



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Intermediate School Gateway

Middle School 364

**1426 Freeport Loop
Brooklyn
NY 11239**

Principal: Dale Kelly

Dates of review: March 19 - 20, 2008

Lead Reviewer: Ken Bryan

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Gateway Intermediate School (IS 364) has an enrollment of 412 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 71.5% Black, 21.9% Hispanic, 4.4% White and 2.2% Asian and other students. The student body includes 1.2% English language learner and 11.7% special education students. Boys account for 49% students and girls account for 51% of students enrolled. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 90.7%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 61% eligibility.

Intermediate School 364 is distinctive in that this small school operates on two sites, The Freeport and Geneva Academies, which are located across the street from each other.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school is extremely well led by its dynamic and visionary principal and cabinet.
- The school has developed very rigorous and systematic systems for the gathering and collation of school-wide data.
- Individual student learning and school-wide goals are determined, monitored and revised very effectively.
- The school's cabinet and faculty work very collaboratively and collegially within this small learning community.
- The students behave well and responsibly and they have formed very positive relationships with the teachers and one-another.
- Professional development opportunities are effectively determined and delivered.
- The school's budget is allocated very resourcefully to enhance professional development, teaching and learning.
- The school has developed strong relationships with parents and caregivers who are actively involved in the life of the school.
- The students are well supported by all adults in the school who provide excellent academic and personal guidance.
- I.S. 364 is an orderly, safe and purposeful small learning community in which all stakeholders strive for excellence.

What the school needs to improve

- Further develop the teachers' capacity to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all students.
- Introduce more technology to enhance teaching and learning.
- Focus upon the use of problem solving, collaborative working and the use of hands-on learning to better motivate and inspire students.

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.

The Gateway Intermediate School is small and very effective learning community. Being housed on two sites does not adversely affect the feeling of inclusivity and uniformity as school-wide systems have been carefully managed. The school is extremely well led by its dynamic principal and its highly effective cabinet, who share their responsibilities diligently between the two academies. In addition, the teachers and the cabinet work very collaboratively and collegially to plan a broad and engaging curriculum and to participate in well-targeted differentiated professional development. The overall quality of instruction is, however, not consistent from classroom to classroom and the school recognizes the need for better differentiation for learning, a clearer focus upon learning objectives and an approach which is more hands-on and child centered. The school has made good progress from the last Quality Review, particularly with regard to the provision of professional development which is now a significant strength of the school. The school has made good progress from the last Quality Review, particularly with regard to the provision of professional development which is now a significant strength of the school.

The school's systems for the gathering, collating and the analyzing of school-wide data are of an outstanding quality. Teachers are provided with comprehensive data binders and are robustly supported through professional development which focuses upon the use of data to inform instruction. This is an excellent tool for identifying trends in individual student achievement and progress, skill mastery and the relative performance of grades, departments and cohorts. As a result, challenging goals are set, interventions are assigned and programs are carefully monitored. The school's inquiry team is well established and has successfully identified its target population. It is now carefully tracking the progress of this small group of vulnerable students to help better inform the school's data monitoring processes.

IS 364 is a small school. As a result, the teachers and the students have developed excellent relationships and the school provides very effective personal and academic guidance. The students feel safe, challenged and nurtured and they exhibit very positive attitudes and behavior. The school runs very efficiently on a day-to-day basis, procedures are routinely followed and there is a tangible atmosphere of purpose and calm.

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

Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor the student's progress over time.

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

The school gathers and analyzes data extremely effectively. All teachers are provided with very comprehensive data binders which facilitates an excellent understanding of the achievement and progress of every student. This is an outstanding feature of the school. In addition, this process of information dissemination is fully supported by very effective professional development, collaborative meetings and support from the administration and coaches. The entire faculty and administration are vigorously developing their confidence and competence in the use of data to inform instruction and in the use of the data binders themselves. The data binders are exemplary tools to store student, class and cohort data to drive instructional planning and the setting of goals. The achievement and progress of special education students who are assigned individualized education plans are rigorously tracked through these robust systems. The relative progress of the very small English language learner population is also carefully monitored. The school also monitors the progress of the various sub-group populations based upon ethnicity and gender. The inquiry team is also rigorously tracking the progress of its target population. The school uses a wide variety of sources to inform the data binders; instructional targeted assessments from Acuity, portfolios and items skills analyses are examples of the plethora of formal and informal assessments the school uses to monitor student and cohort progress. As a result of this rigor, the school can demonstrate consistent growth in achievement from 2003 to 2008. It can also demonstrate a detailed item skills analysis trail which leads to effective professional development planning.

The principal and his administration systematically and frequently compare IS 364's performance with similar and peer horizon schools. The school systematically checks the school's current performance against the previous years' data to determine trends. Grade and departmental teams rigorously analyze each cohort's performance as it transfers through the school. As a result of these detailed analyses, the school is setting challenging targets for school improvement based upon student progress.

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use data to understand each student's next learning steps and to set suitably high goals for accelerating each student's learning.

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

All stakeholders at IS 364 participate in a very collaborate process to set school-wide goals using the data binders. The Comprehensive Education Plan is reviewed each month by the school leadership team based upon the numerous sources of data. Individual learning goals are set for each student and challenging targets for improvement for cohorts, grades and departments. Frequent and fine modifications and amendments are made in a timely fashion as a result of skills analyses and the rigorous analysis of trends and patterns. Targets for improvement are both measurable and realistic and include success criteria and timeframes. Students at risk of failing are quickly identified and remediation interventions are assigned through grade and departmental consultation meetings. The inquiry team is well established and is carefully focusing upon the lowest achieving 'bottom third' of students. Academic intervention service provision is well targeted and delivered. Examples include Saturday Academy, extended day programs, the effective use of 'F' status teachers to provide push-in support and the very empowering peer tutoring program. As a result, the students within this targeted cohort make good progress.

All members of the school community are focused upon improving the performance and progress of the students. High expectations are shared with parents and caregivers

during frequent and well-attended meetings. Goals for improvement are vigorously shared with students, teachers and parents through grade conferences, parent-teacher meetings and workshops. The school has an open-door policy whereby parents have access to all staff in order to receive and give information.

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.

The school successfully plans a broad and balanced curriculum which includes the mandated core subjects and electives. The cabinet and teachers carefully analyze interim data from the Acuity monitoring tool to determine strengths and weaknesses. Mid-term assessments, periodic assessments in math and reading and student portfolios are robustly utilized to gauge the performance of individual students and to evaluate the effectiveness of the classes. The curriculum is also well enhanced by a number of extra-curricular activities such as an American sign-language class, recorders, violin and judo. Despite being limited by the amount of space, the school strives to provide a stimulating curriculum.

Teachers are held very accountable to provide well-planned and engaging classes which motivate the students. The principal and the cabinet appreciate the need to go further in this regard. Where lessons are compelling, child-centered, well differentiated and include the use of technology, the students enjoy learning and make good progress. Predominantly, the teachers use the data to group the students according to levels of achievement. In more heterogeneous settings there is a lack of differentiation by input for many students, such as the adaptation of learning materials, vocabulary and the accommodation of different learning styles. The principal has been proactive and imaginative in the use of the school’s budget to meet the needs of target populations. All members of the small IS 364 learning community have built very positive relationships. There are high levels of mutual trust and support within the student and staff constituent groups. Excellent relationships exist which promote the academic and personal development of the students and the professional development of the staff. The school’s overall tone and climate is safe and conducive to learning. One student powerfully commented that ‘the teachers are our friends and together we make a family. The school is our second home.’ The school’s strategies and processes for challenging student absence and tardiness are robust and embedded. In addition, good attendance is celebrated through the effective use of incentives and the use of bulletin boards.

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 principal and his cabinet frequently and regularly observe every teacher and provide constructive feedback. Through the rigorous and systematic analysis of school-wide data, differentiated professional development opportunities are carefully provided by coaches, lead teachers and the administration. In addition, needs assessment surveys are conducted at the beginning of the year. External providers such as the Knowledge Network Learning Organization staff developers and other professional organizations also

provide very carefully targeted programs. There are numerous opportunities for teachers to visit other classrooms and an open-door approach to intervisitations is endemic across all grades. This is resulting in greater consistency as teachers are able to share best practices and resources. As this is a small school there is a high degree of collaboration, where teachers share ideas and conduct professional dialogue. Those teachers who are new to the profession receive numerous opportunities to observe colleagues and to participate in a well developed mentoring program.

As well as academic guidance, teachers are very proactive in providing students with personal support. Students are very well supported by advisory staff and guidance counselors and external agencies such as Groundworks for Success, Prep for Prep, 144 and the Arts Inc. The students' personal and academic development is enhanced through the school's partnerships to support the arts, careers, community outreach and recreation.

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 well developed.

The principal and cabinet ensure that planning is an integral part of the school self-review process. The Comprehensive Education Plan includes clear goals which are both measurable and realistic. Frequent adjustments are made based upon available data and the school leadership team meets monthly to review progress towards meeting student, cohort and departmental goals. Grade and departmental teams meet weekly to evaluate school-wide data and there is a developing strategy to use periodic, interim assessments to track the relative effectiveness of interventions, programs and initiatives.

As a result, analyses of current formal and informal data lead to timely modifications and revisions to the school's goals. The administration is able to make year-on-year comparisons with past performance and they frequently evaluate IS 364's results in relation to similar schools. The data binder and the underlying data collation system is a very powerful tool to determine patterns and trends, which provides the school with a constantly up-dated view of how well the school is doing. The school benefits as a result of its small student population. As a consequence, individual student learning goals are carefully monitored. The effectiveness of student-focused interventions is carefully evaluated and there is a very clear understanding of the next stage of the goal setting process. Departmental, grade and cohort goal setting is part of a school-wide cycle, involving all stakeholders. As a result, the principal, his staff and the wider school community have a clear understanding of the school's overall aims and vision. The teachers participate in an annual retreat to conduct a school self-review and other stakeholders are provided with frequent opportunities to participate in the goals review and setting process.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Intermediate School Gateway	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
Quality Score				X	

Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather and generate data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor the students progress over time.

To what extent do school leaders and faculty provide . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
1.1 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of each student, classroom, grade level?					X
1.2 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of special education students?					X
1.3 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of English language learners?					X
1.4 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of ethnic groups, gender groups and all other categories of interest to the school?					X
1.5 a measurement of performance and progress based on the school's own past performance, and among students, classrooms, grades and subject areas?				X	
1.6 a measurement of performance and progress based on comparisons with similar schools?				X	
1.7 training, management systems and structures that support teachers in the use of school data to inform planning and instruction and to track the progress of students?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 1				X	

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use data to understand each student's next learning steps and to set suitably high goals for accelerating each students learning.

To what extent do school leaders and faculty . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
2.1 engage in collaborative processes to set demanding, objectively measurable goals for improvement, and to develop plans and timeframes for reaching those goals?				X	
2.2 focus on each student, classroom, grade level, academic subject and group of students whose performance or progress has been identified by the school as a particular focus area?				X	
2.3 identify and improve the performance and progress of those students in greatest need of improvement?				X	
2.4 share whole school goals with all members of the school community to rigorously improve the performance and progress of students?				X	
2.5 convey consistently high expectations to students and their parents/caregivers?				X	
2.6 regularly provide students and their parents/caregivers with information about the goals set for each student, and about each student's progress and performance, and how they can improve?				X	
2.7 invite and enable parents/caregivers to provide useful information to teachers and the school about the learning needs and capacities of their children?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 2				X	

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instructional Strategy to Goals: The school aligns its academic work, strategic decisions and resources, and effectively engages students around its plans and goals for accelerating student learning.

To what extent does the school . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
3.1 select core curricular approaches that facilitate and provide meaningful interim data about progress towards goals and focus on raising the achievement of students?				X	
3.2 provide a broad and engaging curriculum, including the arts, to enhance learning both within and outside the school day?				X	
3.3 hold teachers accountable for the progress and learning of the students in their charge, for making instruction interesting and compelling, and for creating a positive safe and inclusive learning environment?			X		
3.4 ensure that teachers use school, class and student data to plan for and provide differentiated instruction that meets the specific needs of all the students in their charge?			X		
3.5 make budgeting, staffing and scheduling decisions strategically, based on data, to meet the school's academic goals for all students?				X	
3.6 ensure that there is an environment of mutual trust and respect between all staff and students to support personal and academic development?				X	
3.7 ensure that there are effective and consistently applied procedures to encourage and monitor student attendance?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 3				X	

Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building to Goals: The development of leadership, teachers and other staff capacity is aligned to the school’s collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.

To what extent does the school . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
4.1 use frequent observations of classroom teaching by the principal and other available information to develop a differentiated strategy for improving the quality of each teacher’s instruction?				X	
4.2 make professional development decisions strategically, based on data, to help meet the improvement goals of students and teachers?				X	
4.3 provide frequent opportunities for teachers to observe each other’s classroom instruction and to meet together in teams to plan, share effective practices, and evaluate one another’s instruction in an open and reflective professional environment?				X	
4.4 develop effective procedures for the induction and support of teachers who are new to the profession or the school?				X	
4.5 align youth development, guidance/advising and other student support services around stated academic and personal development goals?				X	
4.6 consistently implement clear procedures that enable the school to run smoothly and encourage effective student learning?				X	
4.7 create effective partnerships with outside entities that support the academic and personal growth of the students?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 4					X

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

To what extent do . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
5.1 the school’s plans for improving student outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?				X	
5.2 the school’s plans for improving teacher outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?				X	
5.3 teachers and faculty use periodic assessments and other diagnostic tools to measure the effectiveness of plans and interventions for individual and groups of students in key areas?				X	
5.4 teachers and faculty use the information generated by periodic assessments and other progress measures and comparisons to revise plans immediately in order to reach stated goals?				X	
5.5 school leaders track the outcomes of periodic assessments and other diagnostic measures and use the results to makes strategic decisions to modify practices to improve student outcomes?				X	
5.6 school leaders and staff use each plan’s interim and final outcomes to drive the next stage of goal setting and improvement planning?				X	
5.7 the principal and school community have a clear vision for the future development of the school and implement procedures and systems to effect change?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 5					X

◇	Outstanding
+	Well Developed
✓	Proficient
➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features
Δ	Underdeveloped