 8, and receiving feedback from a clear instructional rubric tailored to ESL instruction.

**Priority Area 4:** Recruit and hire extraordinary leaders, teachers, and support staff, and build and utilize systems to evaluate, develop, promote, reward, and retain this staff over the long term.

* **Highlight:** The school is 100% staffed with no openings.
* **Highlight:** The school leadership has been impressed by the strength of the four fellows in the UP Teaching Fellows Program. These fellows support the school’s coverage needs while training to become full-time teachers.
* **Highlight:** The school has been able to fill vacancies within an average of 20 calendar days. UP Academy Holland has swiftly filled these vacancies through development and promotion of staff in the building who have demonstrated readiness. The school also has been able to use the Deans of Curriculum and Instruction for short-term coverage.
* **Challenge:** The school has had to fill 9 vacancies since the beginning of the school year.

**Priority Area 5:** Fully engage all of the school’s families in the learning of their children.

* **Highlight:** The school hosted a Back to School BBQ for families, students, and community members. The event attracted more than 100 families and provided an important opportunity for staff members to connect with students and families.
* **Highlight:** The school’s Coordinator of Family and Community Relations is strong and continues to build deep, authentic relationships with families.
* **Highlight:** In November, UP Academy Holland held its first report card conference day of the year, and more than 370 families attended.
* **Challenge:** Although attendance continues to improve, there is a core group of students (approximately 20 students) that continues to struggle with tardiness and absenteeism. The Coordinator of Family and Community Relations has developed an outreach plan for these families. The UP Academy leadership team reviews attendance data and progress with identified families weekly.