



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



# **Quality Review Report**

**Edward Bush School**

**Public School 18**

**101 Maujer Street  
Brooklyn  
NY 11206**

**Principal: Karen Ford**

**Dates of review: March 12 - 13, 2007**

**Reviewer: Jacky Grossman**

# Content of the report

## **Part 1: The School Context**

Information about the school

## **Part 2: Overview**

What the school does well

What the school needs to improve

## **Part 3: Main Findings**

Overall evaluation

How well the school meets New York City's evaluation criteria

## **Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Public School 18, The Edward Bush School, serves 256 students from pre-kindergarten through 5th grade.

Almost a quarter of the students are English language learners, nearly 6% are special education students. Eighty-three percent of the students are Hispanic, 12% are Black, and the remaining 5% are comprised of Asian, White and other ethnicities. Girls comprise 51.1% and boys, 48.9% of the student body. Eighty-three percent of the students are Title 1 eligible, which is higher than the City average and that of similar schools.

Daily attendance this year averages 95%, which is above both the Citywide average and that of similar schools.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal is energetic and dedicated with a clear mission and has the capacity to effect further change.
- Students and parents express satisfaction with the school, are proud to be a part of the community, and students feel supported academically.
- The school places great importance on attendance and punctuality, resulting in levels above those of similar schools.
- Students from different grades positively support each other through an effective buddy system.
- Student empowerment and peer leadership and mediation both stem from and enhance the magnet themes and result in a positive learning environment.
- The many links with outside organizations are routinely used to raise academic achievement.
- High quality classroom displays including student work and units of study reinforce learning and the school's high expectations.
- Common planning time results in the sharing of good practice, refinement of planning and improved student progress.
- The principal is fostering a community of learners, where all members of the cabinet are responsible for creating a positive learning environment.

### What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that systems are in place for ongoing monitoring and revisions of school-wide goals and plans.
- Further integrate science more fully into the balanced literacy curriculum.
- Expand the use of technology to help meet the needs of diverse learners.
- Continue to focus on differentiated instruction to meet the needs and learning styles of all student groups.
- Develop greater consistency in classroom practice across all grades.
- Further formalize processes for feedback, collaboration, and goal setting to raise the level of academic rigor.

## Part 3: Main findings

### Overall Evaluation

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

Teachers, students and parents agree that, since the arrival of the current principal a little over two years ago, PS 18 has been transformed. Students' voices are now heard in classrooms as part of group work, during conferencing with teachers, and most importantly, in the student government, where 'their opinion is taken 'as seriously as any adults'.

The faculty has spent the last two years designing and implementing a fluid, cohesive curriculum map that has facilitated student-centered teaching and learning. Each grade develops monthly lesson plans to ensure alignment for all students of skills and concepts taught. Resources have been poured into classrooms, as well as an impressive guided reading book room, to ensure that students have access to appropriate and ample materials.

Some loss of enrolment has occurred due to shifts in composition of the neighborhood. However, as a magnet school for government, history and leadership, it attracts families from outside its immediate area, and many families who have left the neighborhood continue to send their children. Much of the original building was destroyed by fires many years ago, leaving no gym, a makeshift auditorium, and a small all-purpose room used for lunch and school gatherings. Despite the limitations of the building, the school functions well. Many members of the school community use the word 'family' to describe it. The small size of the school has not prevented it from developing a diverse after school program in which many students take part.

Elevating the quality of teaching, increasing rigor, expanding the use of data and ongoing revision of goals are priorities for the school. Everyone is aware of the urgent need to raise levels of 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.**

In addition to reviewing standardized City and State test scores, the school engages in a variety of data collection in order to make decisions about targeted interventions. Teachers take running records, collect work samples, and develop academic portfolios which travel with students as they move through the school. Writing and reading assessment profiles, interim assessments, reading logs, early childhood literacy assessment system, and teacher designed assessments are all used to determine which students will receive academic intervention and the type of service they should receive. The staff has received professional development in skill-item analysis which has helped them to better understand the need for use of data.

The principal receives, bi-monthly, an updated list from each teacher regarding the reading and math levels of each student in their class. This information is used to assist in discussions of student progress at pupil personnel team meetings and to determine next steps for each student. Common preparation periods in each grade allow for examination of student work to create benchmarks for student achievement.

English language learners and special education students are tracked via two-way feedback from the service providers and the classroom teachers. Students whose levels improve are still followed and offered additional support to ensure that they keep up their progress. The school is just beginning to look at data closely for its various ethnic groups, in terms of gender and across all grades and subject areas. The administration examines data across classrooms on a grade, and as compared to their own past performance, particularly in literacy. The staff is aware that a closer examination of data has to be made in order to raise achievement levels. The school is also beginning to examine themselves in relation to similar schools and recognizes the need for closer scrutiny of data through this lens.

**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 Comprehensive Education Plan is shared with the entire community. Staff and parents are aware of the school’s overarching goals. The principal exudes high expectations for all students and these expectations are made clear to the students, staff and parent community both in writing and verbally on a daily basis. Parents report that they are aware of their children’s progress and next steps.

The staff reports that the process of developing a school-wide curriculum map has helped them to become better at developing long and short-term goals for their classes and for individual students. They particularly support the new schedule developed by the principal. The schedule provides each grade with four weekly common preparation periods and has enabled staff to develop goals and plans in literacy, math and the magnet themes. Science is not as well developed. Looking at student work, analyzing assessment data, and tracking trends in each grade have enabled teachers to focus on those skills that require additional reinforcement and establish goals for individuals, classes and grades.

Particular attention is paid to students performing far below grade level. Intervention is a priority at the school, with six individual staff members responsible for specific services at different levels. Eighty percent of all services to students are provided as ‘push-in’ support, integrating the work of service providers directly into the classrooms and allowing for immediate dialogue between classroom teachers and service providers. Two full time English as a second language teachers support the 62 English language learners in the school.

**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 utilizes the mandated curricula in both literacy and math. Classrooms are filled with student work samples around the magnet theme of government, history and leadership, and students articulate well their appreciation of these concepts. Real life experiences, such as student government, the successful school buddy system, school and community initiatives, and trips, foster student engagement. Standardized test scores, and classroom visits have indicated to the administration that the school has not done enough yet to incorporate a richer science curriculum into every grade at every level of student performance. The school is working to foster integration of a more sophisticated use of technology, beyond word processing, in order to support independent learning.

The school has re-aligned its budget, scheduling, and staffing resources to meet student needs, such as the addition of a second English as a second language teacher, and the scheduling of four weekly common preparation periods in every grade. The after-school and Saturday programs offer support as well as creating enrichment opportunities. A wide variety of books is in plentiful supply both in classrooms as well as the ‘guided reading book closet’. The seamless day for students attending the extended day program is a valuable opportunity for focused small group instruction.

School leaders recognize the need to create formalized structures for feedback and accountability in order to develop greater consistency of instruction within and across grades and to increase the level of differentiation for students’ learning. Experience levels, pedagogical approaches, and skill levels of teachers and the instructional team vary greatly. The common preparation schedule is increasingly used for planning, professional development, inter-visitation, teacher to teacher feedback, and supervisory support.

Attendance is a high priority and all constituencies are thoroughly aware of the attendance and lateness policies. Students know where to turn for help and feel supported, academically and emotionally, by their teachers. The small size of the school, and of each class, enables every student to be known to all staff members, and the school is a respectful community. Parents express their excitement about the fact that their children are eager to get to school each morning.

**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 is greatly respected, dynamic, committed, and is the clear driving force behind the tremendously positive changes that have already taken place in the school. The principal has an open door policy and is highly visible. She undertakes walkthroughs and informal visits on a daily basis. Every student is referred to by name and afforded individualized acknowledgement of their personal or academic needs and successes. There is a commitment among school leadership to further develop the use of data to drive school improvement and raise the level of academic rigor and expectations on students.

The school runs very smoothly, with precise routines and procedures in place. As a small school with limited staff, many people wear multiple “hats,” but responsibilities are clearly delineated. Ongoing professional development supports the cabinet and instructional team, whose members, while very committed to the school, are not uniformly consistent in pedagogical strength. Professional development and collaboration is a priority for the school. In addition to reworking the master schedule to accommodate common planning and professional development, the school has invested in several seats at Teachers’ College and has an AUSSIE staff developer. Evidence of implementation in literacy abounds in several classrooms. Partnerships with outside agencies and organizations successfully support academic achievement and help address many non-academic issues.

Teachers visit other schools, attend workshops after school and on weekends, and meet weekly with coaches. Some teachers who have been on staff for several years acknowledge that they have learned a lot about balanced literacy through ongoing and consistent support, and that their teaching styles have changed for the better as a result. New staff members are supported by colleagues formally and informally. Because of the small size of the school, the cabinet, the instructional teams and the school leadership team consist of several of the same faculty members. This allows for alignment between the work of all teams. Grade level teams are particularly aligned, sharing common planning periods multiple times per week.

The principal has made a deliberate effort to recruit and retain high quality staff. Potential hires are asked to provide demonstration lessons and spend time at the school prior to hiring. All staff are expected to participate in continuous professional development. Further professional development is planned around the gathering, analyzing, and use of data to strengthen teaching and ensure that student achievement levels begin to mirror the considerable energy being focused on improving the quality and consistency of instruction.

**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 school’s Comprehensive Education Plan is shared with the whole community each spring and again in September. At this time, no formal structures exist in which the plan is revisited, regularly, throughout the year with the express purpose of revision and realignment. Classroom instruction, while steeped in the overarching goals of the plan, is not continuously developed around the specific goals or action plans. Teachers do not routinely check against the plan to ensure that their classroom instruction is aligning with stated goals. The principal and teachers each expressed that establishing benchmarks, both temporally and instructionally, and reviewing student progress around these benchmarks would aide the staff in shifting towards more in depth utilization of data.

The pupil personnel team meets every two weeks to discuss individual students. Case managers are assigned who track the progress of referred students, but there is informality in the way in which plans for students are revisited and revised. The teachers do engage in collaborative examination of data within individual grades, but much of the work is informal, and examination of data across grades is limited. Individual teachers collect copious amounts of data on students, particularly in literacy. However, a streamlined data collection and analysis process is not developed, thus preventing all staff from using relevant information in all subject areas to continually revise plans and goals.

The principal acknowledges that many on her staff are at an early stage of using data effectively, in particular in terms of the ongoing analysis of data for the purpose of cyclical goal setting. Professional development is being planned to aide the staff in deepening their knowledge, and increasing their facility with data driven instruction.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: Edward Bush School (PS 18)</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>	∅	✓	+
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>	∅	✓	+
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>	∅	✓	+
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		