

# **Quality Review Report 2008-2009**

**Henry Street School for International Studies**

**Middle-High School 292**

**220 Henry Street  
New York  
NY 10002**

**Principal: Erin Balet**

**Dates of review: March 30 - 31, 2009**

**Lead Reviewer: Francesca Peña**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Henry Street School for International Studies is a Middle-High School with 500 students from grade 6 through grade 12. The school population comprises 31% Black, 55% Hispanic, 2% White, and 11% Asian students. The student body includes 15% English language learners and 26% special education students. Boys account for 56% of the students enrolled and girls account for 44%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2007 - 2008 was 82.1%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 100% eligibility. The school shares a building with two other middle schools and occupies the fourth floor. Its first cohort of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students graduated in June 2008.

### Overall Evaluation

#### **This school is proficient.**

The principal is a strategic thinker and planner who, in her first year has shared her vision for raising achievement with the whole community. There is a promising development in the range of school improvement initiatives with the new appointment of two assistant principals who, in collaboration with grade team leaders, use information gathered at meetings to make decisions regarding school, academic and administrative policy in support of better student outcomes. The administration efficiently uses data from the school environment survey, progress reports, input from faculty and staff, and school-wide student performance data as the foundation for staffing, budgetary and curricular plans.

The school's investment in after-school activities, a new dean of discipline, and tutoring programs has paid huge dividends for attendance and student achievement. Attendance has improved from 82.1% to 87%, school incidents are down 55% and the passing rates have moved from 75% to 85% as evidenced by the results of the second quarter report card of the second term. The school provides services to 100% of English language learners and special education students and as a result, there has been a significant increase in their attendance and scholarship.

There is a strong collaborative, calm and respectful culture in the school. Teachers lead grade-team meetings and department meetings and feel they have ample opportunities for professional development in and out of the school. School staff, parents and students are pleased with the administration of the school and recognize improvements in the school over the course of this year. The principal and assistant principals recognize the need to continue to develop consistent instructional practice in addition to differentiated instruction. In addition, plans are in place to formalize the goal-setting process for each student, and to create college level courses to meet the needs of advanced students.

The school does not effectively engage parents and students to analyze the impact of interventions and track student progress towards their achievement goals in all core subjects. The school leadership does not engage the entire school community in data-informed processes to develop the school's Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP).

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school effectively uses a wide and varied range of assessment data to review student progress and plan interventions where appropriate.
- The school provides effective support for special education students and English language learners and both groups are making good academic progress.
- The principal and assistant principals make informed and effective organizational decisions across all aspects of the school to support improvements in learning.
- The entire school community has worked successfully to create a positive tone in the building and to provide a safe and stimulating learning environment.
- The principal is a strategic thinker and planner, who shares her vision for raising achievement with the whole community.
- The school schedules weekly collaborative planning time and professional development forums to provide valuable professional development opportunities.

### What the school needs to improve

- Create a database to enable teachers, administrators, parents and students to analyze the impact of interventions and track student progress towards their achievement goals in all core subjects.
- Formalize the setting of learning goals to identify the students' next learning steps so that they are fully understood by students and shared with their parents.
- Promote greater consistency in differentiated instruction based on data so that lesson planning reflects purposeful groupings, students are challenged, tasks accommodate different learning styles and questioning extends thinking to maximize student learning.
- Extend the curriculum to include more challenging classes to meet the needs of high-achieving students.

## 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 proficient.**

Henry Street School for International Studies engages in effectively gathering, analyzing and interpreting formative and summative data about student performance and progress for the purpose of planning for, acting on and achieving the four goals set for the 2008-2009 school year. Teachers and administrators gather data from student report cards, attendance reports, Regents results, teacher progress reports, and student transcripts. Data analysis is supported through one period a week of dedicated common planning time. Professional development and continued support in the use of ARIS to disaggregate data by teachers has been conducted to enhance teachers' proficiency in interpreting data, thereby sharpening the lens by which to improve instruction.

One of the goals is to provide State mandated services to all English language learners and special education students, and to significantly increase school attendance rates since last year only 65% of special education students (1/3 of the school population) attended school on a regular basis.

As a result of creating additional collaborative team teaching classes, hiring three additional special education teachers, and supporting data analysis through dedicated common planning time for teachers, the school is in 100% compliance of State mandated services and this has led to a 10% increase in their attendance and a 12% increase in credit accumulation. The school does not have a standardized data-collection and analysis protocol to ensure that conversations regarding student progress are systematic. School leaders and faculty have not yet designed a comprehensive process that would enable them to systematically collect a range of data in all core subjects, to analyze student performance, and to identify trends in individual students and sub-groups.

**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.**

School leaders and faculty set clear goals at the beginning of the year. They provide services to 100% of English language learners and special education students, prepare students for on-time graduation, increase student attendance and create a safe and caring environment for learning. Leaders derive these goals from an analysis of school-wide data. Using various channels of communication, the school shares these goals with the entire community and reviews them at the conclusion of each quarter.

As a result of so many students falling behind in credit accumulation, the upper and lower schools were reprogrammed. Blocked scheduling was applied to grades 6 through 8, whereas students in grades 9 through 12 were individually programmed. This flexibility in programming enabled the school to program credit-deficient students for extra classes which afforded them the opportunity to recover credit and to get back on track to graduate on time. This strategic decision has paid great dividends for students, especially for the 12<sup>th</sup> grade cohort where nearly 90% of the students are expected to graduate in June and 52% of them are expected to graduate with a Regents diploma.

The attendance team meets weekly to assess attendance data and to identify students with excessive absences or lateness. The team then works with families to create a plan for improving attendance. As a result, attendance has increased by 5% thus far this year. Grade advisors, teachers and the parent coordinator play a significant role in ensuring that all parents are informed of their child's academic, social, and attendance progress. Students and parents receive an official progress report six times a year. However, the setting of learning goals to identify the students' next learning steps so that they are fully understood by students and shared with their parents is not a consistent practice yet. As a result, school leaders and faculty do not have clear procedures to regularly set measurable and rigorous learning goals for individual and groups of students in all core subjects that build on what they know and can do, and identify a series of next steps to achieve these goals in the designated period.

**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 proficient.**

The principal and cabinet rely on data to make strategic decisions for budgeting, hiring new staff and scheduling. For example, in response to the needs of its special education population, the school added collaborative team teaching classes in all core content areas across the grade levels. These classes meet the needs of special education students and general education students in a least restrictive environment. In addition, three more teachers were hired and as a result the school is providing all mandated services to this population, leading to a 10% increase in attendance rates and improved scholarship performance.

The Learning Environment Survey for 2007-2008 indicated that students did not feel safe attending this school and for the lower school, poor attendance and the high incident rate led to a "F" rating on the school environment section of the City-wide Report Card for 2007-2008. In order to address this problem, the school hired a dean of discipline and put new discipline systems in place, leading to a 55% decrease in major incidents. Quality Review interviews reveal that parents, students, and teachers feel that the level of safety and tone of the building has vastly improved this year.

The school actively promotes a positive learning environment that fosters personal, social and academic development. In order to help students develop a supportive climate for learning, the school has structured its advisory classes by gender and grade level. The high school students can choose from about 20 enrichment mini-courses that meet during advisory time. Classroom observations reveal a high level of student engagement. Advisors deliver a challenging and engaging curriculum that is aligned to

State standards. However, students indicated the need for more advanced placement courses and the administration is already planning these. In addition, the school is aware that instructional technology has yet to be fully integrated into all planning in order to aid both teaching and learning and to better prepare the students for post-secondary work. The lack of technology is mainly a result of limited funds. The principal is already looking at different ways to remedy this situation. Small-group instruction and after-school programs augment and support the curriculum. As a result of this support, only 25 students from the 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades are projected to require summer school classes. Lesson observations reveal that teachers do not adequately plan and teach lessons that are differentiated to meet the needs of individual students and student groupings, and lessons are not adequately designed to enable all students to reach their learning goals. Teachers, as of yet, have experienced intensive professional development on how to plan and present differentiated instruction in the classroom.

**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 proficient.**

The school has built its leadership capacity through the addition of grade level team leaders, guidance counselors, an attendance teacher, two assistant principals, and a dean of discipline. As a result, student achievement and involvement in after-school activities have dramatically increased and incidents have significantly dropped.

The systemic integration of Boyle's Matrix allows the leadership cabinet to assess teacher performance based on formal and informal data and to effectively differentiate individualized support. Weekly collaborative planning time and grade meetings are embedded in school-wide scheduling to provide opportunities for regular and grade-specific professional development. Yet, not all teachers are encouraged to participate 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.

Professional development forums have created opportunities for building capacity among the staff, have increased opportunities for some teachers to visit colleagues' classrooms and foster distributive leadership. Teachers feel that they have ample opportunities for professional development in and out of the school. Learning walks, facilitated by the leadership coach, have provided immediate feedback on best teaching practices and also identify focused areas for improvement. The work of each grade level data inquiry team has enabled the school to focus on improving the 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduation rate and 9<sup>th</sup> grade holdover rate, resulting in higher graduation rates and decreased holdovers. The Inquiry Teams have focused on tailoring individualized academic intervention plans for struggling students.

Parent workshops have slightly increased parental involvement and improved school and family communication. However, the school recognizes the need to find ways to effectively engage more parents. The school has established excellent partnerships with Henry Street Settlement, New York University, Mental Health Partners and the Asian Society to provide after-school and leadership programming for students and staff. Investments in these outside resources has paid great dividends. Nearly 90% of the

senior class has completed college applications and about 90% of the junior class took the PSAT exam.

**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 proficient.**

The principal is highly respected by teachers, students and parents. Though she has only been in her position for a short time, she has successfully shared her vision for raising achievement with the whole community. This has led to the faculty's commitment to the goals in the Comprehensive Educational Plan. The school's self evaluation is an accurate reflection of the school's practices and demonstrates that self-reflection is a widespread and integral part of the school culture.

Students are able to meet with their guidance counselors every six weeks to review credit accumulation and course progress. The school shares all information regarding graduation requirements and eligibility with families through mailings, meetings with parents, and parent-teacher conferences. They hold planning meetings resulting in graduation contracts with 12<sup>th</sup> grade families whose children are in danger of not graduating on time. As a result, students show commitment to their schoolwork and an improvement in course passing rates is clearly evident in the most recent scholarship report. An assesment of student transcripts has enabled the school leadership to strategically focus its resources to support improved student outcomes. For example, over 30 students will make up some of their credits during the rigorous credit-recovery extended day program created to help these students to graduate on time. In preparation for June Regents examinations, the school will conduct mock Regents exams. These practice exams provide teachers with specific feedback about difficulties that students are facing and allow for curriculum revision before the actual exam.

The school would benefit from the creation of a multi-layered system of early academic interventions for struggling students. School leaders do not have adequate systems in place to regularly examine (at least every three weeks) individual student, subgroup, and grade level data to monitor and revise groupings and curricular decisions throughout the year to improve student outcomes. The school plans for improving student outcomes and its strategies for improving each teacher's instructional practices do not include measurable interim goals and suitable time frames for evaluating success and making adjustments during the year.

## School Quality Criteria 2008-2009

<b>School name: Henry Street School for International Studies</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, DYQ, 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.

<b>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.</b>							
<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>			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.</b>							
<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>			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.</b>							
<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>			X				
<b>Quality Review Scoring Key</b>							
△	<b>Underdeveloped</b>	➤	<b>Underdeveloped with Proficient Features</b>	✓	<b>Proficient</b>	+	<b>Well Developed</b>