



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Institute of Collaborative Education

Middle-High School 407

**345 East 15 Street
New York
NY 10003**

Principal: John Pettinato

Dates of review: December 13 - 14, 2007

Lead Reviewer: Bruce Berry

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Institute for Collaborative Education is a middle/high school with 405 students from grade 6 through grade 12. The school population comprises 21.7% Black, 25.1% Hispanic, 44.6% White, 7.4% Asian and 1.2% other students. The student body includes 1% English language learners and 10% special education students. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 50%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006 -2007 was 92.6%. The school is not in receipt of Title 1 funding.

The school shares a building with several other schools.

The school has a waiver from the State in respect of Regents High School Tests.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal's all embracing leadership provides a culture where students and teachers are able to grow as a community of learners and retain their individuality as innovators.
- The leadership team and teachers share a vision for the continuous growth of students' academic and social achievement.
- There are excellent data systems in place for tracking student progress.
- The school provides very effective support for students in greatest need of improvement.
- The innovative project based learning curriculum gives high levels of challenge and creative learning opportunities for all of the students.
- The highly differentiated instruction provides the opportunity for students to be independent, creative thinkers and to be constructive team members.
- There is a highly respectful and caring culture in the school, in which students accept ownership of their own learning and behavior.
- There are excellent communication systems in place for keeping parents fully engaged with their children's education.
- The professional development programs are fully driven by the needs identified by curriculum and instructional outcomes.

What the school needs to improve

- Further refine the sophistication of the action planning process by continuing to formalize existing structures.
- Research the possibilities of aligning to the State math curriculum without diminishing the present high-quality project-based outcomes.
- Explore the possibilities of providing a wider range of recreational activities for students in the after-school program.

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.

Since the last Quality Review, the school has continued to develop their innovative program of vertical planning for the project-based curriculum. The use of technology is playing an ever-increasing role in the classroom learning activities for the students. The principal has created a highly effective team of staff who are fully committed to developing the young people in the school as a community of learners and innovators. The school has developed excellent data systems, which are used weekly to monitor the progress of every student and to plan intervention programs when necessary. The innovative curriculum provides a wonderful vehicle for the students to develop their skills as independent thinkers and learners. This is further enhanced by the high-quality differentiated instruction provided by the teachers. The highly structured support available for student learning gives high levels of motivation for all the students and provides excellent help for the students in greatest need of improvement. There are excellent communication systems for keeping parents fully informed of their children's progress. The parents have exceptionally high praise for the quality of education provided for their children by the school. The school is very well organized and has an excellent caring and respectful culture. It enables the students to grow as individuals, both academically and socially. The school is constantly refining their action planning process and is exploring ways to provide more recreational activities. The Prodigy Project team, operating as the inquiry team, is focusing their research on students whose performance is well below their potential.

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 outstanding.

The school has developed its own graduation assessment tests that exceed the State Regents tests requirements. The students undertake research projects and complete design portfolios of their work. They create exhibitions and perform presentations before a committee, which certifies their work. There is an excellent assessment process in place for monitoring students' progress. Data, consisting of five descriptors of student performance, is collected and analyzed weekly to check the progress of each student, classroom, grade and subject. The teachers use a range of assessment strategies, including quizzes, tests, homework and ongoing assessments of students' projects. Special education students are integrated into general education classes and make excellent progress through the high-quality support they receive. They are pulled out of electives, with parental agreement, in order to receive resource room support in line with

their identified learning needs. The resource room teacher has invaluable dialogs with subject teachers to ensure that the students receive consistent support for their learning.

The school's assessment data is reviewed on a regular basis in order to monitor the progress of different ethnic and gender groups. A range of excellent strategies is being used to address the underperformance of boys. They include an increase in the use of technology, more activities that are of a practical nature and the use of more focused reading materials. The project based learning system provides excellent continuity of learning from grade 6 through grade 12. The systematic use of data enables the progress of each cohort of students to be closely monitored. The school takes a leading role in the New York State Performance Standards Consortium. It has recently received a high-quality report from an external committee following a review of the performance-based standards required of the school. It is also part of a study group with the other schools, where teachers make intervisitations and share good practice.

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 outstanding.

Staff work collaboratively to set challenging and measurable goals for improving student achievement. The goals are well constructed and are based on students' present and projected performance. They are set for each subject and for graduation at each grade level. By regularly using the school's excellent data system, the leadership team has an in-depth knowledge of the progress of each student, classroom, grade and subject. The students have clearly identified goals in respect of the outcomes for each of their projects. All the students have an advisory teacher, who meets with them twice a week to discuss their progress in meeting their goals. The students identified as being in need of improvement have a range of invaluable support mechanisms available to them and make very good progress because of the help they receive. The Promotional Review Committee meets weekly to discuss students who are in need of extra support. They plan individual interventions for the students, which include after-school and Saturday programs. Students identified as performing well below their potential are referred to the Prodigy Project Team, with a teacher working with them on a one-to-one basis.

All members of the school community share exceptionally high expectations of what the students are capable of achieving in their time at the school. "There is a beginning, but there is no end to their learning" is how one parent described the impact of the school on their child. The excellent communication systems keep the parents updated on the progress their children are making. The parents have access to a website, which contains useful information about school activities and resources for parents and students. They receive an excellent in-depth narrative report from all the subject teachers on their children's progress and on the areas for improvement. There is a range of exciting events for parents, which include science exhibitions, family mathematics nights and literature and humanities events. The students run weekly Town Meetings for parents where they highlight student work, faculty projects and invite community speakers.

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 outstanding.

The inquiry-based curriculum gives the students the opportunity to engage in activities with a high degree of challenge and interest to stimulate their learning. The school has designed a curriculum by taking the requirements for graduation and, using backward design, has created a vertical project-based curriculum throughout the school. The expansive curriculum provides interesting opportunities for the students to study a wide range of subjects. These include visual arts, where the students have created drawings, paintings and murals, which are showcased in local museums and at conferences. The students create original musical works, which are performed in offsite concerts and competitions. The school offers a wide range of exciting elective subjects such as theater, band, architecture, Spanish and psychology. Grade 12 students take part in a four-month internship in which they work in a variety of business and community organizations. The instruction in the school provides many opportunities for the students to be independent creative thinkers and to be constructive team members. The learning activities are differentiated very well to match the students' learning needs and different learning styles. For example, in a science lesson students are recreating the greenhouse effect in the laboratory and are accelerating the global warming to research the impact over time. The leadership team is looking into the possibility of aligning the project-based math curriculum for grade 6 through grade 8 to that of the State curriculum.

Budgeting, staffing and scheduling are used imaginatively to support the curriculum and the instruction. The leadership team is prioritizing the creation of small class sizes. They are providing excellent resources for instruction and are continuing to support the use of technology to enhance instructional practice. There is a wonderful caring and respectful culture in the school, where teachers provide exceptional support for the students' academic and social development. The teachers create an exciting learning environment for the students. They give them many opportunities to develop their skills as inquiring individuals and as independent learners. Another indicator of the interest and engagement the students have in their learning is the high attendance levels. There are excellent procedures to support student attendance and include teachers making the early morning calls to particular students to help them to get to school on time.

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 outstanding.

The principal makes excellent use of classroom visits each day to monitor the quality and the relevance of the instruction. He monitors the preparation for the two-week projects to ensure that it is in line with the vertical planning process and has clear timelines and benchmarks for improving student achievement. All aspects of the visits are reviewed with the heads of the subjects and professional development is planned to address any identified areas for improvement. Teachers are asked to undertake a formal written reflection of their instructional practice. They share these with the principal and use the outcomes to plan differentiated training activities. The professional development team undertakes an effective survey of the teachers to identify the main areas for training for the coming year. The major areas for this year are vertical planning for the projects and the differentiation of instruction. There is an excellent team structure in the school. The frequent grade level and subject meetings offer teachers the opportunity to plan together and to discuss students' progress. They are able to share good practice through the excellent program of scheduled classroom intervisitations. There is a highly effective program in place for supporting new teachers to the school. They have a full induction program and an experienced teacher from their subject area provides them with invaluable mentoring support.

The school has a range of exciting initiatives in place for supporting the continuous growth of students' academic and social achievement. They receive excellent support from their advisory teacher, the guidance counsellors and the college advisor. In addition, they have wonderful opportunities to be involved in major community projects. For example, two teams of students and teachers went to Louisiana to help with the rebuilding project after hurricane Katrina struck the area. Another group is taking part in an exchange with a group of students from Paris. The students from the two countries are writing poetry, music and producing a theatrical representation of their respective transport systems. The school has many partnerships, which provide excellent support for the students' academic and social enrichment. In their quest for continuous improvement, the school is exploring ways to provide an even wider range of recreational activities in the after-school program.

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 school has very effective plans and goals for improving student and teacher outcomes. Measurable and challenging annual goals are set for each subject and for graduation at each grade level. The school's project-based curriculum provides excellent data on a weekly basis and at six interim points during the year to monitor the progress made in reaching the long-term goals. The leadership team and teachers are able to identify individual students in each grade and class who are in need of further support for their learning. The teachers, the Promotional Review Committee and the Prodigy Project Team are constantly active in providing intervention support and programs of study for students in need of further improvement. The school leaders effectively oversee the activities of all the groups and monitor the impact of the curriculum and the instruction. They review the data on a weekly basis and work collaboratively with the teachers to make strategic modifications to plans and goals when necessary. The school leaders are constantly refining action planning process by continuing to formalise existing structures. The very effective structures, which provide students with different levels of support depending on their need, have a very positive impact on the students' academic and social development. The project-based curriculum organization is providing the students with high levels of self-motivation. They are able to demonstrate their independence as learners and their developing skills as innovators. The whole school community is fully committed to continue to provide a curriculum, which develops highly motivated and self-disciplined students, "gives them the freedom of learning" and "prepares them for the life beyond school".

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME:	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 rigorous, objectively measurable goals for improvement, and to develop plans and timeframes for reaching those goals?					X
2.2 focus on each student, classroom, grade level, academic subject and group of students whose performance or progress has been identified by the school as a particular focus area?					X
2.3 identify and improve the performance and progress of those students in greatest need of improvement?					X
2.4 share whole school goals with all members of the school community to rigorously improve the performance and progress of students?					X
2.5 convey consistently high expectations to students and their parents/caregivers?					X
2.6 regularly provide students and their parents/caregivers with information about the goals set for each student, and about each student's progress and performance, and how they can improve?					X
2.7 invite and enable parents/caregivers to provide useful information to teachers and the school about the learning needs and capacities of their children?					X
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 and tardiness?					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, and effectively address discipline related incidents?					X
4.7 create effective partnerships with outside entities that support the academic and personal growth of the students?				X	
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