



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The High School of Fashion Industries

High School 600

**225 West 24 Street
New York
NY 10011**

Principal: Hilda Nieto

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Reviewer: Jo Storrs

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The High School of Fashion Industries is located in the Chelsea region of Manhattan with 1665 students enrolled from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 54% Hispanic, 34% Black, 7% White and 5% Asian. Only about 4% of the students are English language learners. Spanish is the predominant first language. Nearly 6% are special education students; some are in self-contained classes. About 89% of students are female.

The school is Title 1 eligible with 67.7% of students qualifying, which is above the averages for similar and City schools. The attendance rate is 85.9% which is higher than the averages for similar and City schools. Students travel from the five boroughs to attend the school and many go on to pursue careers in the fashion industry.

The school opened in 1940, and until 1956 was the Central Needle Trades High School. It is housed in a fine example of Art Deco architecture that the school is doing its best to preserve. There are good facilities including a large auditorium, attractive library, gymnasium and specialized science and fashion rooms. The principal has been in post for five years and was previously an assistant principal in the school.

The school has significant support from its Advisory Board and has formed many fruitful partnerships including 'Arts Connection', the 'International Center for Photography' and the 'Fashion Institute of Technology Saturday Live and Tech Prep' that support fashion design, art and marketing programs. In June 2005, the school received recognition as one of New York State's 'high performing/ gap closing schools' as it met all applicable State standards.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal provides exceptional leadership and has very high expectations for the school and every student.
- The principal and cabinet are an enthusiastic team dedicated to achieving success for each student.
- Excellent systems and effective use of data at all levels underpin the school's work.
- This high achieving school promotes a culture of inclusion, respect and the pursuit of excellence.
- The collegiate and industrious faculty and staff give their time unreservedly to help students to be successful.
- The excellent academic intervention services improve the performance and progress of students in greatest need.
- Administration, faculty, staff and partnerships work together harmoniously; for the benefit of the students.
- The creative and innovative curriculum that is carefully planned and assessed to meet students' needs.
- Most instruction is of a very high standard so students enjoy learning and perform well.
- The tremendous care and nurture, and the excellent and supportive relationships across the school, enable students to feel respected, valued and motivated to do their best.

What the school needs to improve

- Keep up the excellent achievements of the school.
- Establish specific goals and checkpoints for each grade in order to monitor progress and keep students on track.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well-developed school.

The High School of Fashion Industries is a unique and highly successful school. The principal was appointed five years ago following five years as an assistant principal in the school. She is an inspirational leader who has won the loyalty and dedication of the talented cabinet, and the confidence, respect and support of staff, students and parents. With the cohesive cabinet, she leads a dedicated and stable staff committed to achieving high standards. They believe that every student should be well supported and this support sustained until the student achieves success. There are excellent relationships and a genuine respect between teachers and students, who enjoy school and are motivated to do their very best. Nearly all rise to the challenge and behavior is very good. Students respect and support each other well, concentrate in class and benefit from the wealth of available curricular opportunities. There are clear and effective systems to ensure the school runs smoothly and efficiently.

The school has excellent systems to monitor and analyze individual students' progress from a vast array of data, some generated internally. The administration reviews all available information diligently to create class schedules and excellent intervention programs designed to meet students' individual needs. Professional development is planned to meet whole school, departmental and individual needs with a focus on high standards of achievement. The school, parent association and parent coordinator keep parents regularly informed of developments. Parents have a high regard for the school and recognize its exceptional qualities.

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.

The school is committed to the academic and vocational achievement of students. It has excellent systems to collect and use State and City data and information from its own internal assessment systems. All available data is interrogated to identify the performance of all groups, including English language learners, special education students, students at risk and the gender in-balance across the school. Comparisons made with the school's prior performance inform annual targets to maintain and further improve performance and attendance. Data is customized to track the performance and progress of individual students and to identify trends over time. It is used to identify targets and the needs of each student which are shared with departments, faculty and staff. Intervention and remediation programs are established for students at risk. The assistant principals and deans for attendance, guidance and security investigate students not succeeding because they are falling behind, 'cutting' classes or not attending well. The effective data management systems also allow the school to interrogate the data and compile reports in response to teachers' specific queries. As a result of all these factors, Regents' results remain high, the school achieved adequate yearly progress and the graduation rate is

higher than the average for City schools. In addition, the school was recognized in 2005 as one of New York State's 'high performing/ gap closing schools'.

The school benefits from a wide mix of students and the data identifies performance of the various ethnic groups and of English language learners. With the significant imbalance between male and female students, the school compares student performance by gender and is addressing disparities. Equal care is taken to collect data and track the progress of special education students. The administration is dedicated to achieving success for each student. They monitor and analyze overall data rigorously to provide a current view of the achievements of each grade, class and groups of students enrolled at the school. Importantly, they use the information very effectively to determine actions for improvement.

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.

This high achieving school promotes an inclusive, collegiate culture where every student is supported to excel. Very good use of data ensures the school has detailed knowledge of each student's progress. The results of internal tests and observation of students provide complementary evidence. The administration enthusiastically pursues high standards and uses all available data to work collaboratively with the leadership team to establish targets and plans in the clearly expressed Comprehensive Education Plan. Targets include meeting the needs of male students and addressing the low literacy and mathematical skills of many students entering the school. The assistant principal and members of their departments cooperatively set goals for individuals and groups of students. These are being refined to provide academic expectations and regular checkpoints in every grade so student progress can be examined easily and interventions applied quickly to keep all students on track. The collegiate and industrious faculty and staff unreservedly give their time to help students succeed. Particular attention is given to improving the performance and progress of students at risk, special education students, the small number of English language learners and irregular attendees. The excellent academic intervention services effectively support these students through specific programs for individuals or small groups and significantly improve their performance and progress.

The principal provides exceptional leadership, not wavering from her high expectations for every student. Students, parents and staff share accountability for student growth and development. On entry, parents, carers, guardians and students receive handbooks outlining expectations for attendance, behavior, performance and homework. Students feel respected and nourished academically and personally; they are very proud of their achievements and keen to attend. Parents receive regular information about their children's curriculum, progress and performance through helpful newsletters and discussions with teachers and staff. They confidently approach the school and feel any issues are addressed promptly and sensitively. Parents involved with the school are supportive and delighted with their children's performance and progress.

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.

The administration, faculty and staff harmoniously provide a creative, inter-linked and innovative curriculum that is very responsive to students’ needs. There is a high focus on academic success and a structure of majors that nurtures vocational programs and smaller communities within the school. Each department designs a stimulating curriculum to meet mandatory test requirements and the diverse skills of the fashion industry with programs in, for example, art and graphic illustration, visual merchandising and fashion marketing. The advisory board is very supportive of the schools’ needs. They promote the magnificent end of year fashion show and provide support for individuals or groups of student requiring financial or other help. The school has formed many fruitful partnerships that support academic and fashion design programs. Excellent academic intervention plans and credit recovery options enable students to catch up and perform well. Teachers recognize their accountability and differentiate planning and instruction accordingly. The high percentage of lively, differentiated class and group instruction engages and motivates students to do well. Talented students enjoy an exciting variety of enrichment classes that meet their needs effectively. Analysis of data enables faculty and staff to take successful action if extra support or changes to intervention programs are required for individual students.

Budgeting, resources, staffing and scheduling decisions are very carefully based on the schools’ plans and the specific needs of individual students. Self-contained classes and language classes help improve these students’ performance. The extended day program and a wealth of clubs and activities meet the academic, cultural and social needs of the diverse school population and support students’ interests and learning. All of these factors are enabling students to make good progress. The excellent and supportive relationships across the school and the tremendous care students receive makes them feel respected, valued and motivated to succeed. Students know who to turn to with their problems. They are proud of the school, enjoy most lessons and find nearly all teachers and staff friendly. There are well-developed systems to improve student attendance, punctuality and behavior in this reflective, compassionate and diverse community.

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.

The school’s thorough selection process ensures all new appointments have the required analytical, pedagogical and fashion-oriented skills to maintain the school’s high expectations. Consequently, the school has many loyal and excellent faculty and staff who give their time unconditionally to help students. Everyone feels well-supported, respected and valued by the principal and their colleagues and retention of staff is high. The principal and assistant principals for instruction regularly observe classroom teaching and provide constructive individual feedback. Professional development addresses school targets, such as the current focus on improving writing skills, and also focuses on departmental and individual needs. Ongoing individual and inter-departmental discussions and the meticulous mentoring of new teachers maintain the initiative. Teachers also attend conferences and courses to update their subject skills in order to drive up

achievement. Common planning, intervisitation and curriculum development within the school day are valued as the means to share best practice and adjust plans to provide consistency across classes in each grade. Continuity throughout the school and curricular links, such as between literacy and art, or mathematics and fashion, are also established through these opportunities. Following agreed procedures, a range of collaborative teams consisting of the principal, cabinet, teachers and staff systematically evaluate goals, results and personal performance frankly and honestly. The outcomes steer revision and improvements.

The principal is held in high esteem by faculty, staff, and students who recognize her exceptional leadership. She is totally committed to the welfare of staff and students who appreciate her concern for them. As a result, she commands loyalty and respect and effects change with integrity and consideration. Cabinet, faculty and counselors are equally dedicated to the school and play their parts well. The school runs smoothly due to clearly defined procedures that are followed conscientiously. The mature attitudes of most students also contribute effectively to the school's disciplined and friendly culture. There are numerous beneficial links with outside agencies, support services and community groups that help the school to improve performance.

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 principal and cabinet have a very clear picture of the school's strengths and areas for further development. Their high expectations, determination and collegiality provide a cohesive education that closely meets students' needs. The school leadership team is influential in setting and revising the detailed, articulate comprehensive education plan that is a valuable form of monitoring. The plan provides the rationale and direction for the work of the school and its community. Teachers use built-in, uniform tests and conscientiously assess and track students' achievements and work against detailed standards. Students are also given opportunities to self-evaluate. This information, and data from specific skills analyses, is discussed at regular departmental meetings with assistant principals and reveal which students are failing to make expected progress so the departmental goals and instructional programs can be modified to support them. Diagnostic assessments are undertaken when required. The performance of special education students, English language learners and students' at risk is equally well monitored and goals adjusted when necessary.

The administration diligently reviews all available data to identify its progress in meeting the needs of the students. Departmental data is scrutinized at cabinet meetings and comparisons between classes, grades and subjects are monitored carefully. Successes are celebrated and discrepancies investigated and resolved without delay. All decisions are reached collaboratively and focus on improving learning. An important aspect of monitoring is the regular walkthroughs, conducted by the administration, which have explicit purposes known to faculty and staff. These provide invaluable information which is documented in detail and may lead to realignment of practices, professional development or revision of plans. Through all these effective monitoring procedures the administration demonstrates its constant determination to achieve excellence.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The High School of Fashion Industries (HS 600)	∅	✓	+
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