



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Leonard Dunkly

**Public School 16
157 Wilson Street
Brooklyn
NY 11211**

Principal: Virginia Berrios

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Reviewer: Rodney Braithwaite

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Leonard Dunkly Elementary Public School is a neighborhood school with 400 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. Special education students account for 16.5% of the student population, with 10% taught in self-contained classes. This number represents a higher proportion than City and similar schools. Ten percent of students are English language learners, which is lower than City and similar schools. The school population comprises 77% Hispanic student, 18% Black, 5% White, and the remainder are Asian or from other ethnic groups. The school is Title 1 eligible with all students qualifying. This is higher than in both similar and city schools. The attendance of students was 89.9% in 2006, an improvement on previous years, but still slightly below that of City and similar schools.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The Leonard Dunkly school is improving, because of its better understanding and use of data to improve the learning of i students.
- The Principal gives passionate and decisive leadership to the school, and is well respected by the school community and parents.
- The Assistant Principal gives clear and positive leadership to the development of instructional skills in the school.
- Students are happy and secure in school, enjoy their learning, and show respect to each other and to adults.
- The school cabinet understands well the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and is open and honest in its dealings with all staff.
- Teachers work effectively together in teams throughout the school, sharing student information and developing planning in the drive for improvement.
- The school has very good relationships with parents, who greatly appreciate the care and guidance their children receive.
- The school uses support services and other outside bodies well, especially for those students most in need.
- The development of technology instruction is a strength of the school.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that all teachers are confident in preparing differentiated work for students working at different levels within the same class.
- Track the progress of special education students more closely to ensure that achieve their potential.
- Enable students to understand their learning goals more clearly, in order that they improve their achievement.
- Develop new initiatives in order to provide more extra curricular activities to enrich the learning of students.
- Build on existing methods to encourage better student attendance.
- Ensure that all teachers are held accountable for improving their instruction based upon the good advice, guidance and support they regularly receive.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school.

The school is a welcoming and friendly environment where students enjoy their learning. In the last few years, the school has been struggling to improve the achievement of students, particularly those who have considerable barriers to learning, or are at an early stage of learning English.

Led by a determined and dedicated principal, the school has introduced changes which are leading to a steady improvement in the progress of students. The school has much improved its data gathering, and how this information is used in planning the next steps in student learning, but still has some way to go to address some elements of this aspect of its work. The assistant principal is constantly involved in supporting and guiding teachers in the development of their instructional skills. The school has a good partnership with parents who are pleased with the education that the school offers. Some parents take advantage of the many opportunities the school gives to them through workshops to improve their own contributions to the learning of their children.

The administration and coaches have accurately identified the main issues for school improvement. These include the need to improve teachers' planning to meet the needs of all students in their class through an increase in opportunities for professional development. Good attendance remains an area for improvement, in spite of considerable efforts by the school. The school leadership is open and mostly accurate in its self evaluation of the school and has a good knowledge of what should be done to maintain momentum and secure further improvement. The good teamwork of the staff and willingness to improve instruction shows that they are capable of implementing change and raising student achievement.

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 has improved considerably in the last two years in the way it gathers, creates and uses data to track the progress of all students. The administration and teachers no longer rely solely on analyzing the results of City and State tests to give them a picture of students' progress. Staff are consistently generating an accurate data bank through the regular use of internal testing, recording and analysis of student work. The principal and assistant principal have a good understanding of what the data is telling them about the progress of students in each class and grade, different ethnic groups and English language learners. They have also recognized through interrogating data that the progress of special education students is not as good as that of other groups, and so are taking corrective action. As a result of recent good analysis and use of data, the school is seeing an increase in the number of students reaching at levels 3 and 4 in mathematics over previous years. The school has additionally a much clearer picture now of the

progress being made in all grades, which is showing that there a consistent trend of improvement in the achievement of students throughout the school. The administration is involved in considerable interaction with other similar schools in order to have a greater understanding of how its performance compares with others.

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 school has a number of well-established collaborative teams who work consistently and successfully, especially at grade level. Teachers regularly exchange information, reflect on their practice and observe each other teach. This enables them to develop continuity in the analysis of the progress of their students, and is helping them to develop a corporate approach to the setting of goals, and to developing medium and long term plans. Meetings are well led, and enable regular exchange of information between the school and other support services ensuring that students most in need of help and improvement have appropriate plans prepared for them. The assistant principal with responsibility for special education students works very closely with the literacy and mathematics coaches in developing the school’s intervention programs. This has been an urgent priority since the school realized from its data that these students had been making insufficient progress.

The administration has high expectations for students’ continued progress, and this is made very clear to students, parents and all staff. Much information is exchanged with a good majority of parents who greatly appreciate the approachability of teachers and leaders, and do their best to support their children. The school continually encourages parents to attend regular workshops explaining aspects of the curriculum, and offering help and advice on how parents can contribute to their children’s learning. Not all parents take up these opportunities, but school events such as the recent highly successful ‘Winter Carnival’, are very well attended, resulting in a considerable body of parents having a much clearer understanding of what their children experience. The parent coordinator is particularly effective in providing a strong link between the school and parents.

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 recent improvement in the gathering and interpretation of data has helped staff to become more aware of how they can use this information in the planning of the mandated curriculum. Teachers use their own records and test results and assessments more effectively than in recent years to align their planning to student needs. However the school self evaluation correctly identifies that some teachers have not yet understood the need to differentiate their planning and instruction in order to improve the progress of their students. Students themselves recognize this, reporting that they sometimes find the work too easy. This applies particularly to students who are capable of reaching and exceeding the standard, and is an indication as to why only recently more of them are beginning to achieve levels 3 and 4. Students themselves are very eager to improve, having high aspirations for what they want to do beyond school. They are usually well engaged in their

learning, and enjoy a reasonably broad curriculum. This applies especially to their learning in technology, where resources are well used, and good instruction enables students to improve their skills. However opportunities for enrichment through extra-curricular activities are at present limited and the school recognizes that there is a need for greater diversity in this area of provision.

Relationships between staff and students are good, characterized by mutual respect, and students are confident that they have adults in school that they trust and can turn to in times of difficulty. The attendance of students is a little below that of City and similar schools, although on an improving path. The school has well-established procedures, clearly understood by parents, to deal with student absence. The administration knows, that attendance is still not good enough, and is trying to initiate more effective methods in order to make attendance consistently higher.

The principal manages the budget well. She has recently had problems with a fall in revenue in some budget areas, resulting in a decrease in professional development opportunities for teachers. Realizing that this could be detrimental to improvement and student outcomes, she is now reviewing the school's focused plan of budget priorities.

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 school has an effective administration, well led by the determined principal. Their recent strong commitment to the effective use of data is bringing recent improvements in the progress and learning of students and a strong desire for this progress to continue at a greater pace. All staff, through regular meetings and observations, have a good range of information which they are expected to use to develop and revise their plans for student performance. They are effective, open and honest in peer evaluation, and the two coaches play a very positive role in this collaborative process. However, high expectations for student progress are not yet embedded consistently within all teachers' planning, and the school is working towards greater consistency.

The principal, and assistant principal, who has a major role in helping to improve the quality of teachers' classroom instruction, are involved in regular classroom observation. Their judgment on the quality of instruction is accurate, and the assistant principal offers good support and guidance to teachers about their effectiveness in the classroom. These messages may not always be comfortable to hear, but accurate and objective feedback is essential in order that collaboratively established goals can be achieved. Although professional development and collaboration are effective when they take place, budget constraints have resulted in a reduction in opportunities for improving instructional skills. All staff have concerns over this, especially as the school is now prioritizing the need to increase skills in differentiating instruction. The result is that professional development is not yet fully aligned with the school's stated goals for improvement in the school's Comprehensive Education Plan.

The principal is well respected by the school community and has demonstrated her capacity to manage change. Parents are especially appreciative of her commitment and passion for the care and learning of the students. She is very influential in the smooth running of the school. Daily procedures and routines are well proven in the way that they consistently adhered to by staff and students alike. The school has developed good

outside links with educational support services, and with organizations such as Studio-in-a-School, the Williamsburg library, and the Brooklyn Urban Center.

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 undeveloped.

The structure for monitoring and revising the evaluation of students' progress is an area which the school has accurately identified as undeveloped in certain aspects. Teachers have a considerable amount of information about the progress of individual students. The school's own evaluation correctly indicates that this information is not being used sufficiently well to produce plans to impact on teachers' planning and practice in order for students to reach their goals. As a result, students only have very rudimentary ideas as to how they can improve. They know that they have learning targets, but these might be, 'improve my reading', or 'get better at adding', without any detailed knowledge as to how they might do this. Verbal comments, through conferencing, are more effective than written comments on students' work which frequently do not indicate how students can improve. Teachers have created the evaluations and information they need to drive improvement and are setting plans and goals for future progress. At present, though, there is insufficient flexibility in some areas of teaching practice to guarantee that all students will make consistently good progress in learning.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Leonard Dunkly (PS 16)	∅	✓	+
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		