



**NYCDOE**

**Quality Review: Final Report**

# **The New York City Department of Education**



# **Quality Review Report**

**International High School at La Guardia  
Community College**

**High School 530  
31-10 Thomson Avenue  
Queens  
NY 11101**

**Principal: Lee Pan**

**Dates of review: May 19 - 20, 2008**

**Lead Reviewer: Bonnie Laboy**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

International High School at La Guardia is a high school with 475 students from grade 9 through grade 13. The school population comprises 3% Black, 47% Hispanic, 14% White, and 36% Asian students. The student body includes 70% English language learners and 0% special education students. Boys account for 47% of the students enrolled and girls account for 53%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 94%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 76% eligibility.

The school is the founding member of the International Network for Public Schools, which promotes an instructional model with core principles that support immigrant students, English language development, experiential learning and localized autonomy for teachers. This network of schools is comprised of ten international high schools located in New York and California. Students are admitted on the conditions that they entered the country less than four years before their application to the school and have been assessed as English language learners. The school is also part of the New York Performance Standards Consortium which enables students to graduate with portfolio assessments in lieu of selected Regents exam.

This school is an empowerment school. Empowerment schools have more flexibility to make key decisions and control the resources for their school community.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal's strong leadership and clear vision upholds a highly inclusive school dedicated to individual student care and progress.
- The school effectively promotes teacher empowerment and collaborative decision making to reach the goal of student achievement.
- Teachers and administrators are highly dedicated role models who demonstrate excellent teamwork and set high standards.
- The school places student needs at the center of all its planning, budgeting, scheduling and hiring decisions.
- The school places a high priority upon the personal development of all of its students, which parents value greatly.
- Students are treated with full respect and are continually and effectively encouraged and supported to reach their highest potential.
- Parents and students appreciate the positive impact the school makes in their lives and how they are included in all aspects of school life.
- Professional development activities are based very effectively on need, skill and interest in order to promote student achievement.
- New teachers are well supported with a strong induction program.
- A continual drive for improvement and individualized student support permeates the school.

### What the school needs to improve

- Further develop systems and structures to include a clear schedule of benchmarks for student performance, particularly in portfolio assessments.
- Expand school plans and goals to include objectively measurable, interim and final benchmarks.
- Improve Design Your Own formative assessment systems to provide class, grade and school-wide periodic student performance data.
- Further develop teachers' skills to plan consistent and effective differentiated instruction.

## 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.**

International High School at LaGuardia Community College is a grade 9 to 13 Early College high school for recent immigrants. Forty-six languages are spoken and students represent 63 different nations. A deep appreciation and respect for all cultures and individuals is at the heart of the school's belief system. Its highly personalized approach encourages all students to reach their highest potential. Students' needs are the backbone of all programming and budgeting decisions. The school has very effective systems to support teacher autonomy, collaborative decision-making and personal development of students. Professional development and a high level of support for new teachers furthers the school's efforts for effective instruction. However, differentiation of instruction is not yet consistent throughout the school.

The school partners with the Early College program to support increased college access for underserved/at-risk students. Parents speak with much pride about their children's participation in college-level courses. The school also supports parents in their desire to learn English and attend college. One student stated, "I am so proud of my mother. She took English courses here at the high school and is now going to college too!"

Currently, student portfolios are produced in the senior grades and there is a need to explore portfolio benchmarks in the lower grades. The school's Design Your Own formative assessment system yields good individual student data, but is not yet equipped to produce class, grade or whole school data. This limits its effectiveness in identifying trends. Since the last Quality Review, the school has made good progress in addressing areas for improvement. The inquiry team is developing very effective practices, based on data results, to support its target population. In order to systematize the supports for credit recovery, the school created an "Incomplete Track Make-Up Form," which is used to document students' progress and set next steps.

### **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.**

Staff use data well to understand the progress of individual students. Student performance data is gathered in a variety of ways from performance assessments such

as projects and portfolios to more quantitative assessments such as their Design Your Own assessments, scholarship reports, and Regents exams. Counselors gather data on incoming students through interviews, intake assessments, and an evaluation of students' prior record to gain a holistic picture of each student. Students are continuously assessed to gain timely insights in their English language development. Staff regularly monitor and evaluate the progress of students during weekly instructional team meetings. Very good structures and systems are in place to assist staff in using data to develop individualized supports for students. For example, instructional teams meet weekly to analyze student work and discuss strategies to support student achievement. The school has collaboratively developed additional school-wide data tracking systems where student performance data towards portfolio completion and credit accumulation is gathered and analyzed to establish interventions for students. These include portfolio mentoring reports, Incomplete Make-Up Forms, and school-based tracking systems to identify students' credit needs.

The school gathers data on ethnic groups such as struggling Asian students and long-term English language learners in this year's cohort. The school uses well the results of their Design Your Own assessments to analyze individual student performance. However, the system is not yet equipped to provide class, grade or school-wide performance, which hinders their ability to identify patterns at these levels. Leaders at the school look at the school's past performance and make comparisons with similar schools to identify best practices.

**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 uses data well to devise plans and to set challenging goals for the whole school, instructional teams and students. The school has established a school governance model, whereby school goals and decisions are made collaboratively by teams, committees, teachers, students and parents. School goals are well known, which provides all members of the school a clear focus. However, goals for instructional teams are collaboratively developed, but do not include timeframes for interim benchmarks. Staff analyze rigorously scholarship reports, Regents results and portfolio performance to set broad-based goals for all students. However, insufficient attention is given to specifying interim objectives for these goals aligned to relevant timeframes.

At the individual level, instructional teacher teams set next-step goals so that students are challenged and supported on a consistent basis. The collaborative sharing of student performance information at weekly instructional team meetings helps staff to efficiently and effectively identify students who are struggling. The support and implementation of targeted intervention strategies for students is consistent, comprehensive and effective in ensuring that students make progress. Students are well aware of goals set for them and the steps they need to take in order to improve. This is evidenced by their targeted mentoring schedule and individualized extended-day support schedule.

The school sets high expectations for its students. Students and parents are kept well informed of students' progress via quarterly report cards, bi-semester portfolio mentoring

reports, incomplete course forms, parent conferences and monthly parent teacher association newsletters that are translated. Parents and students speak passionately about the school and its dedication to ensuring that students quickly acquire the English language and progress towards participating in college-level courses. One parent stated, "I am amazed at the willingness of the staff to do everything to help my child succeed".

**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.**

Instruction is driven by a thorough analysis of student performance. Lessons are project-based and made interesting by their teachers. For example, students participate in an experiential learning project that uses Newtown Creek as the lab site. Classroom tasks and projects are designed collaboratively by teachers and are constructed to provide them with information on student performance. On occasion, the work is too much the same for all students, meaning that some of them struggle to keep up with the level of English text while others progress nicely. While individualized attention is paid to students, differentiated instruction in the area of text, process and product is not yet consistent throughout the school.

The principal uses her budget wisely. Students' needs are the driving force when making all scheduling, purchasing, professional development and hiring decisions. Based on a review of last year's data, the principal hired a full-time art teacher and two part-time teachers to support professional development for new teachers, and the early college seminar program for students transitioning to college. Teacher autonomy and responsibility is a core belief at the school. Teachers are fully accountable for their students and work diligently and tirelessly to support their every need, academic and personal. A culture of mutual respect, appreciation and inclusion permeates the school. This is modeled effectively by the principal who treats all members of the school with a high degree of dignity and respect. One parent stated, "The principal values our input and includes us in many cultural activities." Students support one another well through peer tutoring and work collaboratively in teams in all of their classes. The school places a high priority on student lateness and attendance. Rigorous monitoring helps maintain the school's consistent high attendance rate.

**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 extent to which teachers and administrators regularly share ideas and engage in constant dialogue, regarding ways to accelerate learning, is the key to the school's success in this area. The entire staff confirm that their professional development is clearly driven by student needs and improving their achievement. Teachers regularly observe each other to inform their practice and to assess student performance. Student performance drives instructional team agendas, curriculum development and weekly

professional development. The school has a robust and unique peer support and evaluation process providing teachers with constructive, consistent feedback for improvement. Senior teachers develop professional portfolios. Newer teachers participate in a peer-evaluation team program, where their peers, administrators and their students evaluate them. Information gathered from this multi-layered evaluation guides personalized professional development for new teachers. New teachers are also well supported by senior staff and by a part-time veteran teacher who provide individualized coaching in curriculum design, pedagogy and classroom management to help newer staff enhance their skills. The weekly instructional-team structure provides professional development opportunities tailored to the needs of the team's students.

The school is well organized. Staff and advisors are particularly aware of the backgrounds of their students and are adept at building students' confidence levels and helping them overcome barriers. As a result of the highly personalized environment and high levels of respect among all members of the school community, the school has virtually no disciplinary issues. Students benefit from the many links with partner organizations, particularly LaGuardia Community College. Students have access to the City University of New York's massive library network, the campus fitness center, pool and computer labs, all of which support their academic and personal growth.

**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 principal sets the tone for the school and provides excellent leadership. The administration meets on a weekly basis. Each instructional team does the same and information passes backwards and forwards. There is a continual modification of practice in response to quantitative and qualitative data. This is very evident in terms of immediate response to revisiting and revising goals for individual students. There are effective structures in place, which engage staff across the school, and particularly in instructional teams, to consistently monitor and make prompt changes to student's individual needs such as for peer tutoring and after-school help. The staff is very competent in identifying the needs of English language learners. The maintenance of student portfolios provides an effective basis for the analysis of progress in relation to individual students. The entire school community is actively engaged in an ongoing reflection and monitoring process of the needs of its students.

Whole-school goals and instructional-team goals are clearly outlined, however, they do not specify how success will be measured in specific timeframes throughout the year and this limits their effectiveness. The collaborative discussions about student performance data, within instructional teams, committees and the faculty, effectively promote strategic decision-making. The need to focus on language content development emerged from this dialogue. The school's Design Your Own periodic assessment system provides individual student data, but does not yet yield class, subject, or whole-school data. This limits its usefulness in identifying trends at these levels. The principal's deep commitment to her students and staff shapes the school's caring environment and creates a strong sense of solidarity and community as the school moves forward in its mission and vision.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: International High School at La Guardia</b>	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
<b>Quality Score</b>				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?			N/A		
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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>				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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>				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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>				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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>					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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>					X

◇	<b>Outstanding</b>
+	<b>Well Developed</b>
✓	<b>Proficient</b>
➤	<b>Underdeveloped with Proficient Features</b>
Δ	<b>Underdeveloped</b>