

News and Speeches

Chancellor Klein Announces Expansion of Cutting-Edge "School of One" Program

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More than 240 Middle School Students at Three Schools Participating in the Seven Week After-School Program

Program Resulted in Strong Achievement Gains for Students Participating in Summer Pilot

Schools Chancellor Joel I. Klein today announced that the School of One, a first-of-its-kind program that uses technology to provide students with highly individualized and innovative classroom instruction, has been expanded to three middle schools as an after-school math program. School of One departs from the traditional classroom model of one teacher and 25 to 30 students in the classroom. Instead, at the School of One, students participate in a combination of teacher-led instruction, one-on-one tutoring, and independent learning. This spring, more than 240 sixth grade students at I.S. 339 in the Bronx, I.S. 228 in Brooklyn, and M.S. 131 in Manhattan are taking part in the seven week after-school program, which will conclude in late April. In May, the School of One program will transition for the first time to an in-school program at one of the three schools, offering students the opportunity to experience this type of learning during the school day. All three schools will have in-school programs during the 2010-2011 school year.

The School of One launched as a summer pilot program in math last June at M.S. 131, a middle school on Manhattan's Lower East Side, and gained national attention. In November, Time magazine recognized it as one of the 50 best inventions of 2009. School of One combines traditional teaching with cutting-edge instructional software so that students receive an educational program that is customized to their academic needs, interests, and learning styles. To organize this type of learning, students follow unique schedules based on what they accomplished the previous day. As a result, students within the same school or even classroom can receive very different instruction, each lesson tailored to the concepts a student needs to learn and the ways he or she can best learn them. Teachers acquire data about student achievement each day and then adapt their lessons accordingly.

"School of One represents some of the most cutting-edge work being done in education today and it's exciting that more students have the opportunity to participate," Chancellor Klein said. "I'm proud that we've put a record number of students on the path to graduation, but we must also ensure our classrooms are preparing all of our students for success in the real world. As part of this effort, we must explore new ways to deliver instruction and leverage technology to improve learning. That's what the School of One is all about."

“Every student deserves personalized learning,” School of One founder Joel Rose said.

“Meeting this need is a tall order, even for the best of teachers. But by combining great teaching with state-of-the-art technology, personalized student learning is now within our reach. We are excited to begin this next phase of our growth so that we can more deeply understand how School of One can be best implemented across many schools during the regular school day.”

An independent study of last summer’s pilot showed that School of One increased student achievement by 28 points on a test of middle school math skills given before and after the program, raising student scores from an average of 42 percent to 70 percent.

“I saw firsthand the power of School of One last summer,” Principal of M.S. 131, Phyllis Tam, said. “There's little doubt in my mind that it is the future of education. The academic results we saw from the program were extraordinary. And beyond that, our teachers were inspired, our students were engaged, our parents were intrigued, and our entire school community couldn't wait to bring School of One back this year.”

“For years, we've talked about personalizing education down to the individual child,” I.S. 399 Principal Jason Levy said. “I wanted to bring School of One to our school to help meet the needs of each student in an innovative way.”

“School of One totally transforms the delivery of math instruction to our students with the focus being on student learning,” I.S. 228 Principal Dominick D’Angelo said. “School of One provides an engaging, creative, and exciting learning environment for all levels and types of students. The impact of School of One on education will be comparable to the impact of the industrial revolution on manufacturing.”

The School of One has been supported by generous grants to The Fund for Public Schools from a network of funding partners, including the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, Robin Hood, NewSchools Venture Fund, the Google Inc. Charitable Giving Fund of Tides Foundation, and Cisco Global Education.