

EXCERPTS FROM NYC DOE SCHOOL QUALITY REVIEW

The imaginatively constructed curriculum motivates students and encourages them to become independent learners. Each year, students create interdisciplinary portfolios. This process improves writing skills as well as research and critical thought. They use their computer access to review previous work to support current activities. One student observed, "It's like building up to one big topic and everything connects." She went on to explain how science lessons can link to social issues, which in turn are connected to history.

Students are confident to discuss their learning. Lessons ... encourage sharing ideas and learning from one another. Students observe how these opportunities build their confidence and teach life skills. For example, students who had made their own documentaries in a digital photography class presented their films to their peers, articulating their practice.

Teachers are held accountable for the progress and learning of their students. They are further supported through grade meetings and opportunities to plan collaboratively and to receive feedback before they teach a new unit. They work closely together to plan interesting experiences and opportunities for students.

There are excellent relationships between students and staff and the culture is one of trust and mutual respect. As one student observed, "We feel safe and have a great connection with our teachers."