



**NYCDOE**

**Quality Review: Final Report**

# **The New York City Department of Education**



# **Quality Review Report**

**The Bedford Village School**

**Public School 3**

**50 Jefferson Avenue  
Brooklyn  
NY 11216**

**Principal: Kristina Beecher**

**Dates of review: February 26 - 27, 2007**

**Reviewer: David King**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

The Bedford Village School is located in Brooklyn and serves a largely Black population. It has 618 students in pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The ethnic breakdown is 87% Black, 6% Hispanic, 5% Asian and 2% White or other groups. It is a Title 1 school with 66% student eligibility, which is lower than similar and other City schools. The figure is not a true reflection of the actual proportion treated as eligible which is 90%. The 4% of special education students taught in two self contained 12:1:1 settings. Another 3% receive special education teachers support services and 6% are English language learners. Attendance at 91% is lower than similar schools and other City schools.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school is well led by a principal who has a strong vision and sets a clear direction for the school.
- The school is an orderly well managed environment.
- Partnerships with community based organizations are routinely used to achieve the school's academic goals.
- Attendance is a high priority for the school and it is well monitored.
- The principal and her cabinet convey high expectations to students, staff and parents or caregivers.
- The academic intervention services and 'children are reason enough' teams are effective in improving the academic performance of those students with the greatest needs.
- The school has achieved a high standing within the community and is maintaining that with steadily improving levels of performance.
- The school has a commitment to the arts which is raising student self esteem, broadening their horizons and supporting them in achieving academic goals.
- The school uses the budget wisely to improve student outcomes.
- The teachers know the students well and respond positively to their academic and personal needs.

### What the school needs to improve

- Further develop the generation of meaningful data to achieve academic goals and the alignment of instructional plans.
- Develop a more systematic and consistent use of conferencing notebooks across all grades to support the generation of data in a range of formats.
- Review and improve scheduling arrangements to enable the members of the 'children are reason enough' team to meet regularly with grade teams.
- Review and improve the provision and staffing for English language learners
- Evaluate the implementation of the Comprehensive Education Plan and incorporate action planning for all members of the cabinet.
- Further develop the use of data in a variety of forms to improve the differentiation of instruction.

## Part 3: Main findings

### Overall Evaluation

#### **This is a proficient school.**

Bedford Village School is a welcoming, caring and inclusive environment providing a broad, culturally rich educational experience for the whole school community. The principal has created a school where staff are respected, students enjoy learning and parents are happy to send their children. The principal has very strong values and high expectations of both her staff and the students. She is strongly committed to her students getting the best start in their education and having a clear understanding of their cultural heritage. This is a community in which all members feel valued and respected. She is well supported by her staff in achieving this. She works very closely with her cabinet and knows the strengths of the individuals on her staff.

In addition the school has many strengths, a key one being the detailed knowledge that is held about each student and their backgrounds, there is also good communication between school and home. The students themselves are well mannered and articulate.

Performance in English language arts, mathematics and science has improved in recent years and the standards achieved are amongst the highest in the area. There is a drive to continue to improve and the school cabinet, which is constantly reviewing progress is keen to update provision for the students.

The areas for improvement are ones that the school is already aware of and consequently it is intent on putting together action plans and has begun to think about how this can be achieved. The current strengths coupled with recent improvements demonstrate that the school has the capacity to improve even further.

### 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 proficient.**

The school collects and analyzes data proficiently for the whole school using scores from formal assessments and other interim assessments in mathematics and literacy. The school collects benchmarking data in September, January and May. In addition to this the principal collects assessment information at the end of each month as part of the system to monitor student progress. This has included the collection of writing samples and teachers' conference notebooks. As a result of this the principal and her cabinet have a good knowledge and understanding of the performance and progress of each of its students. However, the collection of daily assessment information and the use of conference notebooks by teachers are inconsistent and are not monitored sufficiently well by the cabinet.

The school is fully aware of the performance of all the ethnic groups. It collects data on the performance of ethnic groups, English language learners and special education students. This does not yet include school generated data but there is the capacity to make this refinement. Special education students receive a considerable amount of support and monitoring from academic intervention services so the school is fully aware of the progress of these students. This input has resulted in the support for these students being carefully considered and efficiently used. The school has also hired a second language teacher for three days a week which means English language learners receive good support on those days. The continuity of this provision is subject to disruption over the course of the academic year.

There are many students who attend the school who have specific needs such as those which arise from being in care. The school has a sound knowledge of who these students are and of their performance and progress. The 'children are reason enough' team works very closely with these students and others considered at risk. This team has been effective in raising student self esteem but they are not working systematically enough with teachers to get a full picture of academic progress. The school has considered the performance of girls in mathematics and has a motivational program for girls and their parents called 'Gain 24'. This is having a positive impact on girls' performance and their attitudes to mathematics.

The school is fully aware of how its performance compares with others schools locally and City-wide. It is also fully aware of the needs of its community and is establishing a strong reputation in the community.

**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 mathematics and literacy coaches use data to help facilitate the differentiation of instruction across the school. The coaches have encouraged the creation of groupings within each class based on this information but the impact of this is variable. Each class teacher has an assessment binder in which they record daily student progress, although the use of these binders and evidence of goal setting is inconsistent and is not fully developed across the school.

The principal and her cabinet look at the data they receive and use that along with other information such as students' social progress and behavior to reach a decision about placement of each student within a class. Goal setting and differentiation in classes is variable according to the teachers' competence and experience. Some teachers use post-it notes placed on students' work indicating how well they have done and what they can do to improve but there is no rigorously applied system for recording this information. There are writing goals for the whole school and teachers have received professional development on the Independent Investigation Method and the Teachers' College writing programs. This has had some impact on improving the quality of student writing lower down the school and it has made teachers more aware of writing, although it is too early to assess what the impact of this has been on students' writing across the whole school.

The academic intervention services team has produced very effective pupil intervention plans for holdovers and those students achieving at levels 1 and 2. This includes a program of early morning breakfast classes, reading recovery groups and a mixture of one to one work and 'push in' to the classroom. There is also a Saturday Academy for grade 5 students. This has been effective in reducing the numbers of students at level 1 during the last academic year.

The principal has high expectations which are conveyed to students, teachers and parents or caregivers. One challenge the school faces is encouraging parents to take a more active involvement in their children's education. The school is trying a number of strategies through the work of the parent coordinator.

**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 proficient.**

The school delivers the mandated curriculum but does not make use of curriculum maps. Teachers have been inconsistent in making sure that their planning is aligned with the students' needs. There is not enough differentiation of instruction in some classes and the generation of meaningful data is not consistently managed. Some analysis of student work takes place during collaborative meetings and is beginning to result in teachers revising units of study accordingly. Not all teachers understand the way in which data impacts on differentiation of instruction. The school is aware of all of these inconsistencies and is working hard to resolve them, to appropriate effect.

Resources have been allocated well according to the needs of the students. A considerable amount of the school budget has been allocated to academic intervention services instruction, which is a notable strength of the school. Academic intervention services staff are used particularly effectively in reading recovery and literacy intervention programs throughout the school. Small group programs, one-to-one work and the extended day program are other ways in which the school ensures that the weakest students, particularly those achieving at level 1, receive individual attention. The school has established a philosophy for improving literacy and writing and has provided the staff with professional development and classroom support. Additional funding has been gained through Project Arts and sensibly used to purchase resources to complement instruction in music, dance, physical education and art.

Scheduling decisions are driven by the needs that emerge from student data analysis. There are common grade preparation blocks and weekly grade-wide professional development administrative meetings. The special education teachers are also available for grade meetings. Common time has been created for the specialist teachers in art, music, dance and physical education. This sort of decision making has helped to promote the arts as a way of enhancing brain power and has resulted in many students changing their moods and perceptions.

The teachers are very aware of the academic and social needs of all the students and the students themselves stated that they enjoy their lessons when the work is challenging. They also indicated that there were often times when they were asked to complete work which is repetitive and not particularly interesting. Students demonstrate interest in their work but are often passive. There were good examples of student engagement seen in

science and social studies. Attendance is a high priority for the school and many strategies are in place to improve it, including phone calls and letters home.

**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 proficient.**

The principal has an experienced staff and only two are new to the job. They demonstrate a desire to give the students a good start to their education and to provide them with an environment in which they feel valued and respected. The teachers share the vision of the principal and also her commitment to success.

The professional development program is compiled from a combination of ideas from faculty and the cabinet. It is designed to allow the staff to develop their skills and build on their knowledge of strategies to help support the learning of each student as effectively as possible. Examples of this include the training for improving literacy and the writing program, led by the literacy coach. Portfolios of student work reveal that this training has had an impact in improving writing.

Teacher observations take place regularly on both a formal and informal basis. The principal and her assistant regularly visit classrooms to monitor performance and to model teaching. Every teacher receives the mandatory formal observations and receives very thorough and supportive feedback. Teachers get regular opportunities to visit each others classrooms. The coaches have a support role with all teachers. Combined with other aspects of the professional development program, these classroom observations and support sessions are helping to improve every teacher's knowledge and understanding of how to help students to reach their goals.

The principal respects and supports the teachers and all the staff enjoy being treated in a professional manner. She has the capacity to make the changes necessary to further improve the school. The staff are contented and they enjoy working in the school. The school has good systems and structures, procedures are clear and the atmosphere is calm and purposeful.

There are many partnerships with community-based organizations, including Cornell University, Education through Music, the Orchestra of St Luke's and the Morgan Library and Museum.

**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 principal and her cabinet are now engaged in the next phase of raising standards in the school. The majority of decisions are reached collaboratively and always with the

needs of the students in mind. Data has not driven instruction firmly enough up to now, although the staff does have a thorough knowledge of the students.

The principal has a detailed Comprehensive Education Plan with action plans for its implementation and monitoring. A further document called Goals and Objectives has also been produced which prioritizes aspects of the Comprehensive Education Plan. This has helped the cabinet to focus on specific areas for improvement. The major area of improvement is the generation of meaningful data to achieve academic goals and the alignment of instructional plans.

The Comprehensive Education Plan is used regularly and guides improvement planning. Plans are revised when new information comes to light but do not clearly show interim goals and new steps for action following the analysis.

The school is flexible in its approach to scheduling and learning is organized to respond to the needs of students. This is particularly effective in the support for special education students and other students in need of extra help. Not all of the students are challenged by the teaching on offer although the atmosphere in the school is very positive. The school acknowledges that the use of data in a variety of forms needs improvement. This represents the next major step forward for the school.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: The Bedford Village School (PS 3)</b>	∅	✓	+
<b>Quality Score</b>		X	

<b>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.</b>	∅	✓	+
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"> <li>• each student, classroom, grade level,</li> </ul>		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"> <li>• ethnic groups, English Language Learners, special education students*</li> </ul>		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"> <li>• all other categories of interest to the school*</li> </ul>		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
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>		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.

<b>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.</b>	∅	✓	+
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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>		X	

<b>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.</b>	Ø	✓	+
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
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>		X	
<b>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.</b>	Ø	✓	+
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
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>		X	
<b>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.</b>	Ø	✓	+
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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>		X	