



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

**Public School 093
31 New York Avenue,
Brooklyn
NY 11216**

Principal: Yvonne C. Knight

Dates of review: March 15 – 16, 2007

Reviewer: Frank Jones

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

The William H. Prescott School, Public School 93, has 470 students from kindergarten through grade 5. Eighty six percent of the students are Black alongside 7% from Hispanic backgrounds; the remaining 7% are Asian and other ethnic groups. Twelve students are educated in two self-contained special education classes. About a sixth of the school population is special education students. Of the remainder, all are general education students with the exception of twenty-two students who are English language learners. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 96% student eligibility. Attendance figures are presently 91%, which is slightly below the average of similar and other City schools.

The majority of students enter the school at kindergarten with a growing number starting in pre-kindergarten who are not zoned. The school has a stable and experienced staff. In acknowledgement of the mixed message the name of the school may give to students, staff and the wider community, the leadership team is understandably trying to change it.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal provides good leadership and strong direction and consequently she is held in high esteem by the school community for her dedication in making a difference for students.
- There is a culture of care and understanding permeating the school at all levels so that staff respond to students' personal and academic needs.
- Senior staff collect and analyze data well, from a variety of sources, to understand what each students knows and can do.
- The principal has a well developed system to compare the school's progress with other similar schools in the region.
- The staff work well together and are mutually supportive.
- The school pays particular attention to improve the progress of students with greatest need so that the progress made by English language learners is particularly good.
- Parents welcome the support and information to understand instructional programs.
- The emphasis and effectiveness of the reading program engenders a love of books.
- Professional development opportunities are well targeted.

What the school needs to improve

- Use data to set long-term goals for each individual student that clearly identify the incremental steps required to achieve them.
- Increase teachers understanding and analysis of data to inform learning.
- Increase teachers ability to differentiate instruction so there is a match of task to identified learning needs.
- Provide a broader curriculum throughout the school for students.
- The goals in the comprehensive education plan are not all fully quantifiable, data driven or measurable.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school.

The principal was appointed in 2005, having been assistant principal at the school since 1998. Since then, English language arts and math scores for the total school population for students in grades 3 - 5 have increased year-on-year. Evidence suggests that this position will continue. Those students who experience difficulties are identified at an early stage and receive appropriate intervention support. The school sets high expectations for standards for academic achievement of all students, irrespective of ability, and parents recognize and support this.

The principal provides good leadership and a strong direction for the school and is held in high esteem by the school community for her dedication in making a difference for students. The staff fully support her and are committed to their work. They, in turn, are well supported through the school's professional learning program. There is a culture of care and understanding permeating the school at all levels. Students are happy to come to school, feel secure, and enjoy their learning. They speak highly of the principal and consider the staff will go the 'extra mile' to enable them to succeed.

The principal has plans to broaden the curriculum and include more art, science, music and social studies so that all students receive a balanced curriculum, with literacy underpinning its delivery.

The areas for improvement identified in this report are predominantly those already identified by the principal as in need of additional development. Key priorities are to support staff in their understanding and use of data driven instruction. This will enable teachers to consistently plan more differentiated activities in class that are closely matched to students' prior achievement. The school has a strong capacity for further improvement.

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 well developed.

The school utilizes data from a variety of sources including that provided by the City plus a range of tests and assessments that clearly illustrate what each student knows and can do. Good use is made of the raw scores in the Gains report to identify progress that has been made and the potential of students to move up a level, or within a level. This information is discussed with appropriate staff through a collaborative process. Teachers use continuous assessment to identify need in English language arts and math and engage in group, or individual, conferencing with students to support their learning. End of topic math assessments give a clear indication of the understanding the student has and the progress made. The school generates its own data for reading, enabling students to

develop this skill in a sequential manner. Staff are becoming more confident in the use of data to drive instruction but this is not yet consistent in all classes.

No pattern is discernible from analysis of students' progress by different ethnic backgrounds. English language learners make good progress as they move through the school. The rate of progress is enhanced when there is strong parental support. Individual education plans are in place for special education students and the school makes every effort to integrate them into mainstream where possible. Students in danger of being held over are identified and receive additional support.

The school measures the favorable progress it has made against other schools in the region. The principal has a mentor in an equivalent school and uses this opportunity to analyze what needs to be done to improve further. Analysis of performance identifies a year-on-year increase in student achievement at grade 5, for the past five years, in math and English language arts. The progress of students within grades varies and the principal has decided to loop teachers, where possible, to ensure better continuity and more progress in learning.

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.

Although students have targets that they aspire to, the school does not use the analysis of the achievement data available to set long term goals for individual students. Student levels and scores are analyzed and general targets are set for students to move upwards within a level or to a new level according to past performance. These goals are not quantified and do not identify incremental learning steps that each student will require to achieve them.

The school has good structures in place that enable collaborative working at grade level to discuss assessments and plan appropriate curricular tasks to meet student need. Staff are confident in each other's company. At grade meetings they speak openly about their practice, seek help and make changes. Analysis of data drives these discussions and points for action are agreed that focus on what they consider best meets student needs.

Benchmarking of each student takes place on an annual basis to identify what he or she knows and can do. The school uses this information to provide intervention strategies and additional support for students. Intervention, as early as grade 1, coupled with focused support for reading and writing accelerates progress. By the end of grade 2, all students are working at a grade appropriate level. Each student has a portfolio which is updated and travels with the student through the school as a record of work done and progress made.

Parents know that the school has high expectations for all its students. They are well informed about the progress being made. The school invites parents to borrow materials and attend meetings that focus on aspects of the curriculum, so they know what is being taught, how and when.

The principal makes explicit to the staff the goals for the school and her high expectations of them. This information serves to give shared direction to staff and enables them to pull in the same direction, as a team. The strong feeling of collegiality and single purpose felt by the staff is a positive feature of the school and assists its smooth running.

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 modifies the mandated curriculum in English language arts by being a Teachers College school and in math by using an investigative, problem-solving approach. The demands of State testing also impact on what is taught. The curriculum is heavily focused on these two subjects and the principal has identified the need to make it broader. The principal and assistant principal take responsibility for one curriculum area each. This enables them to support the coaches, as required, and make secure judgments on the impact the curriculum has on learning. The staff meet on an annual basis to plan the year’s instruction program in writing and math, which is displayed prominently in the school for parents and students. This is then further modified in grades and made class specific by individual teachers.

The principal carries out regular learning walks and engages in scrutiny of student work. This provides valuable information about the impact the instructional programs have on student achievement. Discussion with teachers holds them accountable for the performance of the students. The principal has a high profile in the school and, as a result, knows the standards achieved in each class and is able to carefully monitor the progress of all students.

The effective use of differentiation by teachers, in class, is inconsistent across the school. Where it is used well, all students are engaged and enthusiastic about their work. When this is not the case, the pace of instruction is slow and learning is restricted. Teachers welcome and benefit from common prep periods that are used to plan and discuss issues relating to instruction. The school is developing the use of technology across the school and the budget is used well to support this. The flexibility of the timetable enables intervention to occur according to the needs of the students. This enables English language learners to make good progress because they all achieve level 3, or above, by the time they leave the school.

Students enjoy being at school. They speak highly of their teachers and principal whom they trust and consider go the ‘extra’ mile for them so they can succeed. The principal’s use of ‘pixie dust’ is legendary in the school as a confidence builder prior to testing. The school has an attendance officer and effective strategies are in place to reduce lateness and increase attendance.

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 experienced and stable staff that is comfortable in each other’s company. The criteria for appointing teachers include an empathy and commitment to encouraging literate and numerate students. This is reflected in the increasing scores achieved by students in State tests. Future appointments are planned to reflect the need for music and science to be developed in the school. The commitment and capacity to use data to drive instruction is not explicit in the selection criteria.

The principal has a deep understanding of the quality of instruction and pupil achievement through lesson observations. Teachers welcome the feedback and support for instruction they receive as a result of this. The principal is aware of the needs and strengths of all teachers. This information is used to focus professional development at individual and whole school level. Coaches play an important role in improving instruction through team-teaching and modeling good practice. The cabinet uses data to gain an overview of school strengths and where it needs to improve. Teachers are subsequently moved between grades to utilize their expertise and improve student achievement.

Grade meetings, attended by senior staff, provide an opportunity to consider data on student outcomes and compare performance between grade, classes and teachers. This information is useful and informs planning and realignment of the curriculum. Teachers lack confidence in data analysis, therefore the focus is on instructional activities rather than using the information to identify what students need to learn. The principal and teachers have high expectations of all students and this is a view held by students and their parents. The school is calm and orderly and reflects the purposeful and caring nature of the leadership team and staff. The school includes a range of activities for students after school to enrich and support the academic program. It regularly secures grant funding to bring in other organizations for specific events.

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 goals for the school are incorporated in the comprehensive education plan some of which are quantifiable and data driven. This is not fully developed to link all goals to quantifiable data and make them measurable. Goals are further refined and staff are made aware of the focus for the year. In its effort to continue to raise student achievement the school has identified areas for development that reflect this, such as the need for increased differentiation. The cabinet discusses the long-term goals for the school and evaluates them during the year. The extended cabinet includes practitioners who inform the decision-making process from their day-to-day observations of what is working well and what needs to be adjusted. This first hand information is valuable.

Assessment takes place in the core subjects. Information gained is discussed either in subject groups or grades. The school is not afraid to make alterations to its plans and implement alternative strategies to enhance progress and achievement. On-going assessment, and conferencing with students at classroom level, enables staff to be more focused in their approach to individual learning needs. However, this is not always evident in their instruction.

Individual education programs are discussed with parents and involve appropriate intervention staff. The programs are monitored, on a regular basis, for impact on the goals set and activities designed to support learning. Diagnostic tests take place in reading at grade 1 and this triggers additional support for those students identified at risk. This early intervention improves the progress of students and promotes their evident love of reading.

Long-term plans are evaluated at the end of each year by the cabinet. The information from this forms the basis for further development.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: William H. Prescott School (PS 93)	∅	✓	+
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	