



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Long Island City High School

High School 450

**14-30 Broadway
Queens
NY 11106**

Principal: William Bassell

Dates of review: September 24 – 25, 2007

Lead Reviewers: John Collings

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Long Island City High School is a high school with 3432 students from 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 14% Black, 56% Hispanic, 14% White and 16% Asian students. The student body includes 12% English language learners and 10% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance for the school year 2006-2007 is 82%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 61% eligibility.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school provides a broad and stimulating curriculum, which is key to the outstanding student attitudes and involvement in learning.
- There are high expectations for all students to do well resulting in a strong climate for learning.
- The creation of personalized learning environments is a real strength of the school, and ensures students' academic and personal involvement.
- The principal is very well supported in his vision through the commitment and competence of the cabinet.
- Students are provided with very good academic and personal support, which results in students having high aspirations for the future.
- The commitment of teachers to reflectively evaluate and improve their practice ensures that student achievement continues to rise.
- The principal has created an exemplary learning environment.
- The very good breadth of data available to the school supports teachers in modifying their practice to ensure student learning is effective.

What the school needs to improve

- Use the data available to differentiate teaching and learning more effectively so that students make the best progress possible.
- Use available data to set interim goals for students and regularly monitor their progress towards them.
- Inform students and parents of the goals being set and the progress made.
- Ensure the very clear vision shared by the principal and assistant principals, can be articulated by the whole school community.

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.

Students in this school want to succeed. This is because there is a strong climate for learning. This has been created through the leadership of the principal, and implemented through a committed cabinet and a dedicated staff team. Central to this positive learning climate are the personal learning environments and a wide and varied curriculum that engages students' interests and motivates their learning. The school has used data in innovative ways to identify where improvements are most needed. Teachers have used the data to reflect on their instruction and improve their teaching. As a result, academic performance and attendance have continued to improve over the last year. However, the data is not used to set students challenging targets that are based not only on formal assessment data, but also teachers' predictions of the progress students are expected to make over the coming year.

The principal's clear vision, commitment and strong leadership results in mutual respect between all members of the school community. Staff support students very well to succeed both academically and in their personal development. As a result, they are articulate, mature and have high aspirations. They say, "We are proud of our school and want to do well." While the administration is clear about its vision for the school, not all members of the school community communicate this consistently.

The school has identified its inquiry team and its target student group for focused monitoring. The first meeting is planned before the end of this month.

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 makes very good use of data to identify which students are achieving well and where learning is not as effective as the school would like. This has resulted in modifications to the curriculum, which are carefully monitored for effectiveness to ensure all students make the best possible progress. The school shares pertinent data with staff. Along with good professional development, this has led to good interpretation and action at the classroom level. As a result, there has been continually improving performance over the last few years.

The school has been innovative in developing its own data systems to analyze student progress and to use these not only to monitor student progress but also in identifying expectations. It has used this data well to modify its practice in supporting students in various ethnic groups through increased bilingual support. The early indications suggest this is having a positive impact on their performance. The school reviews its own performance very well. It is able to demonstrate that while 80% percent of its students enter below their grade level well over 60% graduate.

Although this is a large school with well over 3000 students, it has used its data very effectively to create personalized learning environments (PLEs) of approximately 200 students. The smaller data sets of these PLEs enable the school to track students reliably to ensure they make the progress expected, and if not, be supported to do better. This initiative is having a significant impact on improving student progress.

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.

There is a very strong climate for learning in the school where whole school goals are known as well as those for individual PLEs. This focus on smaller learning communities and their ability to respond promptly to student need has, since their introduction, been largely responsible for the improving performance of the school. While goal setting is firmly in place the school has more work to do in establishing interim goals for students. This will enable even more timely adjustments to accelerate student progress

There is effective use of data to identify students who need support, to modify instruction and to inform professional development and staffing. The key to this analysis has been the setting up of PLEs. It has enabled the staff to monitor both academic and personal progress very carefully and ensures very few fall behind without being identified as in need of support and intervention. This is because all students are individually known to all staff in the PLE and their progress in English language arts, math, social studies and science is discussed very regularly by the teaching staff involved.

The parents interviewed during the review were very enthusiastic about the school. They are particularly complimentary about the support it gives and the amount of communication available to them. This partnership has a significant impact on student learning. However, both students and parents would benefit from being involved in setting short-term goals to raise expectations even further.

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.

There is a very broad and stimulating curriculum focused on student aptitude and achievement. When combined with the care and support through PLEs this ensures students take responsibility for their own learning, want to achieve, and so perform well. The very strong climate for learning is created through mutual trust, respect and innovative

curriculum planning, providing a stimulating environment in which students learn very effectively.

The school has developed a strong reputation for a good balance between academic and vocational courses. Student motivation has increased resulting in improved student attendance and performance. The jewels in the crown are the culinary courses that prepare many students to go to prestigious colleges to become chefs.

Teachers are held responsible for the progress of the students in their care. This not only includes classroom teachers but also subject assistant principals, staff supporting special education students and English language learners. This accountability ensures that for all those with the responsibility for performance of students in their care, do their utmost to help them succeed. The school uses data to differentiate instruction through the PLEs. However, there is inconsistency in how teachers differentiate instruction within each class.

The school has used its budget resourcefully. It has created effective PLEs and given effective support to English language learners by providing opportunities for some subjects to be taught in the student's own language. This has accelerated their progress and increased the achievement of this group of students.

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.

Professional development is planned strategically to meet the need of students and staff. The school makes extensive use of data to find out where the progress of students is not what might be expected. It then uses this information to plan professional development, to address the issues identified. The strength of this approach is the identification of professional development needs through the PLEs. This results in very well targeted activities to support teachers in improving their instruction. This is achieved in a climate of mutual respect and the desire for teachers to do the very best they can for the students in their care.

The PLE structures also create secure opportunities for reflection from observations of teaching in an environment in which teachers feel supported, and where innovation is encouraged. This continual review of teaching methodology in order to find the most effective strategy for particular groups of students is one of the main reasons why student performance is improving.

The strong climate of learning in the school demonstrates very clearly that it runs smoothly. Staff and students feel very well supported. The PLEs have been central factors in ensuring students are not "lost in the system". This emphasis on individual support is one of the most significant factors in motivating students and creating and increasing the number of mature and articulate graduates.

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 systems in place to monitor review and evaluate individual, group and whole school goals. The school is making good use of data from periodic assessments to set whole school goals. It has not yet formally established interim goals at whole school level. It has made a number of strategic decisions based on this data that have had a profound effect on the climate for learning in the school, and consequently its performance. These include the setting up and development of PLEs, the very wide curriculum and the commitment to professional development to ensure these innovations are implemented.

Although there is a clear vision for the future that is clearly expressed within the administration, it is less well articulated and understood by the rest of school. In order to improve overall school performance, the school is reviewing how it can include teachers' professional judgments of students' performance in the previous year, to set short and long-term predictive targets for students for the following year. This is enabling the school to make year on year predictions of student progress and monitor their progress against these predictions to ensure students perform well, and make the best possible progress.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Long Island City School (HS 450)	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 demanding, 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?				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?					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 make 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	