

# Quality Review Report 2008-2009

**Beekman Hill International School**

**Elementary School 59**

**213 East 63<sup>rd</sup> Street  
New York  
NY 10065**

**Principal: Adele Shroeter**

**Dates of review: October 24 27, 2008**

**Lead Reviewer: Christina Lewis**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Bleekman Hill International School is an elementary school with 448 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 8.3% Black, 18.3% Hispanic, 55.2% White, and 17% Asian students. The student body includes 14% English language learners and 13% special education students. Boys account for 51.1% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48.9%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2007 - 2008 was 95%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 21.3% eligibility. In September 2008, the school moved into a newly refurbished building.

### Overall Evaluation

#### **This school is well developed.**

Beekman Hill International School is a thriving community that successfully serves a diverse population in the center of Manhattan. The principal and her team, who share their vision for the future of the school with the whole community lead the school well. "These kids are the future, they deserve the best we can offer." Parents are very supportive of the school and the many opportunities they have to become involved in their children's education, from monthly "Family Fridays" to being part of the school leadership team.

The school very effectively collects, analyzes and uses a wide range of data and as a result has a good understanding of the academic and personal needs of each student. The school is currently developing the work of the inquiry team to provide proactive support in meeting the academic needs of all students, but particularly in providing language enrichment experiences for students who are low achievers. In addition, they are developing programs to provide challenge and enrichment for the highest-achieving students.

Effective assessment systems enable teachers to differentiate their instruction and plan to meet each student's needs. This has been particularly effective in the collaborative team teaching classes, where special education students make good progress. The school also provides a range of additional support for students identified as at risk but has yet to coordinate the work of the different service providers to design comprehensive intervention plans for these students.

The school has developed a challenging and engaging curriculum including the arts. As a result students are engaged in their learning and want to succeed. While the school has focused instruction and assessment in all core subjects, only some areas such as reading and math, have effective monitoring systems in place. The school has yet to fully establish interim checkpoints in other areas in order to maximize student outcomes in all subjects.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school very effectively collects analysis and uses a wide range of data and as a result has a good understanding of the academic and personal needs of each student.
- The school has developed a challenging and engaging curriculum including the arts.
- Effective assessment systems enable teachers to differentiate their instruction and plan to meet each student's needs.
- Good two-way communications ensure that parents are thoroughly involved in, and therefore supportive of, the work of the school.
- The school is a positive learning environment that engages students and encourages them to succeed.
- The whole community shares a strong vision for the future development of the school.
- The good professional development encourages teachers to be evaluative and reflective in their work.

### What the school needs to improve

- Continue to develop the work of the inquiry team to provide proactive support in meeting the academic needs of all students, but particularly providing challenge for the highest-achieving students.
- Coordinate communication and the work of all service providers in designing comprehensive intervention plans for students identified as at risk.
- Establish interim checkpoints to monitor the curriculum and maximize student outcomes in all subjects.

## Part 3: Main Findings

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

**Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, generate and analyze information on student learning outcomes and use it to understand what each student knows and can do and to monitor the student's progress over time.**

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

The school very effectively collects, analyzes and uses a wide range of data in all core subjects. As a result, it has a clear understanding of the needs of individual and groups of students. Staff members receive this information in a very concise visual way that enables them to plan very well to meet different needs of students. All teachers regularly receive an updated spreadsheet of biographic and performance data of all students. Teachers have access to interim assessment data through the Acuity website. The school has provided teachers with laptops and technical support to access this information.

Special needs students are placed in collaborative team teaching classes. Close attention to their specific needs and individual education plans enables them to make good progress in a fully inclusive environment alongside general education students. The small population of English language learners makes good progress due to the good support they receive. Many of them are decertified from the specific language support with above average reading and proficiency levels.

The inquiry team identified a subgroup of the lowest third of the school population in English language arts to use for their action research. They found that students who were not registered as English language learners, but spoke a second language at home, were not getting enough exposure to spoken English. The team's research found that this limited their vocabulary and understanding of written English. As a direct result of their findings, the whole school is focusing on providing language enrichment opportunities for students who share this characteristic. In particular, the early years have a strong focus on speaking and listening. The school recognizes the impact of this research and now plans to use it to provide proactive support in meeting the academic needs of these students. Additionally this year with there is particular focus on providing challenge and enrichment for the highest-achieving 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 well developed.**

The school uses data very effectively to set grade, class and individual goals for students in all core subjects. Teachers plan effective differentiated activities in lessons

that ensure that students are working towards their individual goals. As a result, students are confident in articulating their goals and the steps needed to achieve them. In some of the higher grades they are encouraged to use self-assessment and develop their own learning plans and goals but this is not yet common practice in all subjects. Weekly conferencing ensures that students are on track to achieve their goals. If they need extra support then an “early bird” day program is flexible in providing necessary catch-up programs. Students at greater risk of not achieving their goals are referred for academic intervention or student counseling.

Good two-way communications ensure that parents are thoroughly involved in, and therefore very supportive of, the work of the school. For example, parents and students can contact their class teacher by email. The school regularly informs parents of student progress and school staff work strategically to ensure that there are ongoing conversations about the school’s high expectations for students. A very detailed progress report is sent out twice a year with very clear information on how well students are doing in all subjects plus personal and social development. It also is very specific about what they need to do to improve. Monthly “family Fridays” give parents an opportunity to work alongside their child in the classroom. The school provides an effective range of workshops for parents to encourage them to actively participate in their children’s education, for example, math, reading and technology workshops.

The school leaders revise the Comprehensive Education Plan regularly in collaboration with the whole community. They use data very effectively to evaluate the school goals and to strategically plan for the next round of school improvement. For example, the current focus on high-achieving students is a direct result of this evaluative process and originates from data and parental concerns.

**Quality Statement 3 – Develop Coherent Instructional and Organizational Strategies: The school uses rigorous curricula, teaching and organizational decision making to engage students and faculty in meeting all students’ learning goals.**

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

The school has developed a challenging and engaging curriculum, including the arts, that is fully aligned to state standards. Examples of students’ high-quality artwork are displayed throughout the school and students have many opportunities to play an instrument or sing in the choir. Classrooms are bright and colorful with well-prepared charts and notices that support learning. For example, in kindergarten an alphabet chart uses the students’ photograph and names to highlight initial letter sounds. In all classes, students have checklists or aide memoirs to assist them in their work. School trips and visits are used to enhance learning and provide a rich experience for students. As a result the school is a positive learning environment that engages students and encourages them to succeed. Students perform well and generally make good progress based on prior achievement.

Effective assessment systems enable teachers to differentiate their instruction and plan to meet each student’s need in most grades and subjects. Teachers’ plan engaging lessons around a workshop model that supports students well in becoming independent learners. This happens more consistently in English language arts and math where teachers’ high level of confidence is more apparent. The school is working hard to

ensure that this good practice is applied in all areas by use of staff developers to model instruction and support lesson planning.

The school leadership team strives to ensure that budgetary decisions support school wide goals, for example, by effectively organizing more common prep times for teachers on the same grade to give them greater opportunities to plan together. It also ensures that a wide range of resources is available to support teaching and learning. These include well-stocked classroom libraries and up to the minute technology. The school promotes a school wide culture of trust and respects that is evident in all aspects of its work and focuses on rigorous learning for adults and students.

**Quality Statement 4 - Align Capacity Building to Goals: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school's goals for accelerating student learning.**

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

The school administration has high expectations of teachers and holds them accountable for improving students' learning outcomes. Teachers have individual development plans based on school and individual need that clearly set out goals for improving their performance. The plan is based on formal and informal observations, scrutiny of work and student outcomes. External staff developers and members of the administrative team provide good support and training based on priorities for improvement, for example by modeling instruction. In addition, many opportunities are available for staff to attend external professional development. Leaders regularly monitor the effectiveness of this in the classroom and provide feedback. Teachers agree that this has improved their practice and that they feel valued. New teachers are assigned mentors and are rapidly integrated into the ways of the school. As a result, they quickly become effective in their practice.

Common prep times, grade and subject meetings are scheduled regularly to facilitate discussions on effective practice, review student work and data as well as sharing lesson plans. The impact of this reflective and evaluative approach to their work is evident in teachers' classroom practice and the thoroughness in the way they plan lessons to meet the needs of the students. The successful work of the inquiry team has actively encouraged teachers' participation in study groups to explore the case studies of the target population and gain a deeper understanding of their needs based on latest educational research. Experienced teachers lead these groups and as a result have an opportunity to share in the instructional leadership of the school.

The school effectively uses a wide range of support services, including academic support, guidance counselor and social worker, in addition to the more specialized support for students with special educational needs. These services enhance the academic and personal development of students and support their families. However, the school recognizes that it needs to coordinate the work of all service providers in designing comprehensive intervention plans for students identified at risk.

**Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for monitoring and 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 administration meets regularly to discuss and review student progress. They effectively evaluate provision and revise as necessary. Teachers meet weekly in grade teams to monitor students' progress. They use a range of assessment data including entries in reading records, plus conferencing notes to inform their discussions. Because of these meetings, teachers revise student goals and modify teaching programs as necessary. The school quickly provides additional support through a variety of ways including academic intervention extended day programs or guidance for students who need extra support or have emotional issues. The administration also ensures that sufficiently differentiated instruction ensures students make progress at all levels. While the school completes this effectively in some subjects, the administration has yet to establish interim checkpoints to monitor the curriculum and therefore maximize student outcomes in all subjects. The leadership team regularly evaluates and monitors progress towards meeting schools goals and adjusts time frames and action plans as required.

The administration very effectively uses the Progress Report, Quality Review, Learning Environment Survey and other external data to evaluate its effectiveness and modify as necessary. For example, the schools current focus on math teaching in the higher grade is as a direct result of a detailed analysis of the progress report. This rigorous self-evaluation is an accurate reflection of its practices and is an integral part of the school's culture of continuous improvement. The school prioritizes areas for improvement and this forms the next cycle of school development in the Comprehensive Educational Plan.

The principal has a strong vision for the future success of the school and students that she shares with the school community. She leads by inspiration, commitment, and her belief that students are given every opportunity to succeed both personally and academically.

# School Quality Criteria 2008-2009

<b>School name: Beekman Hill International School</b>	△	➤	✓	+
<b>Overall QR Score</b>				<b>X</b>
<b>Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, generate and analyze information on student learning outcomes and use it to understand what each student knows and can do, and to monitor the student’s progress over time.</b>				
<i>To what extent do school leaders and faculty regularly...</i>	△	➤	✓	+
1.1 collect and analyze actionable information, including assessment results and attendance data, to provide a complete view of the learning outcomes and needs of individual students and groupings of students?				<b>X</b>
1.2 focus analysis on the learning outcomes and needs of all sub-groups of students?				<b>X</b>
1.3 engage in an open exchange of information with students and families about students’ learning needs and outcomes, including assessment results and attendance data?				<b>X</b>
1.4 design or adapt tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize and analyze student performance, identify trends and inform instructional and organizational decisions, and to enable students and their families to assess and track each student’s progress?			<b>X</b>	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>				<b>X</b>
<b>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.</b>				
<i>To what extent do school leaders and faculty...</i>	△	➤	✓	+
2.1 use collaborative and data-informed processes to set measurable, actionable and differentiated learning goals in core subjects for individual students and groupings of students and develop differentiated plans and timeframes for reaching these goals?				<b>X</b>
2.2 use collaborative and data-informed processes to develop the school’s Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP)?				<b>X</b>
2.3 ensure that the achievement of learning goals, and the implementation of plans and timeframes for reaching these goals, is the central focus of school leaders, faculty, students and families?				<b>X</b>
2.4 communicate high expectations to all students and families, and involve students in developing their learning goals and plans and in taking their next learning steps?				<b>X</b>
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>				<b>X</b>

## DEFINITIONS

“**Analyze**” or “**analysis**” includes, but is not limited to, comparisons of:

- the current and past outcomes of . . . individual students, administrative groupings and sub-groups of students and the school itself in core subjects;
- the outcomes of different classrooms and sub-groups in the same grades and core subjects; and
- the school’s Progress Report and other outcomes to those of peer/other schools

“**Assessment results**” include student outcomes on summative assessments (e.g., state ELA, math, science and social studies tests, NYSESLAT, Regents Exams, and Performance Based Assessment Tasks) and formative assessments aligned to the school’s curriculum (including Periodic, DY0, and teacher-developed Classroom Assessments).

“**Core subjects**” are ELA, math, science, social studies/history, the arts, foreign language, and physical education/health.

“**Data-informed processes**” include analysis of Progress Report, Quality Review, Learning Environment Survey, Inquiry Team findings, assessment results and attendance data

“**Groupings of students**” include classrooms, grade levels and high school cohorts.

“**Organizational decisions or strategies**” refer to a school’s use of budget and resources, staffing, planning, scheduling, grade structure, departments and teacher teams and other aspects of the school’s structure and organization that can affect student outcomes.

“**Sub-groups of students**” include special education students, English Language Learners, the other NCLB sub-groups, boys, girls, and other groups significant to the school.

**Quality Statement 3 – Develop Coherent Instructional and Organizational Strategies: The school uses rigorous curricula, teaching and organizational decision making to engage students and faculty in meeting all students’ learning goals.**

<i>To what extent do ...</i>	△	➤	✓	+
3.1 school leaders and faculty deliver challenging and engaging curricula in core subjects, including the arts, that are aligned to state standards?				X
3.2 teachers plan and teach lessons that are differentiated to meet the needs of individual students and student groupings and are designed to enable all students to reach their learning goals?			X	
3.3 school leaders make strategic organizational decisions to support a coherent and rigorous instructional approach that enables students to reach their learning goals?				X
3.4 school leaders maintain a culture of mutual trust and respect and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?				X
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>				<b>X</b>

**Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building to Goals: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school’s goals for accelerating student learning.**

<i>To what extent do school leaders...</i>	△	➤	✓	+
4.1 use their own observation of classroom teaching and the analysis of student outcomes to implement an explicit, differentiated strategy to improve each teacher’s instruction, with a special focus on new teachers?				X
4.2 encourage teachers to take part in Inquiry Teams and other structured professional collaborations (informed by the examination of student work, assessment outcomes and their own peer observations) and share in the instructional leadership of the school with the goal of improved student learning?				X
4.3 provide professional development that encourages teachers to continuously evaluate and revise their classroom practices to improve student outcomes?				X
4.4 utilize youth development, support services and partnerships with families and outside organizations to accelerate the academic and personal growth of students?			X	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>				<b>X</b>

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

<i>To what extent do ...</i>	△	➤	✓	+
5.1 the school’s plans for improving student outcomes and its strategies for improving each teacher’s instructional practices include measurable interim goals and suitable time frames for evaluating success and making adjustments during the year?				X
5.2 school leaders and faculty use interim checkpoints and data to inform lessons, improve curriculum, differentiate instruction and revise student learning plans throughout the year?			X	
5.3 school leaders use data to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of and modify organizational decisions, structured professional collaborations and teacher improvement strategies?				X
5.4 school leaders and the school community have a clear vision for the future development of the school and implement procedures and systems to support academic, personal and professional growth?				X
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>				<b>X</b>

Quality Review Scoring Key							
△	Underdeveloped	➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features	✓	Proficient	+	Well Developed