



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

New Dorp High School

High School 440

**465 New Dorp Lane
Staten Island
NY 10306**

Principal: Deirdre A Angelis

Dates of review: November 26 - 28, 2007

Lead Reviewer: Colin Henderson

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

New Dorp School is a high school with 2323 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 19% Black, 20% Hispanic, 54% White, and 7% Asian students. The student body includes 6% English language learners and 10% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 91.6%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 38% eligibility.

The school was redesigned in September 2006 into eight small learning communities.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Staff in each small learning community know each student well and provide a caring, supportive climate for learning.
- The strong and influential leadership of the principal is a key factor in the drive for success for this redesigned school.
- An effective collegial approach among staff provides a safe and interesting learning environment that focuses on improving teachers' and students' progress.
- Procedures to gather data on how well each student is progressing are outstanding.
- Staff make increasingly effective use of action research to identify deficiencies in students' learning and provide support to improve them.
- Students enjoy coming to school, behave well in classrooms and around the halls and have high aspirations.
- Effective procedures and the clear direction given by the principal, supported by her staff enable the school to run well.
- Plans are monitored frequently and revised when necessary, leading to improved student and teacher outcomes.
- Very good links with outside entities enrich the curriculum and provide opportunities for students to experience the world outside of school.
- Good curriculum realignment in math and science have improved student outcomes.

What the school needs to improve

- Further develop the use of assessment data so that teaching consistently matches students' different learning needs.
- Continue to re-align the curriculum, particularly in English language arts, to enhance students' learning.
- Extend the use of action research programs that improve student outcomes.
- Improve the use of interactive technology to support teaching and promote students' learning.

Part 3: Main Findings

Progress made since the last review

The school has made some progress in addressing the issues identified in the previous Quality Review report.

Overall Evaluation

The school is well developed.

The school has made great strides forward since it was redesigned into small learning communities (SLC). The clear vision of the principal to establish the communities has helped staff to get to know their students very well. They have created a supportive climate and provide very good care and guidance. This is valued highly by staff, students and their parents. There is an air of enthusiasm and enjoyment in the building and people get along well together. The school is set up well to improve students' performance. As a result, students make good progress. One member of staff commented, "This school is like a blossoming flower that will take over the island!"

Students greatly enjoy the wide range of activities offered to them. One student commented, "the school offers something for everyone." Parents know that their children are safe and valued. They are kept well informed about what is going on in school and how well their children are doing. Regular assessments let the students and their parents know what they need to improve. The school uses data excellently to check on the progress of all students and to set long-term goals for them to achieve. The use of research programs to analyze assessment data and target deficiencies in learning has greatly improved student outcomes. This improvement gave a great boost to staff and students and provides a focus for further development.

The principal's hands-on style ensures that she has a visible presence around the school. With help from her assistant principals and teacher co-coordinators, she has created an effective team approach within the whole school and within each SLC. Good professional development encourages more teachers to use assessments and provide activities that match students' different learning needs. However, this is not a consistent feature in each classroom. Some teachers use technology effectively to grasp students' interest and involve them actively in developing their learning, although this is not common practice. The inquiry team has been a developing feature of the school's organization.

It is providing an increasingly effective focus on using assessment to identify deficiencies in students' learning, for example in the organization of their writing. It uses data to set clear goals and to realign instruction and the curriculum. The school has made some good progress since the last review in providing training in the use of data and differentiation of instruction, although its effect is not in consistent practice in classrooms.

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 established outstanding procedures for gathering an extensive range of data that enables it to have an excellent understanding of each student's performance and progress. The very effective use of a comprehensive computer database by the principal and key staff in each SLC and faculty helps them to closely monitor the performance and progress of classes, grades and different groups of students in each academic subject. They constantly update and review this information, for example, at each periodic assessment. Careful and frequent analysis of the data by the administration and SLC staff helps them to understand what progress each student is making, where there are deficiencies in their skills and knowledge and how they have progressed over time.

The performance and progress of special education students are closely tracked and targeted support is given through collaborative team teaching, self-contained and mainstream classes. Individual education plans are checked and updated during every periodic assessment. This individualized approach enabled these students to make a substantial gain in their performance from the previous year. English language learners are also closely tracked and supported, for example, through Project Achieve. Diagnostic tests are used quickly to identify English language deficiency. For example, the school devised its own assessment in the English language learners' native language to check on writing skills. This helped them to identify which specific skills were deficient and staff then drew up a program to address these concerns. Working closely with the New Visions facilitator, staff have gathered and used data, supported by management plans, to improve the performance of targeted groups, for example, lower performing students. This intense focus is reflected in their strong progress in the periodic assessments.

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.

Students know their long-term goals and they receive regular information about how well they are progressing towards their goals, for example, after periodic assessments. Staff in each SLC have common planning time and use it to meet at least three times each week to consider the progress of their students. They focus on groups of students whose performance has been identified as in need of improvement. For example, they used the data to find grade 9 students whose core subject skills were deficient and put them at risk as they begin to take Regents examinations. Staff set clear and challenging goals to improve the performance of these students. The school decreased class sizes in all grade 9 core subject classes and provided extra support in other classes, such as science. This resulted in significant gains in students' reading scores, which provided a great motivation for staff to build on this success.

The school has high expectations of its students and parents are aware of these and most are eager to support the school in helping their children to achieve them. There is good communication with parents to keep them informed about how well their children are doing with effective use of telephone and e-mail contact to provide support and guidance. Students know their performance goals and are kept well informed about how they are achieving. Good relationships between students and staff help them to receive good advice over when they would benefit from additional support through period 9 or Saturday school sessions.

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.

Students choose the SLC in which to enroll. This is evident in their positive attitudes, their improving attendance and their high aspirations. The school aligns its staffing and scheduling decisions to meet students' needs. The curriculum is planned well and regularly updated to promote students' skills by including inter-disciplinary units. SLCs are developing curricular programs that support their different identities, for example, in forensic science, although these programs are not yet fully established to reflect the uniqueness of each SLC. The curriculum generates meaningful data that is used effectively to make some changes to extend students' learning. For example, realigning courses in math and science have prepared students better for Regents tests. This was reflected clearly in the results of these tests, although changes in the English language arts program have not been so effective in improving students' writing skills. Students greatly value the many opportunities provided both in the curriculum and outside of the normal teaching day. Their enjoyment is reflected in the many honors awarded to students in the areas of sport, music and art and in business and commerce. Additional classes both within and outside the school day support students in gaining credits towards their Regents exams.

The school uses data with increasing effectiveness to hold teachers accountable for the progress of their students. More staff are confidently using assessment data to guide their teaching. Some use the data increasingly effectively to guide their teaching to meet students' learning needs. Although greater use is being made of this approach, there are some inconsistencies in practice. Teachers do not consistently use formative assessment to differentiate instruction. As a result, some students are not fully challenged in some lessons to achieve as well as they could.

Staff in each SLC work very hard to support and guide students and where necessary their parents. This is valued highly and results in mutual trust and respect between students, their parents and staff. This creates a caring climate that encourages most students to attend regularly. Recent data shows a significant increase in attendance and the school has rigorous procedures to follow up those students who are not in school. The building is maintained well. Corridors and halls are clean and attractive displays of work add color and interest to the working environment. Students feel safe, enjoy coming to school and take pride in seeing their work on display.

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.

There are frequent lesson observations by the principal and assistant principals and staff have many opportunities for intervisitations to other classrooms and other schools. The principal has given a strong lead on improving the quality of instruction. She has led professional development to encourage her staff to make greater use of differentiated teaching approaches. As a result, teaching is better matched to meet students' learning needs but she acknowledges that "there is still some way to go".

Teachers make good use of professional development to help students meet their goals. Some assistant principals work with a consultant to focus closely on key skills in students' learning as part of the scaffold apprenticeship model of reviewing data and targeting groups of students. This is helping students to achieve their goals and raising performance.

Students benefit from good support in their personal and academic development through the good use of guidance counselors, on-site medical services and partnerships with other community based organizations and higher education institutions. Each SLC is creating a community advisory board to assist in establishing goals for their programs and supporting them to achieve them.

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 has a clear vision for developing further the eight SLCs within the school. She shares this vision with her staff and has provided the means and opportunity to improve student performance. Working with the New Visions facilitator, she has supported each SLC to develop a "change management plan", linked to the whole school goals. This provides a clear framework with end of year targets, short-term goals and detailed assessments to check on how well students are learning. As a result, clear progress is being made towards the whole school goals and student outcomes are rising.

Each SLC collects detailed student data that is used constantly to set up plans with specific goals for student outcomes. These plans are revisited frequently, and revised where appropriate, through common time team meetings to check student progress towards these goals by looking at the results of periodic and teacher assessments. Teachers are becoming more confident in their understanding and use of data and its use in supporting students to make good progress.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| SCHOOL NAME: New Dorp High School | 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 make 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 | |