



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Sal Abbracciamento Landmark School

Public School 108

**200 Linwood Street
Brooklyn
NY 11208**

Principal: Constance Hahn

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Sal Abbracciamento Landmark School is a large elementary school in Brooklyn which serves an ethnically diverse population. The school has 964 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The greatest proportion of pupils, at 64%, is Hispanic. The next largest group, at 19.4%, is Black, 9.6% are Asian with the remaining 7% being White. Twenty percent of the students are English language learners and 5.6% are special education students. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding, with 83.8% being eligible, which is above other similar and City schools. Attendance, at 92%, is in line with City and other similar schools.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal is an inspirational leader who has demonstrated the ability to effect change and has considerable capacity to improve the school further.
- The Core Knowledge curriculum is very good and demonstrates how students learn.
- Staff are not complacent, are very collaborative and share their good practice.
- Professional development is excellent and has demonstrable impact.
- Teachers differentiate their instruction very well and provide the right level of challenge for every student.
- Assessment is consistent and regularly updated because the school evaluates itself very well.
- The school is a family of lifelong learners where students' academic, personal and social needs are nurtured well.
- Comprehensive data is effectively collected and analyzed to inform student progress.
- The school has been highly successful in increasing the performance levels of those students most in need of improvement.
- Student progress is expedited because of effective target setting and the students' involvement in assessing their own learning.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop strategic planning over a longer period so that measurable targets for improvement are timetabled and evaluated so as to keep the school on track.
- Improve the student attendance pattern for the morning intervention support program.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well-developed school.

The Sal Abbracciamento Landmark School gives students an excellent start to school life. This is a school where students are encouraged to do their best and become well-rounded citizens. The school believes in learning together to achieve high standards, celebrating each individual and creating a caring environment in which to work. The principal is an inspirational leader and an excellent manager. Teachers are very well monitored and data is used very effectively to improve student progress. Lessons are lively and interesting and students actively assess their own learning. Excellent teaching and learning is central to the school's success. Students achieve standards well above those of similar and City schools. The recognition of this success is reflected in the school's recent receipt of the 'High Performing/Gap Closing School Award'. The school is characterized by a sense of drive and high expectations that enthuses students and staff alike. This is a well-developed school that is fully committed and capable of continuous well planned improvement.

How well the school meets New York City 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 consistently gathers a wide range of information gained from assessments and tests which provide teachers with detailed data on the performance and progress of each student. The methods and structures for data gathering are clear, systematic and used consistently by all staff. Teachers consequently assess students in a variety of very effective ways, such as, formally with well-established standardized tests and informally with teacher generated assessments, checklists and teacher conferences. Staff are constantly looking at students' work and assessing their achievements. Progress is tracked in relation to the individual's past performance, class results, grade level and subject area. The compilation of assessment binders containing conference notes on every child helps differentiate learning experiences and promotes student achievement. Variations in performance in different subjects are analyzed by subject leaders and administrators to identify patterns and trends. There are numerous intervention strategies available, such as the Wilson program and Great Leaps. This excellent use of data is why the school is so successful in achieving high standards and setting measurable goals for long-range improvement.

The school has established a coherence and consistency to its assessment data by requiring teachers to produce a portfolio of work for each student. The school has been diligent in looking at different subgroups including the effective monitoring of ethnic groups and special education students. It is providing very good support for English language learners. This is a relatively large group of students and there is an effective analysis of their performance and progress which is detailed and provides comprehensive evidence for teachers to support them in classes. Overall the analysis of school data is robust and

rigorous. The school actively seeks alternative ways to evaluate data to find patterns, trends and solutions. The comparison of performance with similar schools is systematic and informs goal setting. Data in relation to past performance is analyzed very well to identify trends of improvement and re-enforce good practice. The compilation of the student portfolio is enabling the progress of students to be evaluated effectively on a year-to-year basis.

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 identification of the school's goals, elaborated in the Comprehensive Education Plan, emerges from open and collaborative activity with staff. These goals, which focus on relevant subgroups, are continually referred to and returned to during regular administrative meetings and discussions which reflect improvements to the curriculum and the quality of teaching. A particular focus has been the development of a Core Knowledge program and the improvement in the levels of writing as a result. All staff can clearly explain why data driven decisions, such as these, have been made.

Data is used well to identify the specific needs of individual students. The school continually explores ways of improving this analysis to make it more focused and specific. For example, the academic intervention services coordinator and classroom teacher use informal assessment data to determine which students would benefit from academic intervention services. These are subsequently regularly provided for the student in order to promote their progress. In younger classes, kindergarten teachers utilize informal assessments and the early childhood literacy assessment data to form guided reading groups. Careful scrutiny of data enables school leaders to clearly identify other categories of interest to the school and to monitor and evaluate comparative performance. In this context regularly scheduled meetings are held with relevant staff to discuss the status of students who are not making adequate academic progress. As a result of these meetings action plans are developed for each student which are effectively implemented and monitored. The school finds creative systems to fully involve students and their parents in setting goals and targets. For example, students reflect on their performance using rubrics or check lists so that they are accountable for work produced and have high expectations. When assessments are administered, the new results are analyzed to determine if progress was made and if goals were met or exceeded. All such information is shared with parents and guardians. Parents are willing to take an active part in their child's education. There is a clear commitment from the school community to the goals and objectives of the school.

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instruction: The school aligns its instructional activity and resources, and student engagement around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.

This area of the school’s work is well developed.

The school effectively utilizes data to help develop detailed curriculum maps in literacy, mathematics, social studies and science, as well as support the Core Knowledge topics. These curriculum maps demonstrate how well the selected material integrates with the

curriculum to produce meaningful information. For example, based on teachers' feedback adjustments are constantly made based on how plans are being implemented. Teachers use assessment data to group students for guided reading, writing and mathematics. Test and formative data is utilized to restructure support in literacy and mathematics.

There are strong systems to ensure that teachers plan effectively to meet the needs of their students. Teachers are held accountable for the quality of instruction. The principal sets clear expectations of instructional practice which are understood by all teachers. These are central to monitoring exercises throughout the year. Teachers plan well together, by grade, to ensure consistency. The effective data collection systems enable teachers to plan and differentiate their instruction according to the needs of the students. This has significantly improved achievement level of students. Teachers are constantly adapting their teaching methods to make learning more relevant and to inspire students to take responsibility for their own learning.

The school makes creative budgetary, staffing and scheduling decisions which have a clear impact on student progress. For example, the financial commitment to an after-school support program and a Saturday academy has had a direct impact upon students' progress. The Read 180 program is having a positive, beneficial effect in raising student reading competencies. Efficient scheduling has provided common planning time for all classes. Extra support staff have been hired to support the bilingual program.

Students are well motivated because they are clear about the purpose of lessons and what is expected of them. They enjoy their lessons and are eager to learn. Relationships between students and staff are excellent and are based on trust and mutual respect. The school has good strategies in place to encourage and reward good attendance. However student attendance in the morning support program is variable.

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 school carefully selects staff based on specific criteria. Teachers are expected to have good subject expertise, a commitment to professional learning and be confident in interpreting data. Professional development is differentiated and increases competence in all staff to use information effectively to improve student outcomes. Programs have evolved around the training and learning requirements associated with the curriculum programs related to literacy, mathematics and Core Knowledge. The school has an effective staff development team which orchestrates professional development activities. For example, the team used the science standards and the Core Knowledge scope and sequence to develop a calendar for the science clusters to follow. Staff are very supportive of each other and willingly share ideas. Peer observations and inter-class visitations are a strong and regular feature of the school. In all grades and across the curriculum, effective demonstration lessons are provided by administration and staff developers. These modeled lessons are standards-based and teachers effectively implement and utilize the strategies learned in executing their own lessons.

The principal is well respected for her professional knowledge, her excellent ability to create a successful team ethos and her capacity to manage continuous improvement. The principal has created a very supportive environment where staff feel valued. She regularly observes teaching and gives constructive feedback about the outcomes of these

observations. Senior leaders are fully aware of the strengths and areas for development of all teachers. They plan collaboratively, and along with other key staff, work diligently to improve instruction. A particular strength is the weekly professional development workshops. Additionally, coaches have been modeling scaffolding strategies for supporting students in their reading, critical thinking and writing skills.

The school is welcoming to students, parents and visitors. It is managed very well and effective systems and procedures ensure that the school runs efficiently. Students know where to go and what to do if they need help or advice. The school works well with outside organizations. It maintains positive links with Child-Health Plus, an organization that provides workshops for parents and the Children for Children program. Parents are encouraged to take part in the school through involvement with field trips and visits. The school is particularly successful in promoting family participation and support through its open communication with parents.

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 school effectively evaluates its short-term goals in relation to students' needs and progress. Longer-term goals, however, have insufficient time-referenced targets for improvement. Senior leaders have a regular schedule of meetings to identify ongoing issues connected with student progress. For example, as a result of these discussions, the school has implemented a departmentalized model for their most at-risk 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students based upon soft and formative data. Each of the above grades has three teachers specializing in a specific area, Read 180, writing and mathematics. This constitutes a focused strategy to meet the needs of these students. In a broader context, individual reviews with teachers are also a measure of the effectiveness of the school's work. The outcomes of these monitoring procedures identify staff development issues.

The school has been effective in using data to monitor and implement planning in successive phases. For example, the school's comparative data supported independent research that a child who was a poor reader at the end of the 1st grade has a significantly reduced chance of becoming a proficient reader by the end of the 4th grade. As an innovative goal-based decision the school has provided academic intervention services to kindergarten and 1st grade students and encourages kindergarten and 1st grade teacher's to retain struggling readers. As a result of this initiative the school data shows a significant growth in reading comprehension amongst 3rd grade students. The school has shown its ability to be adaptable to students' needs through its flexible realignment of staffing and scheduling arrangements for students at risk of not meeting the standard in the higher grades. Staff have a clear perception of the goals and core purposes of the school which drive its work. The evidence of this is shown in the help staff give each other, the involvement with extended day activities and the extracurricular programs. The school has the capacity to build on its successes and promote the academic achievement of students even further.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The Sal Abbracciamento Landmark School (PS 108)	∅	✓	+
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	