



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Clinton Hill School

Public School 20

**225 Adelphi Street
Brooklyn
NY 11205**

Principal: Sean Keaton

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Reviewer: Angela Cook

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Clinton Hill School is a well-established public school that serves students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. There are 433 students enrolled, approximately 75% of whom are Black, 16% Hispanic, 5% White, 2% Asian and 1% American Indian. Special education students represent 4% of the school population. Approximately 2% of the students are English language learners. The number of suspensions is very low. The school's attendance rate in 2005 was 91.7% which was below the average for similar schools and City schools. The school is designated for gifted students. It receives Title 1 funding for 68% of its students, which is broadly in line with similar and City schools.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal provides creative opportunities to enrich the curriculum thereby extending students' learning.
- The school provides a calm, attractive environment conducive to learning.
- Imaginative instruction engages students well.
- Students are courteous, and behave well in classrooms and around the school.
- The school has developed good partnerships with parents, who say they greatly value the work of the principal and his staff.
- Students are eager to come to school and they enjoy their learning.
- Students for whom promotion is in doubt are identified for additional support, and provided with programs leading them to make good progress.
- Good professional relationships between staff and students mean this is a happy school.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop systems and structures which ensure the rigorous gathering and analyzing of data across the school to identify the progress of individuals, groups and cohorts.
- Use the analysis of data to set goals and objectively measurable interim goals at all levels.
- Continue to develop teachers' ability to use data and evaluate success, so that they can plan differentiated instruction which challenges and extends each student's learning.
- Develop the process of review at all levels, so that plans and goals can be evaluated frequently in order to meet the changing needs of the students.
- Schedule regular inter-visitation to support the sharing of good practice, and develop personal goals with each teacher, linked to school's goals, which are reviewed annually.
- Clarify and extend the school's strategies for ensuring good attendance, making sure that parents and staff are aware of the procedures.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school.

Clinton Hill School offers its students a rich variety of learning opportunities and celebrates the ethnic diversity of the school in imaginative ways. Small class size, vibrant classrooms and enthusiastic teachers provide a positive learning environment for students. The principal is passionate about developing new areas of interest for his students, most notably music, art and photography. Students appreciate the opportunities provided for them. They are good ambassadors for the school and take a pride in their work. They say they are happy at school and have high aspirations for their future. The school has built strong ties with the neighborhood community, and parents say that school events are so well attended there is only standing room.

Data is used in a number of ways to support student progress, for example in identifying students who need additional support. The school has recognized the value of supplementing State and City data with a range of its own assessments to give equal emphasis to the progress and performance of students in non testing as well as testing grades. Although the administration has looked at broad trends and set school-wide goals, these have not been translated into individual goals for either teachers or students. This is because data is not yet consistently gathered and analyzed in order to drive improvement. The school is a reflective learning community but the administration recognizes that the systems and procedures for evaluating the impact of actions at all levels are not currently sufficiently robust.

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 places emphasis on City and State data for its analysis but also generates a limited amount of data itself to complement this information. It has established a good system for tracking students' reading levels, which it uses to identify students whose promotion is in doubt. The individual level of need is determined for each identified student and matched to appropriate intervention strategies, which include specific additional programs, the extended day, small group work and Saturday Academy. This is a good start, but it is too early in the development of this process to establish its impact on results. Formal assessment data is used to provide an overview at grade and school level, and to provide details of the achievement of some of the different groups of students within the school, but it is not yet consistently used to inform planning and maximize outcomes. . Conference notes and teachers' logs are in place to track students' progress, but they are not yet used consistently across all classes. Student portfolios, containing work chosen by the student, provide interesting logs of progress, but the value of these records is limited by the inconsistent use of comments to indicate at which level the student is working.

The school recognizes the need to gather more data about particular groups of students, such as higher-achieving students, English language learners, special education students and those with additional learning needs, in order to ensure that teaching is equally effective for all groups. Insufficient attention is paid to data relating to ethnicity. Monitoring performance and progress by gender is another area that the school is seeking to develop, following its analysis of formal assessment data which indicated gender differentials. The school has sought to provide suitable resources for both boys and girls, but the effectiveness of these strategies has yet to be determined.

The school uses its own data to compare students' reading levels across the classes, and it uses formal assessment data to identify trends in achievement over the last seven years in content areas and with similar schools. It acknowledges that further systematic comparisons at all levels are needed in order to monitor and evaluate performance and progress effectively.

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 senior leadership team sets measurable goals within a timeframe, and these goals are focused on raising student achievement. Standards-based data is used to identify areas that require improvement in the school. The team works together collaboratively to produce the plans that will facilitate the attainment of these goals. However, the school goals and plans are not yet translated into individual student goals.

Teachers are beginning to use assessment data effectively to determine which areas of the curriculum require further instruction. Although students know what they must achieve in order to be promoted, individual academic goals are not in place. For example, higher-achieving students who have reached the standard do not have anything specific to aim for and, consequently, their progress against planned outcomes cannot be determined. Some students agree that they would enjoy being challenged further, and one student said that when a teacher pushed her to work harder, it showed that the teacher really cared, and was supporting her in reaching her dream.

Using the reading tracking data, teachers identify those students whose promotion is in doubt. Much effort is devoted to ensuring that these individuals receive sufficient support to move up with their classmates the following year. Formal assessment data shows that the intervention strategies used are successful. However, the data for the last academic year also indicates that only a few of the higher-achieving students were reaching the higher levels.

Parents say they are kept fully informed of their children's progress by regular reports which are sent home. They say that the school disseminates its high expectations for its students through its letters and other communications, by providing parent workshops, parent-teacher conferences and through special events put on by the school. The school is developing good relationships with its parents in order to raise achievement, and is reaching out to the wider school community in order to gain additional support for its initiatives.

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 provides a rich and varied curriculum which is designed to provide students with opportunities for personal development. In art, for example, students are not only engaged in creative art work, but also write about their ideas, thereby extending their ability to express themselves, and share their ideas confidently with their peers. Being able to speak with confidence in public is one of the school’s priorities for its students. The principal, seeking to open the eyes of the students to the wonders of their environment, has established a very active photography club. Chess, swimming and music offer additional enrichment. Many students learn to play musical instruments, including the clarinet, recorder, trumpet and saxophone, and the band plays at school functions. The school is rightly proud of its success in raising expectations in this field.

In some areas the curriculum generates valuable data which is used to allocate additional support. The subject and intervention coaches, focusing effectively on raising student achievement, recognize that the curriculum has the potential to deliver further data which can support staff in their analysis of students’ progress. Careful scheduling provides teachers with a common preparation time, so they can plan instruction together in order to co-ordinate work across each grade. Although work is differentiated between the classes, little differentiation by task was seen within the classes. Teachers, assisted by the coaches, are responsible for their students’ learning. Lessons are interesting and students say they enjoy their learning. The budget and staffing are used well to support learning and provide new experiences. Small class size means that students receive more individual attention, and the relationships between staff and students are very good because the teachers know the students well. Students say there is always an adult to whom they can turn.

Although most parents support their children in attending regularly, historically the level of attendance has been slightly below that of similar schools. However, at present the school has insufficient strategies in place to address this.

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 building a committed team with high expectations who are capable of using data to underpin development. However, the strengths of the team are not yet fully utilized, and data collection and analysis are rudimentary in some areas.

The school has structures in place to support the professional development of staff. The principal shares his goals with staff so that they are working to a common end. The coaches focus on supporting teachers to enable their students to meet the standards. They identify areas for professional development during informal classroom observations, and provide valuable workshops to develop students’ examination techniques. The coaches are also involved in supporting teachers, in grade teams, to look at their different data in order to identify areas for improvement. The principal and senior staff carry out informal and formal observations, providing both written and verbal feedback to the teachers which they indicate are helpful. Although staff do observe each other’s teaching it is not a regular activity and currently there is no schedule for inter-visitations. Teachers

work together in partnerships which rotate so that there is a variety of opportunities for peer teaching in order to share good practice. Strategies to improve each teacher's instruction are not yet in place, but any member of staff experiencing difficulty is well supported as are new teachers to the school. Teachers do not identify personal annual goals aligned with the school's priorities, though some teachers themselves set goals for their classes. There is, however, a climate of reflection in the school which is evident at all levels. Students are encouraged to develop critical appraisal of their work.

The school has established clear routines and procedures, and functions smoothly. The principal appreciates the many qualities of his staff and he is at pains to let them know he values them. He in turn is much respected by staff, students and parents. Partnerships with a number of diverse organizations, such as the Brooklyn Academy of Music and the Botanical Gardens, have been developed, and used to good effect, to extend the learning opportunities for students.

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.

Not all of the school's goals have been translated into action plans that have clear measurable interim criteria. Consequently, the monitoring and evaluation of these plans lacks rigor. Success criteria have not been established and, therefore, it is not always possible to discern quickly whether a plan has been effectively implemented nor to identify the impact of particular initiatives or interventions. However, where the cabinet has focused on a particular aspect, for example, making sure that students at level 2 are well supported to reach level 3, there have been very positive results.

The coaches lead the way in using comparative data to analyze the students' achievements, and they support teachers in evaluating their instruction in order to maximize learning opportunities. Students needing additional support are carefully monitored in order to establish the effectiveness of the chosen intervention. Although the performance of gifted students can be identified in reading, for example, performance and progress is not tracked in all subjects. The cabinet is beginning to look at additional ways of evaluating progress, so that early indicators can trigger a timely response, but these initiatives are still at the early stages of being integrated and as yet there is little impact on outcomes.

Where subject areas are not rich in data, it has been more difficult to provide specific intervention for each student. A blanket approach to supporting students in English language arts and mathematics predominated in the past. However, the school realized last year that this was not efficient, and is now providing more focused intervention. This change of focus did not happen immediately; it took a considerable period of reflection. What emerged was the need for greater information about each student's performance and progress.

The cabinet acknowledges that some of the school's data analysis is rudimentary and data could be used more effectively to promote continuity and progression. Monitoring and evaluation of progress towards the goals identified in the Comprehensive Education Plan have not yet been integrated into all areas. This means that opportunities have been lost to capitalize on past learning by building on the considerable successes of the school. The school is now well-positioned to make improvements in the deficient areas of its work.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Clinton Hill School (PS 20)	∅	✓	+
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		