



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

**College of Staten Island High School for
International Studies**

High School 047

**2800 Victory Boulevard 5N
Staten Island
NY 10314**

Principal: Aimee Horowitz

Dates of review: January 8 - 9, 2007

Reviewer: Corinne Brown

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The College of Staten Island High School for International Studies is a new small school which opened in September 2005 and this year has 9th and 10th grade students. International and global perspectives are presented across disciplines, with all students completing a four year second language, currently Mandarin Chinese, Japanese or Spanish.

Of the 200 students it serves this year, the majority are White (57%), with fourteen percent Black, over twelve percent Hispanic, eleven percent Asian and one percent of Native American backgrounds. Just under 20% are Title 1 eligible students with approximately 10% special education students, not in self contained classes. At present there are no English language learners in the school.

A member of the International Studies Schools Network (ISSN) and Asia Society, the school is located on the College of Staten Island campus and has the use of some campus facilities.

The Attendance Interval Report shows that average daily attendance is well over 90% with over a quarter of all students having 100% consistently.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- This small school has a nurturing and sharing ethos exemplified in small class sizes.
- The principal shows strong leadership and spearheads the drive for student achievement in a holistic sense.
- The school has a dedicated, hard-working and open staff who work collaboratively for the good of students through the spirit of self-reflection and lifelong learning.
- The international curriculum, including foreign language for all and the cultural exchange program, underpins all learning.
- The school uses technology effectively to prepare students for later life and to aid global communication.
- The school continues to develop innovative practice, as in the student led parent conferences and emphasis on kinesthetic learning.
- The school encourages the development of personal responsibility, organization and social awareness.
- The school has a vibrant and stimulating environment, with continually evolving display an integral part of learning.
- The advisory program supports learning, enhances the sense of belonging, community responsibility and life skills development.
- The service learning program and wide-ranging after school club opportunities enrich the lives of the students and the community.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue to work on differentiation of instruction to meet the needs of all learners within a heterogeneous setting.
- Refine and expand the use of data to allow comparison across years and with other schools, and to identify students who might be at risk.
- Continue curriculum development to create interdisciplinary units of study.
- Plan for school expansion, integrating new faculty and students, in line with the school culture.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school with well-developed features.

The College of Staten Island High School for International Studies has successfully made great efforts to establish a school built upon the ISSN principles of international cultural understanding and respect and which can grow as required whilst retaining integrity of purpose. A culture of high expectations with a caring, student centered focus pervades the school. The small school environment is used to ensure that all individuals, students, staff and parents are known, nurtured and respected so that lifelong learning can be mutually enjoyed. The principal is highly valued for her warmth, leadership and vision for the school by the school community. The collaborative approach to all aspects of decision making enables all members to grow as learners, enhances self esteem and fosters a sense of responsibility.

The ISSN School Design Matrix has been adopted as the basis for the organization of the school. It addresses six key domains: vision, mission and school culture; learning outcomes; curriculum; assessment; instruction; school organization and governance; professional learning community; family and community partnerships

The principal has a clear longer term vision for the growth of the school. She works in partnership with the highly dedicated teachers, who are all seen as teacher leaders, to continually reflect and refine practice and plans within the framework of the ISSN Design Matrix. Professional development is reflective, practical and philosophical and indicatives a school of critical thinkers. Holistic development as learners is an ongoing dynamic for all staff and students.

Staff enrich the curriculum in exciting and innovative ways, using a kinesthetic approach and a growing range of interdisciplinary links that truly motivate students. A wide range of after school clubs are already flourishing, thanks to staff passion, within the short time the school has been open.

The use of data and analysis is progressing well. Some aspects are not fully developed and established as data is not available, but staff already have the required skills to undertake this.

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 proficient.

The school is in its second year and currently has only two cohorts of students. It has established the use of data from the outset to underpin standards based instruction as one of many strands, regularly collecting and analyzing a variety of formal and informal data to monitor progress, including assessments devised by the school. Teachers are supported in its effective use through the collaborative working ethos of the school, particularly at grade team meetings and through professional development. As new teachers are

inducted into the school they also become confident and familiar through the supportive mentoring and consensual decision-making processes.

Staff assess their students' achievements in a variety of ways, formally through data from previous standardized test results as benchmarks, and through assessments devised by teachers to check achievement or progress. Grade teams meet twice a week to discuss information from their own observations, from data or assessments, or from other sources such as parents. The close team work of these meetings and thorough knowledge of students enables appropriate steps to be swiftly taken. All staff, including the principal, nurse and parent coordinator contribute to these meetings, offering insight and perspective. Teams are able to consider each student as an individual and plan the most effective personal support accordingly.

Being a school in its infancy, the main focus has been on collection of performance and progress data by individual student, grade, advisory and class. This has enabled identification of some discrete subgroup performance, such as African American males and special education students, and associated planning

The school's use of comparative data can only be undeveloped at this stage as it has not yet begun to generate its own data to enable some comparison with similar schools, nor has there yet been an Annual Report Card. However, the principal and her staff continually seek to refine plans and practice, and have the necessary skills to generate this information as the school develops.

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 proficient.

The Comprehensive Education Plan has clear goals and specific tasks relevant to this newly established school. It clearly reflects the collaborative nature of the school, enabling the school to look at individual and collective performance.

Opportunities for teams to collaborate in data analysis, planning and intervention, together with professional development, means that teachers are supported in targeting student need. This reinforces the process of setting demanding and measurable goals for immediate and long-range improvement. Parents and students are involved in the learning partnership and may be invited to team meetings. Teachers conference with students to gain insight into their learning style and understand their performance, which encourages student reflection. The strong advisory program gives advisors the opportunity to understand student performance and facilitates student responsibility as they make decisions about targets.

Students are empowered through innovative student led parent conferences at which they set goals for themselves. They give insight for advisors and parents on effective ways to support the child's learning and development as an individual. As the school works at the individual level as part of its ethos, students in greatest need of improvement are readily identified and supported.

Parents are also able to track progress and support learning through accessing "Think Wave", an online program, where individual grades and class assignments are posted

weekly. Teachers, advisors and the principal communicate regularly via email, telephone and in person, which ensures no student misses an opportunity to succeed. The school works hard to involve and engage parents with considerable success and is pleased to have been able to appoint a parent coordinator this year. Overall parents support the aims of the school and are full of praise for the commitment and open approach of the principal and all her staff. The PTA is an active and energetic body that achieves very good attendance at meetings and works to support the school vision.

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.

Teachers feel accountable for improving student outcomes. Based on data, courses have been created and implanted to accelerate student learning. Any information that can be used to examine the impact of their teaching on learning is used, such as the Department of Education course mark analysis, interim progress reports and report cards.

Differentiation is developing, and the school recognizes the need to address individual learning styles. Teachers use flexible groupings, alternate or supplementary materials, choice and a variety of recording methods to allow student to show learning. Curriculum development, creating interdisciplinary units of study, is planned to further integrate literacy across the curriculum. Students are motivated by creative delivery, pacing of lessons and structure. They produce creative and colorful evidence of success, displayed throughout the school and contributing to a vibrant atmosphere. Technology is used to good effect in learning and to aid global communication, in line with the school ethos.

Students make a positive choice to opt for CSIHSIH, many traveling considerable distances, a measure of commitment also reflected in excellent attendance. Being on the college campus also has benefits in that some facilities can be used, such as the cafeteria and larger meeting areas. Students appreciate the advisory program which is central to improving their achievement. Consequently they are motivated and engaged. Through the school parliament their collective voice is heard, allowing participate in decision-making. Students are grateful for the breadth of the global perspective, the use of technology to support learning and the sense of independence, responsibility and freedom as individuals the school provides. They feel respected, comfortable with all adults in the school and pleased to be part of such a community. They are proud of their school where individuals are valued, and view the global perspective of their studies as life enhancing.

Decisions about staffing and budget are appropriately focused on needs analysis and student performance, for example to provide highly qualified tuition in languages such as Mandarin Chinese. School partners are effectively used as a resource to support the curriculum and instruction.

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 active involvement of the school community in the selection of new staff fits with the school culture. There is a clear framework for selection to include an international and collaborative outlook, involvement in personal learning and open attitudes.

Professional development is a significant area for this school which believes in lifelong learning. All teachers are seen as teacher leaders and lead, as well as participate in, professional development, including maximizing the use of data so all students can meet their full potential. In addition, the infusion of international education into all curriculum areas and the Principles of Learning (clear expectations, academic rigor in a thinking curriculum, self management of learning and accountable talk) are components assessed on instructional walkthroughs. These enable the principal and leadership to have an overview of the strengths of teachers and students. Informal professional development is ongoing through mentoring, sharing and self reflection evident in teams and visitations. All staff participate in book studies focusing on issues relevant to the school. Team teaching, collaborative planning and modeling are other effective methods the school uses to share in improving student outcomes. As a result of the focus on continuing professional development teachers are supported in accelerating the learning of their students.

Consultants and coaches from the Asia Society regularly contribute in school to development. The staff are provided with opportunities to attend professional development conferences and workshops around international education, the Asia Society's Summer Institute for ISSN schools and a wide range of opportunities based on individual teacher development.

The principal is highly respected by all who meet her for her dynamic and focused passion in creating such a vibrant student-centered school. She is ably supported by a strong and equally dedicated group of professionals who give wholeheartedly in advisory and academic interactions with students.

Partnerships with an extensive range of outside bodies actively contribute to student engagement and success. The service learning program, wide-ranging after school club opportunities and cultural exchange program enrich the lives of the students and the community, which fits completely with the school philosophy. For example, a professional quality newspaper is regularly produced by students in the journalism club who are guided by a very dedicated teacher.

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 proficient.

The school is at an early stage, but already has policies and plans in place to enable organizational and personal growth to take place. Integrating new faculty and students, in line with the school philosophy and ethos, will be part of this process. Data is regularly

collected and assessed during the year and the school flexibly responds to information it provides. Plans and schedules can be subtly adjusted as required, as the school is small, with a cohesive staff who put student achievement first.

Members of the College community and the Asia Society as well as parents, students and teachers serve on the School Leadership Team, which is co-chaired by a parent and teacher. They collaborate to evaluate the school's progress in achieving its mission, assess needs and set goals as detailed in the Comprehensive Education Plan. The ISSN Design Matrix gives another framework for school development which is embedded. The school uses the strong advisory program to gain student feedback as well as through the school parliament system, which impacts positively on student engagement and flexible realignment of practice.

Based on data the school is creating a freshman skills intensive for all students to have essential life skills that embody the school vision, mission and graduate profile. The students already in school use these skills, but this shows forward thinking in long term planning for student achievement.

The school faces significant challenges as it grows, but has established a leadership team, staff and support network to ensure the vision is maintained and that students share in the personal opportunities offered by the international perspective.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: College of Staten Island High School for International Studies (HS047)	∅	✓	+
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	