



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Gateway School

Public School 364

**1426 Freeport Loop
Brooklyn
NY 11239**

Principal: Dale Kelly

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Reviewer: Alvin Jeffs

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Gateway Intermediate School is a collaborative learning community housed in two separate academies located in the Spring Creek section of Brooklyn. These two academies, Freeport and Geneva, serve as two small schools, but are very closely connected so that students and parents recognize the single identity of PS 364.

The school serves 441 students grades 6 through 8. Of these, 9% are special education students and less than 1% are English language learners. The ethnic make up of the school is 73% Black and 21% Hispanic, with small sub-groups of White and Asian students. Attendance is good, standing at 92% compared with the New York City average of 90%.

The school has a scholars program for gifted and talented students. Currently there are six scholars' classes, five located on the Geneva Academy site and one at Freeport. One class is a collaborative teaching class which takes students from both academies and replaces earlier self-contained special education classes.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Students enjoy their time at Gateway where they feel respected and safe.
- The school makes excellent use of data to monitor the academic and personal progress of all students.
- An outstanding principal inspires staff with a vision that is firmly rooted in the drive for high achievement.
- Senior staff model high level skills of teamwork, teaching and reflective practice.
- Teachers use data well to develop programs that assist individual students in taking control of their own learning.
- The school is an orderly community where students receive a good preparation for adult life.
- All relationships within the school are underpinned by respect.
- Parents are very well supported and appreciate the respect shown them as “part of the team”.
- The mandated curriculum is well taught and enriched by a wide range of interesting activities and visits.
- Students demonstrate maturity and sensitivity in their relations with each other and in their response to visitors.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue to support staff with practical professional development relating to the use of data and the differentiation of instruction.
- Delegate some of the management tasks currently undertaken by the principal.
- Appoint a literacy coach.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school with well-developed features.

Gateway Intermediate School is a small school. It makes good use of the advantage of its small size by ensuring that everyone knows everyone else. Teachers and administration know every student and show concern for their progress. There is a strong emphasis on high achievement from all staff and this transfers to students and parents on a daily basis.

The school collects and uses a vast amount of data, internal and external, formal and informal. It uses this data to identify individual students and groups, monitor their progress and act when this progress falters.

The principal is an excellent practitioner with a vision of a high achieving and nurturing school. Although he has only been leading the school for two years, he has gained the respect of everyone he works with. His professionalism has transferred to staff, students and families. He is rigorous in his drive for high standards in behavior and achievement and this has been successful.

The school is one where respect and reflection are two highly-prized qualities. Adults and students naturally treat each other with consideration and understanding. At the same time everyone shows a thoughtfulness concerning how best to move on in academic skills, but also in the development of mature and compassionate citizens.

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 well developed.

When the school receives its students its academic and counseling staff make a detailed analysis of the data to identify those who require additional support, those who have achieved well, but need further challenge and, at the same time, decide the best groupings in which pupils may thrive. Thus, they have an immediate baseline with which to compare future progress. They also start portfolios of work that demonstrate practical developments in terms of work samples, many of which are student selected.

This assessment and analysis continues throughout the three years at Gateway. It is supplemented with appropriate English language arts and mathematics diagnostic assessments, classroom observations and external test data. At any time teachers and administrators know where a student is academically, what the next step of learning should be and what additional help may be needed. All staff are keen to emphasize that this copious data is supplemented with equally important knowledge of students' learning styles, personalities and problems.

Senior staff look closely at all relevant sub-groups. This has meant very useful action relating to the provision of counseling for grade 7 boys whose English performance had

dropped below that of girls. The school can show that the lower achieving group of Hispanic students is now progressing well. The school's knowledge concerning English language learners, special education students and higher-achieving 'scholars' is detailed and linked to action. The size of the school means that this analysis is quickly disseminated to all staff for implementation.

Gateway works closely with a group of intermediate schools within the area. This has allowed them to share practices and compare outcomes. This works well, although there is always room for more work relating to the outcomes of different groups within the school. It also makes detailed comparisons with previous years' performance, between grades and classes. and has closely monitored the steady improvement in external examinations over the past three years.

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 proficient.

The school is rightly proud of its collegiate way of working. The wealth of data and the detailed analyses quickly become the subject of informal discussions between teachers, whose classes are grouped so that similar grade classrooms are close to each other. The data feeds through to grade, faculty and department meetings. Thus, mid-year item analysis has shown a weakness in mathematics relating to algebra and probability and in inference within English language arts. This has been translated into a sharper focus on these areas of work, with the concomitant purchase of resources and attention during classroom observations.

Individual students whose performance gives cause for concern, or who simply are not thriving, are carefully tracked. If progress does not improve, or if anxieties persist, the relevant group of subject, resource and counseling staff meet for detailed discussions which invariably lead to effective action. The school prides itself on its 'transparency' and the outcomes are relayed to parents and students who become part of the action plan. Every adult is seen as a partner in the drive for high achievement.

Careful attention to achievement means that both sub-groups and sub-skills are addressed. The school is clear that with the one exception, boys and girls are making comparable progress. Similarly it knows, for example, that the differential between Black and Hispanic 7th graders gaining levels 3 and 4 in English language arts is small (44% compared with 41%). Where a greater differential exists, such as boys in grade 7, a sharp focus develops at classroom and faculty level.

Discussions with parents and students emphasize the high priority they give to academic performance. Staff develop this by conferencing with students in class, when goals are set and it is further strengthened at parent-teacher conferences where parents are shown work samples and test results as the basis of individual and curriculum planning. These conferences are backed up by advice on skills development. Students have access to a 'test sophistication assembly' to help them cope with examinations, while there are many parent workshops that show families how to support, for instance, the new science exit projects.

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 well developed.

The school has enthusiastic in developing a curriculum for the whole child, addressing personal as well as academic issues. The principal also seeks to avoid a ‘one size fits all’ curriculum and has assisted staff in the development of many enrichment activities, including a rich mix of opportunities from judo to puppetry. It has placed a strong emphasis on core skills and monitors achievement within these areas. To do this it has expended a significant amount of the resources budget on new English and mathematics texts, a very strong battery of laptops and science equipment. In addition, it has invested in a substance abuse worker who has already shown good results. The loss of the literacy coach has created problems, but plans are in place for a replacement. The school also boasts an outstanding physical education curriculum which has been well supported, particularly by the development of a local sports center to compensate for lack of space on site.

Scheduling has been reviewed to ensure that where, for example, there is a mathematics problem, additional lessons can be laid on. There has also been careful attention given to the development of the effective extended day and Saturday academy activities.

Teaching throughout the school is good and students are seldom less than fully engaged. There is a mutual respect and students are very clear that they feel safe and have many adults to whom they can turn with problems. They appreciate the “extra mile” that teachers go for them, as do their parents.

The high expectations are kept in place by very regular dialogues between senior staff and class teachers, focusing on where progress is taking place and where it is not.

Attendance is good, significantly above the city average. This results from clear, rigorous procedures and staff who follow up absences quickly.

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 well developed.

The principal ensures that staff have a say in appointments because he is keen, as are all staff, to ensure compatibility within teams. The school is now able to use the open market recruitment and this is allowing the school to be selective in gaining teachers committed to high achievement and differentiation based on data.

Existing staffing is a mixture of new recruits and longer-tenured staff. The professional development program is a good one and allows new teachers to develop classroom management and lesson planning skills, while more experienced colleagues say they are free to attend higher-level courses. As 24% of staff are new to teaching, training for differentiation and planning has been a priority. This has been successful, but more work can usefully be carried out in this area.

There are rigorous classroom observations undertaken by senior staff and teachers are held closely accountable for academic and behavior standards. This modeling of

observation techniques has proved so successful that inter-visitation between teachers is increasing rapidly. This, together with the small size of the school, means that peer evaluation, usually of an informal kind, is prevalent throughout the school. This collaborative culture means that the many regular meetings achieve good outcomes because of the respect that teachers have for each other and the high priority they attach to student success. This is as evident at faculty meetings as much as with case conferences.

The principal is outstanding. He has moved the school significantly over the past two years and has the respect of staff, students and families. He sets high standards by his example and has developed a strong and equally respected set of senior staff. Not enough work or strategic thinking is currently delegated to these staff.

As a result of the high standards in behavior, the school runs smoothly. Entry and dismissal are smooth and movement between lessons is mature.

The school has developed many effective partnerships. Work with Urban Advantage has assisted in the developments within science, while the curriculum has been enriched through Teaching Matters and Groundworks for Success.

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 proficient.

The school's planning is good in its detailed nature and breadth. It is shared with all interested parties. The school leadership team is seen as a 'public forum' where the maximum parental involvement can be achieved. This means that everyone is clear about school goals. This, together with the expertise and reflectiveness of staff, means that time is not wasted in identifying what needs to be done and why.

The regular analysis of data means that a finger is kept on the pulse of all aspects of school life. Over the past nine months there have been many small, but significant, changes to the way the English language arts and mathematics curriculum are taught. In addition, areas of under-performance and test technique have been creatively addressed as it has become clear that they were matters of urgency. This rapid response has been possible because of the commitment that all staff have to working from the outcomes arising from data collection.

The Comprehensive Education Plan is seen by all staff as a "living and breathing document", susceptible to adaptation in the light of changing circumstances. Periodic reviews take place in light of internal surveys and external examination data. It is this sharp focus and flexibility that has allowed the school to adapt to the many changes occurring, often at short notice, over the past few years. It has meant above all that the journey for students and parents has been smooth and the school has gone a long way to achieving the "seamless education" they plan and work for on a daily basis.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Gateway Intermediate School (PS 364)	∅	✓	+
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	