

Certification Report Advanced Learning Posted January 2004

School Hamilton International Middle School

Program Spectrum

Hamilton International Middle School provides rigorous academic curriculum that prepares students for a diverse and technological society so that they will be able to contribute to and succeed in the larger global community. The school's transformation plan focuses on eliminating disproportionality, and the creation of a learning community built on trust, collaboration, cooperating, and a belief in diversity. Hamilton strives for academic excellence while integrating a global perspective throughout the curriculum. Last year, Hamilton began a full three-year Spanish and Japanese program that focuses on language acquisition sixth through eighth grade. Hamilton offers interdisciplinary team teaching across core subject areas, as well as an exploratory program that includes jazz, beginning, and senior band; orchestra, art, drama, wood and metal shop, and world culture.

Hamilton's Spectrum-eligible students are clustered for language arts, mathematics, and social studies, allowing students opportunities to work alongside other Spectrum-identified students as well as other students who demonstrate readiness for the Spectrum curriculum based on teacher recommendation. In Language Arts, the Spectrum program emphasizes acceleration to the next grade level in reading, writing, and communication. It utilizes higher-level thinking prompts to ensure rigor. The Social Studies curriculum is project-oriented. Students participate in individual, group, and whole-class activities that include simulations, mock trials, debate, dramatic presentations, research projects, PowerPoint presentations, and architectural/building models. Math students receive 80 minutes a week of instruction per day. Spectrum-eligible students are expected to regularly complete extensions beyond the general math curriculum. Students learn and practice presentation skills in all academic areas.

Strengths/Commendations

Motivated staff that is very student-focused and student-centered
Dedication to building and strengthening the program
Awareness of student needs and associated curricular issues
Implements a variety of programs (e.g., Writer's Workshop, math specialists working with teachers in instruction support, teacher-student conferences for evaluation of writing projects)

Areas to be Strengthened

Building robust student numbers
More clearly articulating program curricula within and among areas
Clear articulation of criteria for teacher-identified students included in the Spectrum program
Work on curricular goals and polices across grade levels.
More clearly define the use of rigor across curricula and grades.