



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

**The Dual Language School for International
Studies**

Public School 24

**427 38th Street
Brooklyn
NY 11232**

Principal: Christina Fuentes

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Reviewer: Candido DeJesus

Content of the report

Part 1: The School Context

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

What the school needs to improve

Part 3: Main Findings

Overall evaluation

How well the school meets New York City's evaluation criteria

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

Information about the school

The Dual Language School for International Studies is a pre-kindergarten to 5th grade school with half of the classes designated as dual language in which instruction is 50% in English and 50% in Spanish. English language learners make up about 42% of the 803 students enrolled in the school. Approximately 10% of the students are special education students. Over 90% of the students are Hispanic with less than 10% of the population almost evenly divided among Black, Asian, and White students.

About 86% of children have Title 1 eligibility, higher than the City average and about equal to similar schools. Attendance at the school is slightly higher than similar and City schools.

This is an empowerment school. Empowerment schools have more flexibility to make key decisions and control the resources for their school community. Empowerment schools are free to develop or purchase professional development services, choose which schools to affiliate with, and benefit from reduced reporting and paperwork requirements.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal, with the support of her assistant principal, provides inspirational and effective leadership.
- The staff make effective use of periodic assessments.
- As an empowerment school, the school has developed a number of 'do your own' assessments.
- An excellent dual language program characterizes the curriculum and instructional approaches of the school.
- The dual language program is used as a model for professional development by other schools.
- All classrooms provide print-rich environments and literacy enrichment in both English and Spanish.
- Professional development is comprehensive in meeting teachers' stated needs and uses action research to enhance teachers' craft and instructional strategies further.
- Students are very happy, feel safe and are actively engaged in their own learning.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that periodic assessments for mathematics are as well developed as those used by the school for literacy.
- Simplify strategic planning formats and protocols currently in place in order to facilitate systemic use by all staff members.
- Provide developmental opportunities for parents in order for them to support the school's efforts for academic improvement better.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well-developed school.

The strong emphasis on student support characterizes the school's effort to provide a personalized learning experience. As an empowerment school, it has engaged in developing many of its own periodic assessments that are efficient and effective. The staff have developed a well functioning academic intervention team that uses formative and summative data to plan comprehensive intervention services for all of its students.

The main focus of the school is on its model dual language program that uses students' home language and culture as strengths to be nourished and built upon. The school provides a standards-based curriculum rich in literacy in both English and Spanish. All classrooms display print-rich environments and are equipped with plenty of resources that support student learning in both languages.

The school is a barrier free building for physically challenged children. The school offers a broad range of services that include collaborative team teaching classes, physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, and an on-site medical clinic. Academic results in the last few years, although slightly lower than City schools, are higher than similar schools and demonstrate how the school has sustained substantial growth. The school has developed excellent partnerships with organizations dedicated to conflict resolution and peace mediation. Students as young as kindergarten age are trained as 'peace makers' and mediators. There have been no suspensions this current school year and only one last year.

How well the school meets New York City's evaluation criteria

Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor student progress over time.

This area of the school's work is well developed.

Data information is readily available in well organized binders in the principal's office and shows how the school uses data effectively as well as how competently it generates its own data for each student, class and grade. A comprehensive screening process is applied to every new entry to the school. The school is particularly good at disaggregated data on its English language learners and children with special needs. The emphasis is on its dual language program in which bilingual students receive 50% of their instruction in English and 50% in Spanish. The program demonstrates so much success that it is used as a model site for other schools who wish to implement similar practices. The school also ensures that all students of its diverse community receive the same attention and individualization. Special education students are found in self-contained classes and are mainstreamed in general education classes as well.

Good analysis of data includes examining trends among students, classes, grades, and subject areas over time. Teachers are also good at monitoring each student's progress over time. All teachers have assessment binders in which they gather multiple forms of data on reading, writing and mathematics. However, although effective, data collection for

mathematics is not as well developed as it is for English language arts. The teachers use data efficiently to group their students and direct individualized attention on specific skills needed to improve.

There has been sustained improvement in the achievement of all students. The school deftly uses data to measure performance by making comparisons between itself and other schools, as well as comparing its own progress over the years.

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use available data to understand each student’s next learning step. Through collaborative planning and student and parent engagement, they set high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating each student’s learning.

This area of the school’s work is well developed.

The staff use multiple forms of data to understand what students know and need to learn. Teachers set measurable goals for immediate and long-range improvement. The school is competent at developing benchmarks for students to meet at frequent intervals during the school year. As an example, literacy teachers use running records and miscue analysis to first discover the reading level of each student and then select targeted reading levels for students to meet.

The school applies current research in pedagogy successfully in serving the needs of second language learners and students with special needs. The home language and culture of every student is honored and used constructively to build upon the oral and literacy skills of each student. Consequently, students achieve well in English and Spanish.

Students and parents testify that they are held to high expectations and that they are encouraged to provide any and all information about each student’s performance. However, the school is aware that parents could benefit from more training in how to support and accelerate their child’s learning. Students are encouraged to do their best and feel their work is validated by being posted on bright bulletin boards in classes and walls outside of classrooms. All work displayed is checked and clearly demonstrates a range of standards.

The mission to improve student performance is shared by all members of the school community. School plans effectively focus on improving achievement for individual students, academic subjects and identified student groups. For example, children with ambulatory needs receive comprehensive support services consisting of specific therapies, exercise rooms with equipment and an on-site medical clinic as well as academic support.

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instruction: The school aligns its instructional activity and resources, and student engagement around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.

This area of the school’s work is well developed.

Teams of teachers are involved in curriculum development that is firmly based on high expectations of students and review of their progress. Information from assessments is used well to identify programs and interventions to supplement the core curriculum and ensure that students make good progress. Literacy and mathematics coaches support

teachers in the delivery of instruction in their respective disciplines. Good instruction is achieved through collaborative planning and differentiated lessons based on the needs revealed by examining student data. This results in all students being actively engaged in their learning. Teachers are held accountable for improving instruction and student outcomes.

Budgeting decisions are driven by focused school plans and students academic needs. As an example, the school is purchasing a new mathematics program in English and Spanish that is better aligned with the needs of the school. The school's curriculum committee reviewed the new mathematics program to ensure it is also well aligned with State standards. In addition, the principal is careful to hire staff that fit into the profile the school has developed for teachers. The hiring of part-time teachers facilitates effective scheduling of teacher and student time. Teachers willingly work long days and students are motivated to attend after school activities.

Children are happy, feel safe and take an active role in their daily learning. Students who were questioned felt respected by all teachers and were able to name not one but several individual staff members who they trusted. Student attendance procedures are very good and result in a high attendance rate.

Quality Statement 4 - Build and Align Capacity: The development of instructional leadership, staff, and capacity are aligned around the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.

This area of the school's work is well developed.

Staff are carefully selected by the principal. They must be dedicated to the instructional philosophy of the school and possess skills commensurate with the type of planning and assessment necessary to fulfill the mission of the school. Part time teachers are hired to strengthen academic interventions for students most in need and play a strong role in the school's comprehensive approach to accelerating student learning. All staff members exhibit proficiency and creativity in using data and making comparisons across grades, classes, and groups of students.

The school takes particular pride in the action research projects that teams of teachers engage in to further their own professional learning. The teaming of teachers in committees and study groups for action research is outstanding. This staff is quick to make changes in instructional strategies and interventions when the need arises. Plans and methodologies are revised as teachers realize what is working and what is not. Professional development is well aligned with the staff's stated needs. The school has been a recipient of several large grants in the last few years that facilitate professional learning across the curriculum and in a variety of methods, for example, action research, study groups, lab sites and workshops. Thus, teachers feel more comfortable evaluating themselves and colleagues and reflecting collaboratively on their practice. Teachers frequently observe each other's best practices and offer suggestions for improving instructional approaches. They see each other as critical friends and measure the impact of their own learning the accelerated progress they observe in their students.

The principal is highly respected and valued by all members of the community for her leadership, caring attitude and thoroughness as a supervisor and certainly has the capacity to affect continuing school development. The principal makes it her business to be aware of each teacher's strengths and areas in need of improvement. Always seen visiting classrooms, she competently guides each teacher to do their best, holding them

accountable for the progress and improved outcomes for each student. Partnerships with outside bodies are also exemplary. Conflict resolution programs and mediation are an excellent example, resulting in no student suspensions this school year and only one last year. The school runs smoothly. There are a number of effective programs that promote the social development of all students in need and which are aligned with the school's stated goals. For example, pre-kindergarten children are asserting themselves as good 'peace keepers'. The very effective after school program services more than 50% of the student population.

Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has built-in structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year, recognizing weaknesses in its improvement plans and teaching practices, and flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerated learning.

This area of the school's work is well developed.

The use of data is embedded in the plans and goals set for the improvement of each student. The school's operational processes support the frequent review of student progress throughout the school year and the sharing of anecdotal student data regarding progress is a common characteristic of the discourse among staff. Data is analyzed across the school, grades and classes to identify trends that are successful and those to be singled out for revision. The Comprehensive Educational Plan efficiently sets long-term goals and assessments to monitor the progress of the school throughout the year. The principal and her staff, however, do an even better job setting and assessing interim goals and measuring success in incremental phases. Protocols used by the school are comprehensive although they are too complex for all staff members and parents to fully appreciate and use.

In the early grades, routine diagnostic assessments embedded in the balanced literacy program give teachers daily information on which they base their instructional planning. Teams of teachers frequently meet at grade level to review student data to inform teaching practices and curriculum design as well as identifying interventions needed. This has improved outcomes for students and made the implementation of interventions more effective. In particular, as an empowerment school, the school has developed very effective periodic assessments for English language arts that objectively demonstrate when plans need to be modified and revised.

Phases of goal setting and improvement planning are firmly built upon previous plans. For example, as a result of the successful periodic assessment for literacy, similar assessments are being developed for mathematics as it is less well developed than literacy.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The Dual Language School for International Studies (PS 24)	∅	✓	+
Quality Score			X
Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor student progress over time.	∅	✓	+
1.1 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • each student, classroom, grade level, 			X
1.2 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ethnic groups, English Language Learners, special education students* 			X
1.3 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all other categories of interest to the school* 			X
1.4 Performance and progress are measured based on comparisons with similar schools, with the school's own past performance, and among students, classrooms, grade levels, academic subject areas, ethnic groups, and other groupings of interest within the school.			X
Overall score for Quality Statement 1			X

* These criteria are partially aspirational as of now because schools do not have routine access to all of this data. The NYC DOE plans to provide schools with enhanced access to the necessary data in 2007.

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use available data to understand each student's next learning step. Through collaborative planning and student and parent engagement, they set high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating each student's learning.	∅	✓	+
2.1 Using data, school leaders and faculty engage in a collaborative process to set demanding, objectively measurable goals for immediate and long-range improvement, and to develop plans and timeframes for reaching those goals.			X
2.2 Goals and plans focus on the school as a whole and on each student, classroom, grade level, academic subject, and group of students whose performance or progress has been identified by the school as a particular focus area.			X
2.3 Particular attention is given to improving the performance and progress of students in greatest need of improvement.			X
2.4 High expectations are conveyed to students and parents/caregivers. Students and their parents/caregivers are regularly invited to provide information about each student's performance and how to improve. This information is central to setting challenging goals and developing, evaluating, and revising plans.			X
2.5 Goals and plans for improving student performance and progress drive the activity of all members of the school community: leaders, staff, students, parents, and other partners.		X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 2			X

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instruction: The school aligns its instructional activity, resources, and student engagement around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.	∅	✓	+
3.1 The school selects the curriculum based on how well it aligns with or implements the mandated curriculum and on the curriculum's capacity to generate meaningful interim data about progress towards goals and to support the school's high expectations and improvement plans.		X	
3.2 Teachers are accountable for improving instruction and student outcomes. They plan and differentiate their instruction based on the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.			X
3.3 Budgeting decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.			X
3.4 Staffing decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.			X
3.5 Scheduling decisions about the use of teacher and student time are guided by the needs that emerge from examining student data and by the focused plan the school develops to improve student outcomes.			X
3.6 Instructional programs actively engage students.			X
3.7 Staff know and respect students and respond to their academic needs, as well as their personal needs that affect academic performance. Each student knows and trusts an adult on the staff who is concerned about him or her.			X
3.8 Student attendance and engagement are high priorities. High rates and patterns of absences trigger immediate intervention.			X
Overall score for Quality Statement 3			X
Quality Statement 4 – Build and Align Capacity: The development of instructional leadership, staff, and capacity are aligned around the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.	∅	✓	+
4.1 Leaders, faculty, and staff are selected based on their high expectations for student performance and progress and based on their commitment and capacity to use data, compare outcomes within and across classrooms and schools and develop and revise plans and methods to improve performance and progress.			X
4.2 Professional development decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes. Professional development is designed to help leaders, faculty, and staff use data, self- and peer-assessments, and collaboration with peers to achieve goals for improved school and student outcomes. Professional development and self- and peer-evaluation are aligned and overlap.			X
4.3 The principal frequently observes classroom teaching and has a considered strategy for improving the quality of each teacher's instruction. Teachers frequently observe and support each other's classroom instruction with the goal of improving student outcomes.			X
4.4 Planning, evaluation of results, and revision of plans takes place in teams. Leaders and faculty inform each other of their goals and results, candidly evaluate themselves and each other, and use what is learned to drive improvement.			X
4.5 The principal is respected and has capacity to effect change.			X
4.6 The school runs smoothly. Procedures are clear, communicated to all, and are generally followed.			X
4.7 The school aligns youth development and support services around stated academic goals. Partnerships with outside bodies are routinely used to achieve academic goals.			X
Overall score for Quality Statement 4			X
Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has built-in structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year, recognizing weaknesses in its improvement plans and teaching practices, and flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.	∅	✓	+
5.1 All school plans and other interventions include frequent interim goals and diagnostic assessments of progress designed to reveal in objectively measurable ways whether the plan is being effectively implemented and reaching stated goals.			X
5.2 Comparisons of student progress within and across classrooms and schools are used in making interim diagnostic assessments and measuring the progress of plans and interventions.			X
5.3 Information generated by periodic assessments and diagnostic measures of progress and comparisons is used to revise plans immediately in order to reach stated goals. Interim and final goals are modified when data objectively demonstrate that revision is required.			X
5.4 Each plan's interim and final outcomes drive successive phases of goal setting and improvement planning, and each successive phase is characterized by agile and flexible realignment of practices and resources to improve student academic outcomes.			X
Overall score for Quality Statement 5			X