



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Teunis G. Bergen School

**Public School 009
80 Underhill Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11238**

Principal: Sandra D'Avilar

Dates of review: April 17 - 18, 2007

Reviewer: Alan Geller

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Teunis G. Bergen School, Public School 9, located in Brooklyn is an elementary school with 531 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population is comprised of 75% Black, 16% Hispanic, 2% White and 7% Asian students. Approximately 74% are eligible for Title 1 status which is above the City average. Nine percent of the school population are special education students who are taught in self-contained as well as collaborative team teaching classes. This is a barrier free school which provides access to all students regardless of disability. Four percent are English language learners who receive either a push-in or pull-out mode of instruction. Attendance is approximately 90% which is improving and now compares favorably with City and similar school averages.

The school has a gifted and talented program in which students must qualify at the regional level for admission. Woodhull Mental Health Clinic has a full-time program in the school with a psychologist and social worker to support the needs of students and their families.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well.

- The principal is well respected by the students, staff and parents and has created a positive learning environment.
- The students' performance is tracked in each grade and used to inform the instructional program.
- There is a mutual respect between the staff and the students resulting in classrooms with interested and willing learners.
- Budgeting, scheduling and staffing decisions are aligned based upon meeting the needs of the students as identified by data.
- The school is safe and operates efficiently.
- Teachers have high expectations for their students and are committed to providing each one with the skills to achieve.
- The school-wide enrichment model provides students with the opportunity to develop their interests in small groups.
- The parents are pleased with the positive learning environment and participate in decision-making activities as a part of the school leadership team.
- The school's reward system has led to improvements in attendance.

What the school needs to improve

- Utilize a common system for the collection, analysis and use of performance data.
- Provide more detailed feedback to students regarding their writing pieces so they will better understand what they need to do to improve.
- Further develop training opportunities for staff in the collection and use of data.
- Continue to provide training for teachers to differentiate instruction for all students.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of school plans and interventions more systematically.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school.

Over the past three years, since the arrival of the principal, the school has undergone significant changes that have improved student learning. The school tone has improved as a result of the interesting instructional programs. A mutual respect between the students and the staff has created a positive learning environment. A good example of this is seen in a school-wide enrichment program which allows students to study areas of personal interest. The teachers work collaboratively and uphold the school mission which is to provide educational experiences to develop the whole child. The principal has introduced a data-tracking plan into the school and this is focused on enabling staff to record student progress in a consistent way, although it is not yet consistently followed throughout the school.

The school partners with Teachers' College Reading and Writing Project as a means to further improve curriculum and professional training. Professional development is based upon the needs of the students as identified by data and by staff observations, in order to improve student outcomes. Teachers are encouraged to participate in continuous learning by observing their colleagues and participating in study groups. The social studies program is utilized as a tool to further develop and integrate other subject areas to create a more interesting view of history and reading in the content areas. Parents and caregivers are pleased with the positive school tone and the accessibility of the principal. They also participate in decision making as part of the school leadership team.

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.

Although data is utilized in every classroom and is used proficiently to track student progress over the school year, there is inconsistency in the way it is managed within the school. The school collects and analyzes data in reading, writing and mathematics, but the process is not consistent enough to ensure that accurate comparisons of progress can be made and school leaders do not monitor this data sufficiently carefully.

The data collected contains information from the standardized tests, beginning of the year assessments, continuous assessments and conferencing notes that allow the teachers to provide targeted instruction. Suitable diagnostic tools are used along with interim assessments to provide useful performance data about each student's progress and help teachers to request timely and appropriate interventions, such as from an external service provider, through academic intervention services or by small group or individualize support, to students in the greatest need. The data is used to facilitate small group instruction, guided reading groups, independent groups and to plan lessons based upon strategies which have proven to be successful in improving the instructional program.

The Reading Excellence and Discovery Foundation provides a focused after school program for the students in greatest need which has proved successful in achieving accelerated student progress.

English language learners receive support based upon the results of data and their performance is carefully tracked. The progress of special education students is monitored to determine their needs for additional skills and knowledge. The school compares itself to similar schools, assessing which plans and programs have worked best to raise achievement. A student growth monitor tool allows the school to compare past performance of students so that services can be targeted when students start to fall behind and school leaders and staff compare the data of students, classes and grades as a means of identifying strategies that will help students to learn more. There are, however, inconsistencies in the way data is managed in classrooms that lead to inaccurate comparisons of progress.

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 principal, in collaboration with the staff, has developed long-range aims to improve the instructional plan. Using the balanced literacy approach and the workshop model the school has adopted a teaching approach which is student centered and used consistently across the school. As a result of this major change to school policy, the instructional program provides more individualized and small group instruction that better meet the needs of the students. This approach has enabled the school to establish more precise goals for reaching grade level benchmarks. The Teachers College Reading Writing Project facilitates goal setting for the instructional program in writing. Subject area goals in social studies support each student, class and grade and encourage students in developing their interests as well as their skills and knowledge. These programs have been effective in engaging more of the students in learning. The different assessment tools are used well as a means to determine the level of need of each student who may be assigned academic intervention support. A team of teachers provides intervention, where required, to all students in need. Additionally, cohorts of students in further need receive additional help in the after-school program.

Opportunities are made to establish and reinforce the school’s ethos of high expectation. Teachers place importance on a daily morning message time to share these values with their class. Collective assembly allows the principal to let the students know what is expected of them. The quality of student work on display helps students understand the need to work hard to achieve high standards. The entire staff is involved in reviewing the performance data to determine if the benchmarks have been met and setting goals to reach grade level standards. Parents are considered a valued part of the school. The school reaches out to them by establishing open lines of communication to better share information about their children.

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 follows the mandated curriculum and has identified additional supplementary programs to support students in greatest need. The mandated curriculum in mathematics has built in assessments to track student progress. Additional interim assessments that are selected by the region and the school provide meaningful information about the needs of students and classes towards the attainment of goals. The English language arts program uses a variety of tracking tools to determine progress towards achieving school and grade goals. Teachers make efforts to match instruction to student need by flexibly grouping students based upon their skill needs, although the process of differentiation is not fully developed. Teachers conference with students to identify specific needs and provide feedback based upon written samples. However, much of the commentary is not specific enough for students to know exactly what they need to do to improve.

A formal common planning time is provided every two weeks so that teachers meet to review data in order to recommend appropriate budgeting, scheduling and staffing decisions, as well as to identify strategies that will help the students learn more. As a result of these meetings, for example, some class sizes were reduced as a means of increasing small group and individual support. Additional resources have also been targeted to increase the number of staff for academic intervention.

Students are engaged by the challenging curriculum activities in which they are active and enthusiastic participants. Social studies activities are integrated into all lessons which are further enhanced by school excursions that connect to lessons. A school-wide enrichment program allows students to study areas of personal interest. Teachers treat students respectfully and are committed to improving student achievement. Students return this respect by conducting themselves appropriately and apply themselves to their learning. The school values good attendance and rewards students who attend daily. This has contributed to the steady improvement in attendance rates.

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 leads a committee that seeks to select staff with a commitment to student learning and a willingness to work collaboratively. Newly selected staff are eager to endorse the vision of the school and work together as a part of a team. The professional development plan is based upon the results of analyzing student work and test results in order to determine which activities will best support staff. Professional development in using data has been provided but is not well enough developed to ensure that these strategies take hold and more positively affect student learning. Teachers are trained off-site where relevant in-house training is not available. This ensures that staff receive the best training possible. Consultant services have been secured to develop the social studies program. Subsequently, occasions are made for dissemination of new information to the rest of the staff. Teachers are scheduled to visit other classrooms to observe best practices. These intervisitations are followed up with peer and self assessments. The principal visits classrooms frequently, provides constructive feedback and makes changes

to instructional programs as a result. The evaluation of plans takes place in teams where school leaders and teachers look at assessments, lessons, and curriculum to judge their usefulness. The school uses the scrutiny of student work samples effectively as a tool to evaluate school plans and revise strategies.

The principal is well respected because she cherishes the children and has a commitment to high expectations for all students. Her work has resulted in many positive changes at the school. The students feel safe and the school runs smoothly as a result of the clearly communicated school procedures. The school partners with the Reading for Excellence and Discovery Foundation which works with students in need, using a structured program after-school that has positive impact on students' academic achievement.

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 starts the planning process in June, revising the effectiveness of plans by measuring the attainment of school goals. School-generated data is analyzed and decisions are made as to how to implement new programs or revise existing programs which need to be more closely monitored. The social studies plan was developed as a means to improve student learning with staff and students having been invited to contribute their opinions and interests. Teachers attended a retreat for training and their ideas were further developed on-site. The plan has been implemented and is assessed throughout the year.

Monthly grade meetings are seen as important structures to review the effectiveness of plans and change strategies. They are the forum at which teachers and school leaders evaluate student progress at the conclusion of units of study and projects. Strategies to monitor and improve instruction are reviewed more frequently at cabinet meetings. The cabinet and the grade leader meetings enable the school to change practices flexibly to improve student outcomes, but the principal is aware that monitoring of data management is not sufficiently robust or systematic in driving school improvement forward.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Teunis G. Bergen School (P.S. 9)	∅	✓	+
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	