

Island schools exec moving up the ladder

■ **B.A.S.I.S. superintendent Rose DePinto has been promoted to oversee all of the city's public high schools**

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As part of an extensive plan to restructure the city's public high schools, the head of Staten Island's public high schools will vacate her borough post and tackle the bigger task.

Rose DePinto's promotion comes less than a year and a half after she became B.A.S.I.S. superintendent in August 1999. Prior to that, she served only six and a half months as deputy superintendent of B.A.S.I.S.

B.A.S.I.S. stands for Brooklyn and Staten Island schools and serves about 46,000 students in the two boroughs, of which about 14,000 students attend Island schools. Three struggling Brooklyn high schools were recently taken over by the schools chancellor because of poor performance, bringing the total number of B.A.S.I.S. schools to 24.

One of the names rumored to be her replacement is Charles Amundsen, a Staten Islander and principal of the High School of Telecommunications Arts and Technology in Brooklyn. He would

be the first Staten Islander named to the post since Dr. Joseph Fislser, former principal of Tottenville High School, left the job in 1988.

Ms. DePinto said she will clear out her office in a week or two and take B.A.S.I.S. deputy, Elizabeth Sciabarra, with her.



DePinto

News of Ms. DePinto's promotion was tucked inside a seven-page progress report Schools Chancellor Harold O. Levy issued this week to members of the Board of Education.

"Ms. DePinto is both a talented administrator and a gifted educator. I feel fortunate to have her expertise as we go forward with a more detailed review of high school structure and operations," said Levy.

The schools chancellor wants greater continuity between elementary, intermediate and high schools. Ms. DePinto will consider what types of high schools should be created and look at schools that are failing. She said among her goals is to have students "succeed in a timely four-year graduation period and help kids move onto college or a career of their choice."

Ms. DePinto will examine an

array of models, including the plan to change John Jay High School in Park Slope, Brooklyn, into a sixth through 12th grade school. She will consider establishing themed schools, like Fiorello H. La Guardia High School for Music and Art and Performing Arts in Manhattan, in every borough.

Ms. DePinto will also review student admission policies, which could include looking at zoning issues. She will work on the restructuring with Judith Rizzo, deputy chancellor for curriculum and instruction, and Francline Goldstein, chief executive of high schools and student support services.

Assisting them with professional development will be Joyce Coppin, who will vacate her job as superintendent of Brooklyn high schools.

Staten Island's representative to the Board of Education, Jerry Cammarata, said the restructuring is a work in progress. However, he did have a few ideas.

"The high schools need to be better linked with the colleges," he said, echoing statements made by Ms. DePinto. A stronger relationship could evolve through advi-

sory boards, seminars between high school and college instructors and meetings between principals and college presidents, he said.

He called Ms. DePinto's promotion a boon for the entire city.

"She's a marvelous lady. She has done a great job as the B.A.S.I.S. superintendent and I know her wisdom will be much appreciated as she gives guidance to the high school superintendencies throughout the city."

Both Ms. DePinto and Cammarata declined to hypothesize on who would assume top responsibility at B.A.S.I.S. "I have no idea who my replacement is. There are a number of people under consideration," said Ms. DePinto.

Her deputy, Ms. Scibarra, will stay on at least another month

after Ms. DePinto leaves to ease the transition. Ms. Scibarra has served as deputy superintendent at B.A.S.I.S. since November 1999. She is responsible for instructional issues such as curriculum and professional development. Previously, she was principal of New Dorp High School.

Last January, Reyes Irizarry filled a second superintendent slot at B.A.S.I.S. He came from Brooklyn, where he served as principal of Canarsie High School. He took charge of pupil support services, facilities and budget.

In September the system announced the creation of senior superintendents for community school districts, which include elementary and intermediate schools. The senior superinten-

dents remained in command of their own districts and were asked to mentor and advise peer superintendents.

Officially, Ms. DePinto will be known as the senior superintendent for all high schools and will report to Ms. Goldstein.