



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Marcus Garvey School

Public School 44

**432 Monroe Street
Brooklyn
NY 11221**

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Reviewer: Jan Lomas

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Marcus Garvey School, Public School 44, serves a population of 591 students from pre-kindergarten to grade 5. The percentage of students known to be eligible for Title 1 funding is 81.8%.

The proportion of special education students is 3% and there are a small number of English language learners at 1.8%. The percentage of Black students is 92.7%, while other ethnic groups represented are Hispanic at 4.5% and Asian and others at 2.8%. In 2005, the percentage of students recently arrived in the country was lower than that for City and similar schools at 3.9%.

The attendance rate was 90.4% in 2005, which was lower than that for City and other similar schools.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal is highly respected, passionate about the school and has a well-informed view of how to move it forward.
- Teachers value, and feel excited by, the improvements in data use that are helping them to further improve instruction.
- The principal is well supported by her cabinet.
- Students are welcoming and eager to talk about their school and work.
- Teachers are being offered a developing range of professional development opportunities which enable them to learn with, and from, each other.
- Teachers enjoy the sense of community within the school and work collaboratively to do the best for the children in their care.
- Parents are supportive of the school, its staff and faculty.
- Relationships throughout the school are strong, positive and enabling.
- Classroom environments are often bright, well-organized and supportive of learning.
- The school runs smoothly and student behavior is good.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue to develop teachers' ability to use data effectively to plan well differentiated and challenging instruction in all subject areas.
- Build on the positive work undertaken in curriculum planning and assessment to ensure that teaching and learning is well supported in science and social studies.
- Strengthen tracking and monitoring of some student sub-groups and categories of interest to the school so that data fully assists the school in meeting the needs of all.
- Extend strategies to develop students' self and peer evaluation skills and ensure that individual goals are shared with students and their parents.
- Continue the drive to further improve attendance, and in particular, tardiness.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school.

Marcus Garvey School provides a welcoming and secure environment in which to work and learn. Parents are very supportive of the school and students are open, eager to learn and friendly, reflecting the good relationships they have with staff across the school. The principal leads a collaborative team, many of whom have worked together at the school for some time. This means that teachers are collegial, and there is a good level of trust which enables them to work well together to develop practice and to support school improvement. The principal and assistant principal are a complementary team who are well supported by other members of the cabinet and the wider faculty. The principal has a well-informed view of the school's strengths and areas for development. Under her leadership, the school has made valuable steps forward in the use of data to drive instruction. In-school professional development is being used well to support staff in embracing change with confidence and in striving to meet student achievement goals. The school is currently proficient overall; however some features are already well developed. The school is well placed to move forward and make further improvements.

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

Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor student progress over time.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The school collects and uses data from a variety of sources to generate a clear picture of each student, class and grade. Classroom teachers keep ongoing records from assessments in the classroom, such as unit tests from Everyday Mathematics, conference notes and running records. They use these alongside data from more formal interim assessments such as the Princeton Review, the early childhood literacy assessment system and developmental reading assessment, in order to plan their instruction. The school's routine procedures also enable the school to maintain an overview of the achievement of special education students and English language learners. In addition, the results of the language assessment battery-revised assessments and New York English as a second language achievement test are analyzed for the latter group. The school uses information from the record card and from individual achievement data to monitor the performance of students from different ethnic groups subject by subject. However, it does not, as yet, routinely use qualitative data, such as focused classroom observation, or quantitative data from all classes and grades to check that teaching and learning is effective for all ethnicities. The administration has begun to track data for each gender group more closely, grade by grade, for English language arts and this heralds the school's increasing awareness of differences in the way that boys and girls learn. Analysis of data has led to a focus upon student performance at the higher levels and procedures enable progress towards targets for all students, including those who are higher-achievers, to be monitored at intervals over the academic year. While the school is very aware of the needs of particularly vulnerable children within its population, it has not yet considered how data could be used to focus the spotlight upon them as a discrete group, so that any emerging issues might be addressed.

Data is also used to keep an overview of patterns, trends and comparisons by class, grade and by subject over the year and over time, with an emphasis upon reading, writing and mathematics. The school knows that it now needs to improve the rigor of assessments and analyses in science and social studies in line with recent and planned improvements in curriculum mapping. Comparative data from similar schools is shared with the faculty in order to deepen awareness of the school's relative performance and to prompt ideas about further improvement.

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 produced through collaborative activity using input from faculty, administration and parents. Goals in the plan are measurable while percentages are based upon the school's likely performance, gauged by looking at historical figures. However, annual goals have also been set for classes and individuals in reading and mathematics using analysis of data from interim and other ongoing assessments. Mathematics and writing samples are also scrutinized following 'Quick-write' sessions. All data is then used to plan for instruction and individuals are grouped to enable teaching to better match with needs. Planned improvements in assessments for science mean that goal setting for these subjects can also be addressed. Individual education plans for special education students are revisited on a monthly basis in order to adjust instruction and other services in line with emerging needs.

Collaborative meetings enable teachers to support each other with planning and coaches attend these to provide additional guidance. Students are beginning to share some goals, such as those for reading, with their teachers and there are pockets of good practice which are enabling students to build self and peer evaluation skills. The school intends to strengthen these practices, including the use of rubrics and to develop school-wide strategies for sharing student goals with parents. Parents are currently encouraged to be involved with their children's education through workshops and events such as family mathematics night, parent and teacher meetings and grade meetings that set out the expectations for the year. Other events, such as mother and daughter breakfast, are held which support the community approach within the school. The parent and teacher association is active and parents' representatives are very supportive of the school. Many teachers have embraced the improved focus upon using data to inform their instruction. Their representatives speak with enthusiasm about the way systems and procedures are helping them to better plan for the students in their care. There is a sense of forward momentum within the school engendered by the leadership's eager drive for continual improvement. When data is reviewed, it is used to identify 'students of concern' and this leads to discussion with teachers and a consideration of referral for additional support. The school provides academic intervention services and other opportunities such as Saturday school and extended day classes for students who are grouped according to need. Services offered to students are revisited for each individual on a six week cycle in order to review progress and evaluate the efficacy of what is being provided. The school has also recognized the need to support those students who are ready to make progress at the higher levels and is now doing so by providing 'early bird' classes. Time will be needed to see the full impact of this strategy upon desired improvements in school

performance at levels 3 and 4. Exploration has begun about learning styles and gender differences in learning and this is a developing area for the school. Care is taken with the needs of students from vulnerable or transient families within the school population. For example, a social worker visits the school to support the needs of one of these groups.

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 with well-developed features.

The school has developed curriculum maps and pacing calendars for English language arts, mathematics and social studies in line with the standards. At present, education department guidelines support other curriculum areas and the school has plans to develop maps for science which will further scaffold teaching and learning within the school. The curriculum and scheduling is organized to support learning in creative ways. For example, analysis of data identified the need to strengthen computations skills and 'Flex Friday' mathematics sessions are now planned to ensure such skills are regularly revisited. Staffing decisions have been used to ensure that teachers' strengths are best used to extend teaching experience across the grades. This means that teachers are encouraged to be more aware of their shared accountability for student development and progress within the school. Teachers use data to plan for differentiated instruction and are held accountable for students' outcomes through periodic discussions with the administration about emerging data and progress towards targets. In the best teaching, students are provided with differentiated tasks and hands-on activities which enhance interest and engagement further because they are well matched to their needs. Teachers have had opportunities to develop balanced literacy skills and many students now respond well to routines which enable classrooms to be effectively organized for group work. However, the school is aware that there is more work to be done to enable all teachers to deliver appropriately differentiated instruction across all subjects. The school's focus upon improving performance at the higher levels brings further opportunities to develop teachers' professional skills in order to ensure that instruction is appropriately challenging for all students. Budgeting decisions are proficiently made to support the schools aims and priorities. Students are welcoming, open and are happy to talk about their learning which many clearly enjoy. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and appropriate expectations mean that student behavior is generally good. One parent commented that the principal and teachers 'treat our children as if they were their own,' and one child said, 'the principal helps bring us all together as a big team'. Appropriate attention is given to encouraging good attendance. However, the school continues to work towards improvement, particularly with tardiness, seeking to impress upon parents and students the importance of supporting the school by arriving on time.

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 well developed.

Staffing is a stable feature of the school overall, however, an appropriate process including an interview and demonstration lesson is employed for new staff. Teachers are provided with varied opportunities for development including regional off-site events, which are then

turn-keyed to other colleagues. Within school, staff are collaborative and many are eager to learn with and from each other, using opportunities for team meetings to regularly plan together. For example, one teacher talked of the grade team 'giving each other homework' to come up with strategies to address a particular issue within the classroom. Coaches support and give guidance, inter-visitation is encouraged and 'lunch and learn' sessions have recently been introduced. Grade level study groups provide opportunities to explore and research topics such as 'How does questioning support student learning in mathematics?' Formal and informal observations and inter-visitation are often focused upon current whole-school development issues. Feedback is descriptive rather than evaluative in general, however, it is positive, detailed and provides clear recommendations to prompt reflection. The professional development program is rooted in school priorities and in issues which emerge from the analysis of data. It reflects the current leadership's aim of developing a collaborative community of professional learners. The principal is well respected by staff, parents and students. She has a clear and well-informed view of the way forward and, under her leadership; the school has good capacity to improve further. The school runs smoothly on a day to day basis and is a calm and friendly environment in which to work and learn. The school routinely uses partnerships with other organizations to further its goals and aims. An example is the opportunity for students to learn to play the violin and cello through the Noel Pointer Foundation.

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 Comprehensive Education Plan contains measurable goals which are sometimes specific to groups or grades. The plan does not include time lines for completion of goals; however these are included in a separate document. The use of the Comprehensive Education Plan as a strategic tool is proficient overall, although more specific interim gains and check-up points are likely to make accurate monitoring and evaluation easier. The plan is reviewed by the senior leadership team at intervals throughout the year and this feeds into the next phase of planning and goal-setting.

Comparisons of student progress are made class by class and grade by grade over the year, enabled by the use of periodic assessments. The principal and assistant principal summarize the data by grade and discuss this with teaching teams. In addition, meetings are held with individual teachers in order to review, and, as needed, revise, class and student goals. Planned developments in assessments for science and social studies, and whole-school curriculum planning for science, pave the way for a closer focus upon monitoring and evaluating achievement in these subjects at all levels. The administration and coaches use ongoing review of student progress and qualitative data from observations and discussions to adjust approaches, initiatives and support strategies. Best practice is used to enable colleagues to learn from each other and the school is aware of the need to continue to develop effective differentiation across all subject disciplines.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Marcus Garvey School (PS 44)	∅	✓	+
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	