



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Intermediate School 230

Middle School 230

**73-10 34th Avenue
Queens
NY 11372**

Principal: Sharon Terry

Dates of review: March 24 - 26, 2008

Lead Reviewer: Ronnie Solow

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Intermediate School 230 is a middle school with 973 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 2% Black, 51% Hispanic, 7% White, and 40% Asian students. The student body includes 14% English language learners and 13% special education students. Boys account for 55% of the students enrolled and girls account for 45%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 93.9%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 75% eligibility.

The school is divided into four academies that students select based on interest. These are the Academy of Business and Finance, the Academy of Communication Arts and Dance, the Academy of Environmental Science and Health, and the Academy of Law and Government. These academies engage students in study based on their personal interests and skills. The school also has a program for developmentally delayed students classified with the alternate assessment category.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal has a strong academic focus and provides distributive leadership for effective instruction.
- The curriculum, with uniform data collection and recording systems, contributes to improved student achievement.
- The academic program, engaging and challenging, involves students through collaborative goal setting activities.
- Individual and small groups of students receive effective support through various intervention strategies implemented by the school.
- Professional development is a very high priority, differentiated by interest, need and skill, and well attended by the staff.
- Teachers feel supported by the administration and have the necessary materials and supplies to address their instructional targets.
- School goals are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure they are appropriate and achieved.
- A high level of mutual trust and respect is evident between staff and students because of the nurturing environment.
- The administration and staff collaboratively support one another in the teaching and learning process.
- The school has extensive partnerships that support and enhance the academic, social and emotional development of the students.

What the school needs to improve

- Expand the use of data to address achievement gaps between gender and ethnic groups and to assess cultural sensitivity in the classrooms.
- Address achievement gaps through culturally sensitive, differentiated instructional activities.
- Build upon present efforts to increase parental involvement in the school life of their children.
- Distribute all interim testing results and information to parents in order to share information about goals and achievement consistently.

Part 3: Main Findings

Progress made since the last review

The school has made good progress in addressing the issues identified in the previous Quality Review report

Overall Evaluation

This school is well developed.

The principal makes professional development a priority with a clear focus on improving the achievement of all the students. The school, structured into four academies, engages students in study based upon their particular interests. The principal's vision "from good to great" is evident throughout the school. The use of data, curriculum maps, and pacing calendars drive the high quality instructional program that incorporates differentiated instructional activities to further student outcomes and increase achievement. However, differentiation is insufficiently developed in all classrooms. Very effective intervention practices support students requiring additional assistance to meet their academic targets. The school effectively addresses the needs of higher achieving students through enrichment activities, clubs and classes. Students and staff feel well supported by the school and are happy to attend, resulting in good attendance. The excellent academic program, enhanced by numerous outside partnerships, encourages the academic, social, creative, physical and emotional development of the students. The school is operating at 129% of capacity.

The use of data drives the instructional program. The data specialist regularly supplies the staff with State and interim testing results and assists the staff in using the results of the data entering and retrieval technology programs. At this time, data is disaggregated for gender and ethnic group progress but has not been fully enough translated into action in all classes in order to close performance gaps and assess cultural sensitivity. The school regularly sends home progress reports and academic goal information in between report card cycles. The school does not share the predictive and interim testing results with parents to keep them well enough informed of their children's progress. Parental involvement in the school is not sufficiently developed.

The school has made good progress in addressing the areas for improvement from the last Quality Review. Teachers collaborate with students to set clear goals aligned to the content and performance standards for each core content area. Differentiated instruction scaffolds student learning well in most classes. Student engagement, furthered through hands-on activities, accountable talk and interest-based lessons, promotes involvement and student accountability. Teachers' self and peer evaluation practices utilize the Santa Cruz Professional Teaching Standards and a "critical friends" group that conducts intervisitations, provides feedback and reflection on best teaching practices.

The inquiry team, examining the lowest third of the student body in English language arts on the State exam, designed an action research project with interventions addressing their needs. Some growth in ability is evident.

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 the student's progress over time.

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

The principal, assistant principals and members of the instructional team use a variety of formative and summative assessment data to understand the progress of students, classes, grades and academies across the school. The teachers diligently use data from State exams, diagnostic and predictive assessments, school-created diagnostic exams and informal classroom sources for accurate assessment of performance outcomes of all students. The staff members use data, kept in teacher assessment notebooks that are well-organized binders, and student work samples. This means they have consistently good knowledge of student progress. The school data specialist assists the teachers by providing student performance data and helping teachers access the information on-line. The teachers' skills in analyzing their class data enables them to create effective plans and lessons that meet the needs of their students. Analysis of data for sub-groups, English language learners and special education students in the school targets the learning needs and performance of these groups. Not all teachers are sufficiently aware of the need for analyzing data by ethnicity and gender to address performance gaps and assess the cultural sensitivity of their classroom.

The principal makes very good comparisons with other schools in her network and similar schools in her neighborhood. Information gathered through comparisons propels decisions about best practices, school culture and goal setting. Excellent training in the gathering, analysis and use of data is an ongoing priority. The use of the Santa Cruz Professional Teaching Standards incorporates measurements of teacher utilization of data in designing high-quality learning experiences for all students.

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use data to understand each student's next learning steps and to set suitably high goals for accelerating each student's learning.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

Teachers effectively plan for students by using many varied data sources. The Comprehensive Education Plan and the principal's goals and objectives are the cornerstones of a rigorous, well-rounded academic program. Measurable targets, specified in the curriculum, result in curriculum maps and pacing calendars that provide an objective understanding of student progress. Student work, classroom assessments and formal examination results serve as the basis for the flexible grouping decisions. Students and teachers collaboratively set goals in all core instructional subjects three times per year, producing greater awareness of the progress and needs for both teacher and student. Classrooms and hallways exhibit rubrics, student work and exit projects that effectively convey the results of high expectations for students.

Collaborative teams of teachers meet weekly across subject areas, grades and academies to reflect, share and plan for the students. English language learners,

special education students and students identified as being at-risk for academic failures receive excellent intervention and support services in self-contained settings, push-in and pull-out models, both in school and extended day programs. Higher-achieving students receive challenging instruction in school and after school in well-designed classes and activities. Parents receive information regarding their children's progress through a variety of formal and informal channels that follow a regular calendar. At this time, the school does not include interim assessment information to inform parents of their children's current English language arts and math status and progress and provide information regarding personal and school goals.

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instructional Strategy to Goals: The school aligns its academic work, strategic decisions and resources, and effectively engages students around its plans and goals for accelerating student learning.

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

The broad, engaging core curriculum follows the State and City mandates. All classes effectively utilize the workshop model with flexible, needs-based instructional groupings using differentiated learning activities and materials so that student individual needs are effectively addressed. The extensive program in the arts, technology and physical education enhance the academic program through well-integrated components that support achievement. Most classes effectively differentiate for student needs by content, process and learning style of the students. Teachers are accountable for providing engaging, challenging lessons in a supportive, nurturing environment, even though cultural sensitivity is not fully developed. Students stated, "Our teachers are always available to help us. They give us all the help we need to learn". All data, rigorously examined, reveals trends for classes and individual students. Teachers then make timely adjustments in response to the revealed information. They address student's goals in flexible instructional groups and this leads to improved success.

Creative budgeting and good management systems support student and staff needs in an environment of trust, shared leadership, and mutual respect. Culturally engaging materials, a new computer laboratory, consultants and mentors are the result of skillful analysis of student data outcomes. The creation of three classes from two classes for lower achieving students results in smaller class size and enables greater student attention from the teachers. In support of the learning environment, students wear the school uniform. An advisory program addresses successful work and study habits for all classes in the school. Excellent attendance and lateness monitoring procedures are in place resulting in high attendance figures.

Quality Statement 4 - Align Capacity Building to Goals: The development of leadership, teachers and other staff capacity is aligned to the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.

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

The wide range of professional development activities, well integrated and highly appreciated by the members of the staff, is regularly taken advantage of by the teachers. The administrative team visits classes daily and provides good formal and informal feedback in a timely fashion. Intervisitations between teachers to share best practices

provide good opportunities for educational discussions. Demonstration lessons by assistant principals and teachers, taped and shared, provide material for discussion and reflection at “critical friends” meetings so that teachers can improve their instruction. The math and literacy coaches, mentors and consultants provide good targeted assistance and high quality training for the entire staff. In recognition of the importance of professional development for all staff members, the highly differentiated program includes paraprofessionals and assistant principals in targeted activities to enlarge their knowledge and increase school-wide leadership capacity. The principal states, “Differentiation is like a keyhole. Every bump of the key has to fit.” New teachers receive excellent induction training during August and regularly throughout the year at sessions that address their needs in data analysis and usage, lesson planning, classroom management and topics as they arise.

Clear routines and procedures, along with very effective youth development structures, enable the school to run smoothly and efficiently. After-school programs, supported by a very wide range of effective partnerships, encourage a healthy life-style through participation in clubs, arts and music activities, robotics, chess and sports.

Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for evaluating each student’s progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.

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

The school’s strategic plans include measurable and regularly scheduled reviews of targets in all curriculum areas and lead to effective monitoring and revision systems. Effective systems are in place for monitoring and evaluating the progress of the school towards meeting the goals outlined in the action plans. The inquiry team meets regularly, examines performance outcomes, and plans successive steps to improve achievement levels across the school. Subject and academy teams discuss student progress rigorously, identify areas of strength and weakness and act appropriately on the needs. Timely revisions of curriculum maps and pacing calendars result from the revealed information. The revised plan builds upon successes and effectively addresses the revealed needs through targeted improvement strategies. This well-developed action plan builds on the previously developed plans to ensure continued success. Student goals are examined three times per year to assess individual progress and make sure that goals are met. Scrutiny of work samples, writing books, formal and informal data enables the teachers and assistant principals to make appropriate determinations for each student’s next learning steps.

The principal and the school community have a clear vision regarding the future of their school. The school leadership team, with full representation of the community, outlines an action plan, with good cyclical planning strategies, that ensures continued academic and artistic success through high expectations for all students. Each successive year builds on the successes of the previous year and addresses the newly revealed needs. All constituencies provide information incorporated into the long-term vision and short-term goals for the school and its students.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Intermediate School 230	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
Quality Score				X	

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

To what extent do school leaders and faculty provide . . .	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
1.1 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of each student, classroom, grade level?				X	
1.2 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of special education students?				X	
1.3 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of English language learners?				X	
1.4 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of ethnic groups, gender groups and all other categories of interest to the school?			X		
1.5 a measurement of performance and progress based on the school's own past performance, and among students, classrooms, grades and subject areas?				X	
1.6 a measurement of performance and progress based on comparisons with similar schools?				X	
1.7 training, management systems and structures that support teachers in the use of school data to inform planning and instruction and to track the progress of students?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 1				X	

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use data to understand each student's next learning steps and to set suitably high goals for accelerating each students learning.

To what extent do school leaders and faculty . . .	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
2.1 engage in collaborative processes to set rigorous, objectively measurable goals for improvement, and to develop plans and timeframes for reaching those goals?				X	
2.2 focus 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 identify and improve the performance and progress of those students in greatest need of improvement?				X	
2.4 share whole school goals with all members of the school community to rigorously improve the performance and progress of students?			X		
2.5 convey consistently high expectations to students and their parents/caregivers?				X	
2.6 regularly provide students and their parents/caregivers with information about the goals set for each student, and about each student's progress and performance, and how they can improve?			X		
2.7 invite and enable parents/caregivers to provide useful information to teachers and the school about the learning needs and capacities of their children?			X		
Overall score for Quality Statement 2			X		

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instructional Strategy to Goals: The school aligns its academic work, strategic decisions and resources, and effectively engages students around its plans and goals for accelerating student learning.

To what extent does the school . . .	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
3.1 select core curricular approaches that facilitate and provide meaningful interim data about progress towards goals and focus on raising the achievement of students?				X	
3.2 provide a broad and engaging curriculum, including the arts, to enhance learning both within and outside the school day?				X	
3.3 hold teachers accountable for the progress and learning of the students in their charge, for making instruction interesting and compelling, and for creating a positive safe and inclusive learning environment?				X	
3.4 ensure that teachers use school, class and student data to plan for and provide differentiated instruction that meets the specific needs of all the students in their charge?			X		
3.5 make budgeting, staffing and scheduling decisions strategically, based on data, to meet the school's academic goals for all students?				X	
3.6 ensure that there is an environment of mutual trust and respect between all staff and students to support personal and academic development?				X	
3.7 ensure that there are effective and consistently applied procedures to encourage and monitor student attendance and tardiness?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 3				X	

Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building to Goals: The development of leadership, teachers and other staff capacity is aligned to the school’s collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.					
To what extent does the school . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
4.1 use frequent observations of classroom teaching by the principal and other available information to develop a differentiated strategy for improving the quality of each teacher’s instruction?				X	
4.2 make professional development decisions strategically, based on data, to help meet the improvement goals of students and teachers?				X	
4.3 provide frequent opportunities for teachers to observe each other’s classroom instruction and to meet together in teams to plan, share effective practices, and evaluate one another’s instruction in an open and reflective professional environment?				X	
4.4 develop effective procedures for the induction and support of teachers who are new to the profession or the school?				X	
4.5 align youth development, guidance/advising and other student support services around stated academic and personal development goals?				X	
4.6 consistently implement clear procedures that enable the school to run smoothly and encourage effective student learning, and effectively address discipline related incidents?				X	
4.7 create effective partnerships with outside entities that support the academic and personal growth of the students?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 4					X

Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for evaluating each student’s progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.					
To what extent do . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
5.1 the school’s plans for improving student outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?				X	
5.2 the school’s plans for improving teacher outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?				X	
5.3 teachers and faculty use periodic assessments and other diagnostic tools to measure the effectiveness of plans and interventions for individual and groups of students in key areas?				X	
5.4 teachers and faculty use the information generated by periodic assessments and other progress measures and comparisons to revise plans immediately in order to reach stated goals?				X	
5.5 school leaders track the outcomes of periodic assessments and other diagnostic measures and use the results to makes strategic decisions to modify practices to improve student outcomes?				X	
5.6 school leaders and staff use each plan’s interim and final outcomes to drive the next stage of goal setting and improvement planning?				X	
5.7 the principal and school community have a clear vision for the future development of the school and implement procedures and systems to effect change?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 5					X

◇	Outstanding
+	Well Developed
✓	Proficient
➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features
Δ	Underdeveloped