



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Bay Academy for the Arts and Sciences

Intermediate School 098

**1401 Emmons Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11235**

Principal: Marian Nagler

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Reviewer: Louise Kapner

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Bay Academy for the Arts and Sciences, located in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn, is a grade 6 to 8 school for the gifted and talented. The school opened in 1995 as an unzoned school and students from throughout the city whose results on the standardized tests are at the meeting standards level may apply. A talent assessment and final selection is managed by District 21. The school is not Title I eligible and has little discretionary money but maximizes its allocation to provide a well rounded instructional program with an emphasis on the talents.

The school population is 1145 students, 57% of whom are White, 23% Black, 8% Hispanic and 12% Asian. Slightly more than 1% are special education students, the majority of whom are taught in self-contained classes. Less than 1% are English language learners. Although the school has a diverse population, the majority of students are English proficient.

Attendance is 95% which is above similar and City-wide schools. The school shares a building with PS 771, a school for students with severe disabilities.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The administration is highly visible and involved in school programs.
- High expectations for students and staff are part of school culture.
- The instructional program challenges and motivates higher achieving students.
- The school quickly identifies students in need of academic intervention services.
- Teachers meet regularly and helps design school programs.
- Highquality d ifferentiated instruction is built into classroom instruction.
- Students enjoy attending and are proud of their accomplishments.
- Parents see the school in a very positive light.
- Teachers access the Princeton Review information effectively and use it to drive instruction.
- Collaboration with outside community agencies highlights students' talents.

What the school needs to improve

- Identify those students who are losing ground or are not making appropriate gains ascertained by reviewing the results of the standardized assessments.
- Revise the school schedule to accommodate additional common planning time for teachers, and research and project work time for students.
- Design professional development activities to help teachers learn how to use data to compare and monitor student-to-student progress and performance.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school with many well-developed features.

The principal, administrative team and staff work collaboratively and tirelessly to maximize all resources and provide a safe and secure environment where students can develop academically and socially. They give students good opportunities to pursue interests in any one of ten talent areas including various music disciplines, art, computer/math and creative writing. This year a “Team Theme” has three teams of students vying to earn points for random acts of kindness. All students participate in various activities including pep rallies organized by staff members. The theme is also integrated into the instructional program. Last year the school was a first place winner in the stock market game, a team of students won the “Econ Bowl”, a contest sponsored by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York; and a media team won a web design contest from Think Quest. Collaboration with community agencies provides opportunities for students to display artwork and perform musically.

The school accesses and uses available and self generated data to help drive instruction but a more in depth review of results on the standardized assessments is warranted given the decline of students achieving at level 4 in both the English language arts and mathematics 2006 tests.

The entire school community is very proud of their accomplishments. Parents shared that the school offers a well rounded education and “fosters a small school feeling in not such a small school,” and students feel they attend the “best school in Brooklyn”.

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 uses available data and generates its own data on the performance and progress of all students. Interim assessments from Princeton Review are accessed by teachers and administrators and provide class, grade and student specific data to support differentiated instruction in the classrooms. Data from subsequent interim assessments are compared with prior results to monitor progress. The assistant principal for 8th grade monitors the teachers’ use of this data. New York Start’s item skills analysis for science provides valuable information for science instruction. Student portfolios are in their second year of use and teacher notes from student conferencing provides useful additional information. Report cards are generated four times a year and grades are monitored relative to student performance on the standardized tests.

The school is proud of its performance in comparison to similar and City wide schools on the standardized assessments. However, the school does not sufficiently analyze its own year to year data relative to grade or subgroup results. A review of the data highlighted the school’s overall progress from 2003-2005 on English language arts, mathematics and

science standardized test. Going deeper into the data for the 8th grade and its subgroups, including English language learners, Black students and special education students in mathematics, Black students and Asian students in English language arts, and English language learners in science, did not reflect the same gains. Furthermore, recently received results for the 2006 English language arts and mathematics tests have not been reviewed to ensure that all students are making the required progress. Teachers are not familiar with school generated data such as the Automate the Schools exam history report to more closely monitor student specific results and progress.

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 well developed.

The principal and her administrative team place a great deal of emphasis on providing for the instructional needs of all students and continually encourage teachers to review available data to address student specific needs. An instructional team of teacher representatives from each of the content areas meets weekly with administration to help design ways in which to enhance and enrich the instructional program. Recognizing the need for more student specific information they recommended and supported the implementation of student portfolios to monitor student work. Students identified as levels 1 or 2 on the standardized assessments are identified for academic intervention services. The individual education program teacher schedules and coordinates the delivery of the services by full time staff. Teachers provide the intervention during and after school and chart and monitor student progress.

Grade conferences, subject area conferences, and faculty meetings enable staff to work collaboratively to identify instructional needs of students and set goals for teaching and learning. However, not all grade or subject area teachers’ schedule allows them to attend at the same time. Regularly scheduled common meeting and planning time is needed to address the recent data on standardized assessments. Interdisciplinary teaching is reflected as in an immigration project planned by the social studies and English teachers. Students from the self contained special education 8th grade class are mainstreamed in science to ensure congruence of instruction for them. Seventy five percent has been set as passing and students achieving below this grade are identified for additional support. One teacher shared that students motivate them to create activities that will be challenging and opportunities to learn.

School goals including high expectations are shared with parents and students. A school website shares school information and is up-dated on a regular basis. An automated machine dials out each afternoon informing parents of absences and sharing important announcements regarding school programs. Materials are translated into the Spanish and Russian as out-reach to non English speaking parents. A parent of a 6th grade student said she danced in the street when she heard her son was accepted into IS 98. Students shared that teachers create good learning environments and they feel challenged.

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 well developed.

The school is not mandated to follow any curriculum. However, it has a strong instructional program in all content areas for all students and that the school’s schedule needs to support this effort. A school based option allowed the scheduling of the extended time of thirty seven and a half minutes into the school day and all students therefore are afforded additional instructional time. This supported 6th and 7th grade students having eight periods of English language arts and mathematics per week, many of these double periods allowing for a greater intensity of instruction. Eighth graders are provided with additional mathematics instruction. Students are scheduled for four periods of talent per week. The study of foreign language begins in 6th grade and students study French, Spanish and Italian in 13 week cycles. When entering 7th grade they select the language which they continue with and take a proficiency exam at the end of 8th grade. Accelerated courses are offered in mathematics and science and students sit for regents.

Students are responsible for projects that require research that are usually assigned with a six to eight week due date. Careful instructions including rubrics for creating a high level project are shared. Parents are concerned that projects are sometimes due simultaneously and that this may impact on preparation for standardized exams. The school now plans to share a pacing calendar of projects with parents and students to enable them to plan appropriately for completing all the assignments. Additionally, the school is now aware of the need to review schedules to see how time can be built into student’s daily program to allow them opportunities for research and project work.

Recognizing the need to address declining mathematics scores a mathematics coach was added to the staff and “Impact Math” as a formal curriculum was added. The mathematics coach not only works with staff but also provides after school instruction two days a week for students identified as at-risk. A science software program “Test Wizard” generates tests, quizzes and assignments to align with instruction and allows questions to be worded appropriate for the more struggling learner. The English language arts program is literature based and has an extensive writing component. Teaching is of a high quality with staff being held fully accountable for the progress of the students in their charge. Classroom instruction is highly engaging and challenging, and instructional materials ordered this year show a good understanding of student needs.

Student needs and instructional program drive budgetary decisions. As the school does not receive Title I funding, outside support is welcomed and a recent grant from a local community organization will be supplemented by Project Arts funding for an after school enrichment art program. Staff are well respected and seen as good listeners by students. Attendance is above similar and City schools.

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.

The management of the school is of a very high quality. The three assistant principals work cooperatively and are involved in all phases of the school’s program including observing teachers, ordering materials, scheduling, instructional programming, identifying

student needs. They are supported by a strong leader who in turn relies heavily on her cabinet and meets with them each morning to review issues and set the daily agenda. The strengths and collaborative planning of the administration is reflected in the positive school culture and they are all highly visible and well respected.

Recently appointed staff were selected with great care and senior members of the staff act as mentors. Teachers are very supportive of each other and often share information or visit classrooms to gain further expertise. Observations are part of the formal structure of the school and although the assistant principals have subject area responsibilities, the principal is very involved with ensuring good instruction is going on, and she herself, a language major, assumes the responsibility for the foreign language department.

Teachers are actively engaged in on-going professional development during the school year and are provided with good opportunities to enhance their classroom skills. A regional instructional supervisor is working with the English department, and the mathematics coach supports all facets of the mathematics instructional program including reviewing data to drive instruction. An opportunity to learn how to access and understand data was presented to teachers in the computer lab. While more teachers are becoming proficient at accessing and using data there is a need to provide additional support in this area. Specifically the school does not monitor and compare same student results year-to-year. The school needs to review student data to address student specific needs to improve student outcomes. The guidance counselor aligns his services with the school program. His work with 8th graders as they apply for high school reflects his recognition of their talents and needs as he guides them in their high school selection.

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 well developed.

Although the school is a successful one, when compared to similar and City schools, it now recognizes the need to be even more vigilant in improving instruction, supporting student learning, and providing staff with opportunities to learn and grow professionally. Student progress is regularly monitored and assessment data used to revise instruction as needed. The assistant principal for English language arts reviews student writing, including all drafts as well as the final product, along with the rubric to monitor student work and teacher instruction. The Comprehensive Education Plan is constantly being reviewed and revised to reflect the school's goals and the instructional plan. New instructional programs and materials are incorporated into the school's programs to address student needs as can be seen by the scheduling change this year to incorporate the thirty seven and a half minutes into the school day, and beginning school at 7:45 am. This allows students who travel a great distance to the school who were previously not able to stay late to now receive remedial services during regularly scheduled time. Student records are now being reviewed to identify those who may be potential hold-overs. Monitoring and additional services will be provided as needed. Recent test data will now be reviewed and plans to address student specific needs will be developed.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The Bay Academy for the Arts and Sciences (IS 098)	∅	✓	+
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.	Ø	✓	+
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.	Ø	✓	+
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.	Ø	✓	+
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