



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

East-West School of International Studies

**High School 281
46-21 Colden Avenue
Queens
NY 11355**

Principal: Ben Sherman

**Dates of review: June 2 - 3, 2008
Lead Reviewer: Alexander Ramos**

Content of the report

Part 1: The School Context

Information about the school

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

What the school needs to improve

Part 3: Main Findings

Progress made since the last review

Overall evaluation

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

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The East-West of International Studies is a high school with 149 students from grade 6 through grade 10. The school population comprises 17% Black, 28% Hispanic, 3% White, and 51% Asian students. The student body includes 17% English language learners and 6% special education students. Boys account for 54% of the students enrolled and girls account for 46%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 94.3%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 57% eligibility.

The school opened in September 2007 with grades 6 and 7. This year it expanded to serve students in grades 6 through 10. All students are required to study five hours a week of Japanese, Chinese, or Korean language.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Teachers utilize a robust collection of data to inform instructional decisions.
- Through a culture of positive communication and interpersonal relationships, staff successfully and effectively convey high expectations to all students.
- Leaders have established a thorough system for providing focused interventions to the students in greatest need.
- The school offers an extensive Asian foreign language and arts program that supports and fully challenges all students.
- The school has a comprehensive system for holding teachers accountable for the progress and learning of the students in their charge.
- Achievement is highly celebrated through a rich display of rigorous and engaging projects adorning all the walls of the school.
- The principal has established an environment of mutual trust and respect.
- Frequent, structured and focused observations of teachers effectively improve the quality of teaching and support student achievement.
- Extensive relationships with cultural institutions deeply support school goals.
- The principal aligns his resources well to ensure the realization of his vision for the future development of the school.

What the school needs to improve

- Summarize student assessment data to give a clear picture of the patterns in the performance and progress of subgroups, classes and grades.
- Aggregate individual student goals into class goals, grade goals, and school goals to help teachers target work and further raise student achievement.
- Improve teachers understanding of the strategies in teaching literacy through focused professional development.
- Develop systems to help school leaders monitor progress towards academic achievement goals with established benchmarks.
- Provide teachers with tools to improve their ability to monitor student's progress at the classroom level.

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.

In its second year, the East West School of International Studies has established an environment for learning that ably supports students' capacity to succeed. It realizes its vision to train students to become experts in Asian culture through an exceptional foreign language program as well as many extracurricular activities, which support and challenge all students. Skilled and dedicated staff work tirelessly to establish exceptional programs that allow the vision of the school to become a reality. The school's reflective leader has developed an instructional program that promotes his vision. The school fully utilizes all resources, supplemented by strong relationships with numerous outside organizations to further support student learning. These relationships provide students with extensive opportunities to participate in activities that align well with the school's cause.

The principal is fully respected by all members of the school community and has the capacity to effectively lead. Staff members make exceptional use of individual student data to inform instruction and utilize strong relationships with students to help personalize interventions to meet their needs. However, goal setting for groups of students including class, grade and whole school, and a system for analyzing the data and monitoring the achievement of groups of students is not sufficiently developed. Since the school is only in its second year, they do not have sufficient historical data to conduct analysis based on past performance.

The administration's frequent observations to realize teachers' potential creates a staff that fully engages students through active learning. Work to deepen teachers' understanding of teaching literacy continues. The halls and walls of the school covered with high quality creative work rigorously reflect superior work. Students, parents, and staff are rightly proud of their school and so supportively give more of their time to foster success. In Saturday cooking classes, parents and students communicate with school personnel in a casual environment where staff from various cultures prepare and share meals with members of the school community. The daily ritual, "morning muster," is well embedded into school culture, provides opportunities to share pertinent information and serves to establish collegiality, and respect among staff and students.

The school has made excellent improvements since the last Quality Review. They have created curriculum maps and pacing charts for all subject areas, implemented systems to track student progress, developed spreadsheets of student data for teachers, created mock interim assessments based on NYS Regents examinations, and established a comprehensive staff manual that details expectations for teachers.

The inquiry team made good progress in their study of underachieving students. They administered diagnostics assessments and appropriate interventions to assist students in developing the tools to be successful. These strategies have transferred into the classroom and are now embedded into daily routines.

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 school collects an extensive array of qualitative and quantitative performance data to provide teachers with the tools to inform instruction starting from the first day of school. In addition to summative data from the previous year, teachers administer running records assessment to gauge their students independent reading levels, inform their student grouping decisions, and develop their instructional focus. Acuity predictive examinations, instructionally targeted assessments and the "Renaissance" program assessments also provide teachers with a means by which to address gaps in learning.

The school collects and analyzes scholarship data on an interim basis to gain a deeper understanding of the progress of students. Teachers use this information effectively to inform instruction. The monitor English language learners and special education students closely through individual conferencing and teacher observations of their work. The leadership collects extensive data for their neediest students to plan the best, effective learning experiences for them. They use the same systems for all students but specifically interrogate for special education and English language learners to ensure their success. The inquiry team analyzed data on its focus group students based on ethnicity and gender and arranged effective interventions based on the findings. Through its support organization, the school has analyzed data by subgroup and at whole school level. The school is in the process of establishing systems to conduct this analysis on their own. Historical data for the school does not apply. However, administrators have conducted analysis of their past performance, and compared the data from the previous year to its current performance. The school's administration makes strong efforts to fully utilize data from similar schools and in ongoing problem solving, so have adopted practices observed during visits to similar schools. One-to-one training by the assistant principal to utilize data provides effective extensive support to teachers.

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 well developed.

The school's climate encourages a high level of collaboration among staff. Staff engage in professional dialogue through regularly scheduled team meetings where they plan interventions and set measurably goals for individual and groups of students based on current performance. The school effectively identifies and focuses on students at risk and those failing to meet established benchmarks, so they progress suitably. Teachers utilize regular interim assessments and scholarship data to plan intervention strategies and ensure continuous progress towards goals. They regularly communicate with all members of the school community through "morning muster" by disseminating information relative to goal setting and plans for school improvement to all members of the school community. This also occurs on the school website, with regular communication between teachers and parents. Advisors regularly contact parents to discuss students' successes and instructional needs, and to establish home support for individual goals. The school successfully conveys high expectations to students and their parents through regular

parental involvement in intervention conferences and the rigorous academic program. Parents are provided with many opportunities to share information that leads to increased student achievement through required initial consultations at the start of the school year with assigned advisors.

The school has established and met all goals for the year, but these goals related to the establishment of systems and achievement of individual students. They did not include performance by classes, grades and whole school academic outcomes. Although the school has made good progress in setting goals for individual students, the development of systems to establish interim checkpoints to assess the progress at class, grade and school wide levels has not yet been accomplished.

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 school has developed curriculum maps and pacing charts in all academic subject areas. This work, created collaboratively by teachers, integrates rigorous writing activities in all academic subject areas. Culminating projects assess progress towards established student goals. The school fully engages all students in extensive project based work that allows for more opportunities to differentiate instruction and full participation by students at all levels of development. Project-based work with the participation of the creative art teacher ensures excellent integration of the arts in all subject areas, supplemented by high quality partnerships. Extra-curricular activities include an extensive array of opportunities in Japanese art, digital photography, video production, chorus, instrumental music, as well as a Japanese “Animé” Club. The principal’s vision of developing students prepared to compete in the international market drives the rigorous foreign language program, which includes a choice of daily Japanese, Chinese and Korean language classes for every student.

The comprehensive “credit alert” system ensures full teacher accountability for the learning of all the students in their charge. The system requires teachers to document parent contact and all efforts made to address the needs of failing students. This, in turn, means that differentiation and interventions fully address the needs of students that require additional support. The high attendance rate evidences the trust and respect that permeates the school environment through the administration establishing a culture of positive communication and celebration of success.

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 principal’s and assistant principals’ daily observations of teachers’ classrooms provide immediate and effective feedback that improves the quality of teaching. The system for documenting these activities ensures teachers hold to the expectations set for their professional development. Individualized differentiated support occurs through teacher-selected outside professional development, which further develops their practice. The information collected during observations informs professional development planning.

Evidence clearly shows the school's professional development plans closely align with their stated goals. For example, the leadership requires all teachers to attend training in teaching writing, which is congruent with teaching literacy across the curriculum. The school wishes to improve literacy further through the addition of two part-time English language arts coaches to enhance English and global Regents results. Intervisitations are a common practice, so staff utilize practices from peer schools they believe would support their efforts. The administration expects teachers to implement these per school practices. Good support for new teachers includes in-house mentors and weekly-programmed study sessions with the principal to discuss professional literature and share common experiences and practices. The warm and inviting atmosphere in the school evidences effective procedures to promote student learning and address discipline concerns.

Extensive relationships with cultural institutions strongly support school goals, through guidance for the advisory program, mentors for students based on personal interests, and participation by organizations that provide learning experiences related to different cultures. These include the Ruben Museum and the Alvin Ailey Dance Company, through which students engage in dance and Himalayan art during the school day. "Morning muster" also provides opportunities to share students' successes and develop an environment of achievement. Well-integrated guidance services fully support instructional goals.

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 proficient.

The school has established rigorous goals for the development of systems to improve instructional practices and for the monitoring of student progress. The administration and staff utilize data from various sources including daily walkthroughs, teacher-student conferences, feedback from teachers, student progress reports and mock exams in all content areas. The "credit alert" system ensures timely and effective action to support students at risk of failure. Faculty, partners and parent leaders review school data at a summer retreat and devise or amend plans to address future developments.

School leaders consistently advocate a very clear message regarding the school vision. They appropriately amend plans at midyear in response to closely monitored data sources. They have the capacity to change strategies if success is not visible and as teachers become more adept at using assessment information. The leadership's contribution to measuring success and redefining interim goals is growing. The school is very reflective and monitors its work regularly. However, it has not yet developed an effective system to carry out the detailed monitoring of student and teacher outcomes, subgroup performance and subject trends to make fully informed decisions about future action. It is exceptionally clear that this unique school knows where it is going, understands the complexity of its intentions and will capably do whatever is needed to provide for its students.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: East-West School of International Studies	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