



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Henry Hudson Intermediate School

Junior High School 125

**1111 Pugsley Avenue
Bronx
NY 10472**

Principal: Hilda Bairan

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Reviewer: Stephen Walker

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Henry Hudson Intermediate School (IS125) is a large middle school of 964 students, grades 5 through 8. It is located in the Castle Hill section of the Bronx. The school is housed in a three storey building which was built in 1953. The school population consists of a rich mixture of cultures with 60% Hispanic, 25% White, 20% Black and 18% Asian. Over 18% of the students are recent arrivals from other parts of the world, particularly Dominican Republic, Guyana and Bangladesh. English language learners comprise 12% of the school population and special education students also account for 13%. The school is Title 1 eligible with all students qualifying, which is significantly higher than similar schools and the City average. Attendance at 91.5% is above that of similar schools and comparable to City schools. As from September 2007, the school will be reconfigured as a middle school, grades 6 through 8 and the local elementary school, PS 119 will use the ground floor of the building.

Henry Hudson School was approved as an empowerment school in 2006. Empowerment Schools have more flexibility to make key decisions and control the resources for their school community. Empowerment schools are free to develop or purchase professional development services, chose which schools to affiliate with, and benefit from reduced reporting and paper work requirements.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Recent changes in the school are leading to considerable improvements in general organization, student performance and behavior.
- The new principal provides strong, reflective and supportive leadership with a clear emphasis on the success of all students.
- Parents, teachers and students greatly support the clear vision of the new administration.
- The positive culture encourages the majority of students to behave well and enjoy their time at school.
- Teachers and support staff work well as a team to support the performance and personal development of students.
- The majority of teaching engages students and promotes effective learning.
- The school works closely with parents who greatly value the work of the school.
- The school invests in a developing program of professional development for the teachers.
- The school is constantly evaluating its performance and seeking new ways to improve the learning and progress of the students.

What the school needs to improve

- Further analyze and use assessment information with particular reference to gender, ethnic groups, subjects and similar schools in order to accelerate the success of all students.
- Develop more consistent assessment procedures across the school in order to measure students' progress more accurately and to set clear measurable goals for individual students and classes based on previous performance.
- Introduce a more structured and rigorous intervention program, based on assessment data that supports the low achievers to raise their performance.
- Encourage further instructional differentiation in classes so that all teachers use assessment data to address more specifically the individual learning needs of each student.
- Share good practice in order to raise further the quality of teaching and learning in the school.
- Prepare a Comprehensive Education Plan that provides clear, measurable targets, action plans with rigorous monitoring procedures for all areas of the school.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is an undeveloped school with proficient features.

Recent changes in the school are leading to considerable improvements in general organization, student performance and behavior. The new administration is focusing on the greater use of assessment information in order to raise the level of progress of all students. The new principal provides strong, reflective and supportive leadership with a clear emphasis on the success of all students. She is well supported by the new assistant principals and the cabinet team who facilitate improvement in the school. Parents, teachers and students greatly support the clear vision of the new administration. Records of individual student progress are now being kept by all teachers but there are not consistent assessment procedures across the school. There are good systems of guidance and pupil personnel which support the performance and personal development of students. The majority of teaching engages students and promotes effective. However, teachers do not make sufficient use of assessment data to provide more instructional differentiation in classes and thus address more specifically the individual learning needs of each student. The school is becoming more proactive in reviewing progress and adjusting strategies in order to implement the necessary improvements in the school.

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 student progress over time.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The school is proficient in its use of assessment in order to understand the progress of individual and groups of students. The principal and assistant principals analyze the whole school information effectively and are encouraging the teachers to conduct a similar analysis of their own teaching groups. The school maintains satisfactory focus on raising the performance of the students in State and City standardized assessments. The percentage of students gaining levels 3 or 4 in English language arts and mathematics is on a rising trend and is now slightly higher than similar schools.

Interim assessments in English language arts and mathematics provide useful support information from external tests. The school makes adequate use of the Princeton review assessments as well as the Grow report to highlight skill areas for development. Home room teachers are now given a binder with individual student performance details so that they are able to access the information on their students. The assistant principals meet regularly with the academy teams and individual teachers to discuss student progress. The school has not fully analysed comparisons with similar schools, past performance and differences between classes and grades.

The school has developed effective systems to record the performance and progress of English language learners and special education students. The NYSESLAT and LAB-R are used well to assess language needs for English language learners. All intervention

programs screen students using reading and mathematics assessments in order to address the needs of level 1 and 2 students as well as the low level 3 students. The analysis of differences in ethnic groups has highlighted the need to provide additional support for Hispanic and Black students. Differences in gender are not fully analyzed although there are subject variations between the performance of males and females. The school acknowledges that it could undertake more analysis of performance and progress data with particular regard to similar schools, gender and subject areas.

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use available data to understand each student’s next learning step. Through collaborative planning and student and parent engagement, they set high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating each student’s learning.

This area of the school’s work is undeveloped.

Regular teacher assessments ensure that grades are recorded for each student. Student progress is sometimes reviewed at academic team meetings. Teachers tend to set general goals for students although many are now using skill-based rubrics. However, measurable goals based on previous performance are not always specific for individual students or classes. There are not consistent assessment systems across or between the academies so that monitoring of student progress is not always accurate.

Some intervention programs are provided for students who are scoring below grade levels. Struggling readers are helped through the Wilson and Great Leaps reading programs. The resource room provides effective support in mathematics. The school targets valuable support in small groups for students during the 37.5 minutes additional block before and after school. The after school sports and arts program particularly targets level 1 students who require additional support with their work. A Saturday program is provided for English language learners and their parents. The Child Study Team meets regularly to review the progress of at risk students. However, the identification of students, coordination of programs and evaluation of intervention is not fully effective in supporting the students.

The school works closely with parents who value the work of the school. The school is gaining support with the translation of school letters to non-English speaking parents and is seeking more voluntary interpreters to work with parents. Parents and caregivers are provided with regular progress reports that are detailed and informative. Attendance at parent-teacher conferences is good. Teachers share conference notes and portfolios so that parents are informed of student progress and goals. Parents are alerted quickly if their child is having learning difficulties. Goals and plans for improving student performance and progress are at the heart of the school although the expectations are not always sufficiently challenging.

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instruction: The school aligns its instructional activity and resources, and student engagement around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.

This area of the school’s work is proficient.

Curriculum programs meet mandatory requirements and are beginning to produce data on student progress. Discrete bilingual classes are provided for Spanish speaking students and magnet classes in each grade provide good support for higher attaining students. Some teachers are using rubrics to clarify the skills and assessment procedures for

assignments. Item analysis of practice tests provides details of skill areas for development. Many teachers are now using data to influence their instruction and target the individual needs of students. However, the school acknowledges that teachers do not make sufficient use of assessment data to provide more instructional differentiation in classes and thus address more specifically the individual learning needs of each student.

The assignment of teachers and the scheduling of classes are clearly guided by the aim to improve student performance. The rescheduling for the new academy structure has led to less movement of students during the day so that more time can be spent on teaching and learning. Budgeting decisions are clearly focused on improving students' performance. New science teachers have introduced a stronger program across the grades. The majority of teaching engages students and promotes effective learning. Lessons are well planned and students demonstrate good levels of concentration and attention. The good quality display work provides a stimulating environment for learning in some classrooms and corridors. Students really appreciate how the teachers take time to explain the work. A few teachers are now using smart boards but technology, as a tool for teaching and learning, is not fully exploited. The school is not fully sharing good instructional practice in order to raise further the quality of teaching and learning in the school.

Students speak highly of the support and guidance from teachers and councilors. Staff respect the students and respond to their academic and personal needs. The improvement in attendance reflects the strong focus on monitoring by the attendance co-coordinator and guidance councilor. The positive culture encourages the majority of students to behave well and enjoy their time at school.

Quality Statement 4 - Build and Align Capacity: The development of instructional leadership, staff, and capacity are aligned around the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The new principal provides strong, reflective and supportive leadership with a clear emphasis on the success of all students. She is well supported by the new assistant principals and the cabinet team who facilitate improvement in the school. Parents, teachers and students greatly support the clear vision of the new administration.

Staff are selected on their potential to improve student performance. The quality of recent appointments has been of a high caliber and the school uses Teach for America to support recruitment. There is a developing program of professional development with a clear emphasis on helping teachers use assessment information more effectively. New teachers receive ongoing support through coaching and mentoring. Programs of support are differentiated based on individual staffing needs. The mathematics and literacy coaches as well as external consultants provide good support for teachers with planning and instruction.

Lesson observations are established in the school. The principal or assistant principals observe all teachers formally and provide challenging and supportive feedback at least once per year. There are regular 'walkthroughs' and learning walks and teachers appreciate advice and support. In addition some teachers have developed inter-visitations with their colleagues in order to share good classroom practice. Teams within the school regularly meet but they do not always use this time to evaluate and review plans. The common grade meetings are used well for professional development whilst the Child Student Team discusses the individual cases of students at risk. The school now runs

more smoothly on a day to day basis because expectations and procedures are clear and reasonable. However, the supervision of the corridors and the use of the security staff are not fully effective. The school is well supported by a number of outside bodies such as Morrissania Health Center and New York Hospital Corporation which provide a doctor's surgery and dental clinic. The after school program is organized through Rainbow whilst the Swett sponsorship supports extra curricular music, arts and woodworking activities.

Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has built-in structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year, recognizing weaknesses in its improvement plans and teaching practices, and flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerated learning.

This area of the school's work is undeveloped.

The new administrative team is now evaluating performance and seeking new ways to improve the learning and progress of the students. However, it is early days and the new approach is not yet fully impacting on all areas of the school. The grade meetings, common planning periods and the week-end retreat encourage all teachers to contribute to developments and take a full part in evaluation and planning. The present Comprehensive Education Plan is not a working document for the new team and it lacks clear priorities with measurable and realistic success criteria. The school leadership team are not fully involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the targets. The school acknowledge that it needs to prepare a plan that provides clear, measurable targets, action plans with rigorous monitoring procedures for all areas of the school. The principal has made a good start and her personal review targets provide a framework for development.

There is not a well-defined assessment program throughout the school to monitor and evaluate student progress. Intervention strategies as a whole are not regularly monitored and the school plans to introduce a more structured and rigorous intervention program. Teachers are beginning to use the interim assessments to adapt their teaching plans and groupings although there is a lack of consistency across the school. The school has become more proactive in reviewing progress and adjusting strategies. The principal is introducing a more assessment-driven system so that resources and instructional practice are directed more specifically at the individual needs of students. The new academy structure reduces movement and encourages clearer systems of monitoring. The school is embracing empowerment status to introduce school based improvements but these have not fully impacted on the progress and outcomes of students. There is a great deal to be done in the school but the recent changes in the school are leading to considerable improvements in general organization, student performance and behavior.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Henry Hudson Intermediate School (IS 125)	∅	✓	+
Quality Score	X		

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 student progress over time.	∅	✓	+
1.1 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> each student, classroom, grade level, 		X	
1.2 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ethnic groups, English language learners, special education students* 		X	
1.3 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> all other categories of interest to the school* 		X	
1.4 Performance and progress are measured based on comparisons with similar schools, with the school's own past performance, and among students, classrooms, grade levels, academic subject areas, ethnic groups, and other groupings of interest within the school.		X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 1		X	

* These criteria are partially aspirational as of now because schools do not have routine access to all of this data. The NYC DOE plans to provide schools with enhanced access to the necessary data in 2007.

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use available data to understand each student's next learning step. Through collaborative planning and student and parent engagement, they set high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating each student's learning.	∅	✓	+
2.1 Using data, school leaders and faculty engage in a collaborative process to set demanding, objectively measurable goals for immediate and long-range improvement, and to develop plans and timeframes for reaching those goals.	X		
2.2 Goals and plans focus on the school as a whole and 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 Particular attention is given to improving the performance and progress of students in greatest need of improvement.	X		
2.4 High expectations are conveyed to students and parents/caregivers. Students and their parents/caregivers are regularly invited to provide information about each student's performance and how to improve. This information is central to setting challenging goals and developing, evaluating, and revising plans.		X	
2.5 Goals and plans for improving student performance and progress drive the activity of all members of the school community: leaders, staff, students, parents, and other partners.	X		
Overall score for Quality Statement 2	X		

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instruction: The school aligns its instructional activity, resources, and student engagement around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.	∅	✓	+
3.1 The school selects the curriculum based on how well it aligns with or implements the mandated curriculum and on the curriculum's capacity to generate meaningful interim data about progress towards goals and to support the school's high expectations and improvement plans.		X	
3.2 Teachers are accountable for improving instruction and student outcomes. They plan and differentiate their instruction based on the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.	X		
3.3 Budgeting decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.		X	
3.4 Staffing decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.		X	
3.5 Scheduling decisions about the use of teacher and student time are guided by the needs that emerge from examining student data and by the focused plan the school develops to improve student outcomes.		X	
3.6 Instructional programs actively engage students.		X	
3.7 Staff know and respect students and respond to their academic needs, as well as their personal needs that affect academic performance. Each student knows and trusts an adult on the staff who is concerned about him or her.			X
3.8 Student attendance and engagement are high priorities. High rates and patterns of absences trigger immediate intervention.		X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 3		X	
Quality Statement 4 – Build and Align Capacity: The development of instructional leadership, staff, and capacity are aligned around the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.	∅	✓	+
4.1 Leaders, faculty, and staff are selected based on their high expectations for student performance and progress and based on their commitment and capacity to use data, compare outcomes within and across classrooms and schools and develop and revise plans and methods to improve performance and progress.	X		
4.2 Professional development decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes. Professional development is designed to help leaders, faculty, and staff use data, self- and peer-assessments, and collaboration with peers to achieve goals for improved school and student outcomes. Professional development and self- and peer-evaluation are aligned and overlap.		X	
4.3 The principal frequently observes classroom teaching and has a considered strategy for improving the quality of each teacher's instruction. Teachers frequently observe and support each other's classroom instruction with the goal of improving student outcomes.		X	
4.4 Planning, evaluation of results, and revision of plans takes place in teams. Leaders and faculty inform each other of their goals and results, candidly evaluate themselves and each other, and use what is learned to drive improvement.	X		
4.5 The principal is respected and has capacity to effect change.			X
4.6 The school runs smoothly. Procedures are clear, communicated to all, and are generally followed.		X	
4.7 The school aligns youth development and support services around stated academic goals. Partnerships with outside bodies are routinely used to achieve academic goals.		X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 4		X	
Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has built-in structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year, recognizing weaknesses in its improvement plans and teaching practices, and flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.	∅	✓	+
5.1 All school plans and other interventions include frequent interim goals and diagnostic assessments of progress designed to reveal in objectively measurable ways whether the plan is being effectively implemented and reaching stated goals.	X		
5.2 Comparisons of student progress within and across classrooms and schools are used in making interim diagnostic assessments and measuring the progress of plans and interventions.	X		
5.3 Information generated by periodic assessments and diagnostic measures of progress and comparisons is used to revise plans immediately in order to reach stated goals. Interim and final goals are modified when data objectively demonstrate that revision is required.	X		
5.4 Each plan's interim and final outcomes drive successive phases of goal setting and improvement planning, and each successive phase is characterized by agile and flexible realignment of practices and resources to improve student academic outcomes.	X		
Overall score for Quality Statement 5	X		

