



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Public School 140

**985 Rockaway Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11212**

Principal: Martin Mineroff

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Reviewer: Louise Kapner

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

Public School 140 is a twelve month multi-sited special education school for 261 emotionally disabled and/or cognitively delayed students in grades kindergarten through 8, ages four through 17. The main site, PS 140 at PS 518, has 19 classes including a bilingual class for grades 6 through 8, and shares the building with three other schools in Region 5. It is anticipated that an additional early childhood class will open the first week of March. PS 140 at PS 323 has seven classes, grades 3 through 7, including one inclusion class of six students. Eighty percent of the students are Black, 18% Hispanic, and 2% are Asian. Male students comprise the majority (89%) of the student population. Twelve students, (5%), are English language learners. All students have been identified by the Committee on Special Education as requiring intensive management and therapeutic services and differentiated instruction and are assigned to multi graded classes of 8:1:1 or 12:1:1, student to teacher to paraprofessional staffing ratios.

Students participate in either standardized assessments or alternate assessments as indicated on their individual education plan. Approximately 20% of the student population is alternate assessment, and approximately 10% participated in this year's New York State Alternate Assessment.

This is the first year that PS 140 is consolidated into a two-site school enabling the principal to focus on developing effective behavior management strategies and a rigorous academic program suitable to the needs of the students.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal, well supported by his assistant principals, provides instructional leadership in a well managed school.
- Academic and behavioral expectations are clearly communicated to students.
- Teachers and paraprofessionals share a strong commitment to creating a positive school climate with high expectations for students.
- Parents are supportive of school programs and appreciative of positive results.
- The school uses available and school generated data to differentiate instruction.
- Technology is being integrated into classrooms to support instruction.
- The school places a high priority on establishing a clear code of conduct.
- The early childhood program provides young fragile students with appropriate supports.
- Students are active participants in setting goals and are engaged in learning activities with high expectations.

What the school needs to improve

- Further develop “specialty” subjects that can engage students while integrating curriculum.
- Build on the team structure to support sharing best practices.
- Continue to address attendance and lateness as a high priority.
- Disaggregate data to monitor performance and progress of student sub-groups.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school.

“Children are our Focus” is the overall mission of the school. The principal, who has a long tenure with the school, along with three assistant principals, two of whom were staff members prior to assuming administrative roles, bring a high level of energy and commitment to creating a safe environment where students and staff are respected and are part of a teaching and learning community. One teacher shared that this year’s “greater structure focuses the teachers and thus they are able to better focus students.” Attention to instruction and to developing effective behavior management strategies and interventions is evident throughout the school. Instructional programs are being implemented that are engaging and differentiated. Student work reflecting standards is displayed in classrooms and hallways. A large bulletin board outside the main office is dedicated to ‘POWER’, ‘People on the Way to Earning Respect,’ the school’s behavior modification program. Classes and students who have attained a high level of points are prominently recognized. A uniform policy further contributes to a sense of dignity and decorum in the school. Consolidation into two sites has enabled the principal to optimally use his resources for allocation of staff and purchasing of materials which is also contributing to the successes echoed by all constituents. Both sites have a positive, collaborative relationship with the host schools. The principal recognizes the growth this year and has an accurate view of the areas that need improvement.

Approximately 75% of June 2006’s graduates transitioned to less restrictive environments on the high school level including one student who entered mainstream general education and two students to a high school collaborative team teaching program. The school has already identified and transitioned eleven students into less restrictive environments during this school year.

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 internal data to monitor student progress and performance in academic subjects and behavior. Results from standardized assessments, interim assessments, pre and post assessments from instructional programs such as the ‘Read 180’, the Brigance and data folios for alternate assessment students, running records, and progress reports from the individual education plan provide administrators and staff objective updated information on student performance and progress. Worksheets that reflect students’ results on the standardized examinations, present level of functioning, biographical data, and other pertinent instructional information including academic intervention services, are maintained by each classroom teacher. The English as a second language teacher reviews results longitudinally from the New York State English as a second language achievement test to identify student needs and

monitor progress. A school-wide information system provides a plethora of data related to behavioral occurrences. In-put of school data enables the tracking of occurrences by location, nature and time of referral and provides information specific to classes and students. The reports generated were invaluable in supporting the schools efforts in identifying egregious behaviors and addressing issues related to movement of students in the hallways. Students earn points and classes earn power bucks through the 'POWER' program. Review of this data enables the school to monitor the behavior of students and classes and compare class performance. While the school does disaggregate and use the above referenced data for both sites, it does not disaggregate the information by gender or ethnicity. Given the high proportion of minority and male students this information would be useful.

The principal reviews data from other middle schools as a measure of his school's performance. Internally, available data from each of the standardized tests is reviewed yearly for school growth and student progress. During the course of the school year reports generated from instructional programs are monitored and used by the administration to plan next steps for students and classes. Administration is diligently working to provide staff with the expertise in data review to plan instruction.

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 principal uses available and school generated data to determine next steps for his administrative team and teachers to meet students' instructional and behavioral needs. The focus is on engaging students in meaningful learning activities as a way to reduce the number of incidents and improve student performance. Results from 'Read 180' provide information for grouping and differentiating instruction. Individual education plans for alternate assessment students set clear goals with tasks modified to a student's ability. Results from interim assessments enable the speech therapist to review and revise goals as she works to support communication skills. Review of student portfolios from September through mid-year reflects student progress and helps to develop further goals. Teachers are focused on setting realistic but high expectations for their students and using appropriate materials. Instruction is geared to students' strengths identified on the interim assessments. Level 1 and level 2 students are receiving mandated academic intervention services during and after school. A weekly log monitors the delivery and progress of the interventions. Common meeting time is built into the school's schedule. Grade 'track' meetings take place minimally once a month on the upper grades and once a week for early childhood teachers. Teachers appreciate the opportunity to go over data, and discuss and plan implementation of units of study. However, the school does not use this time optimally. There is a need for skilled staff to provide turn-key training from professional development activities and share best practices with colleagues. Data from the school's occurrence reports and school-wide information system is used to identify the nature of behavioral incidents, when and where they are occurring, and students who are presenting the most problems. Behavior and school management strategies have been revised leading to a marked improvement in the school climate.

High expectations are part of the school culture. Instructional rubrics and rules and point values for the 'POWER' program are visible in classrooms and hallways. A student said

that “if I forget something I just look at the board to see what I did wrong.” Post-its are attached to student work reflecting teacher responses. Parents are asked to sign their child’s daily behavior chart nightly. Report cards and progress reports keep them informed regularly. The parent coordinator runs parent workshops and gives ‘parent awards’ to encourage participation. Parents are appreciative that the school is sensitive to their child’s needs and “works with them together as a team.”

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 some well developed features.

The school uses the mandated content area curricula and follows units of study proposed by the District. The early childhood program supports fragile students many of whom who are extremely deficient in academics. Mathematics programs are structured and activity based. Science and social studies follow state curriculum and students in the upper grades are responsible for exit projects. Additional reading programs, Lexia and Read 180, have been introduced into selected classes. Students work at their own level and pace and self-monitor their responses. Program generated data enables teachers to engage students in small groups for differentiated instruction. Significant improvement in student achievement is being noted based upon interim lexile scores. A teacher pointed out a student whose work reflects a 90% improvement since October. The introduction of the ‘iTeach/iLearn’ initiative supports the use of technology in classrooms. Smartboards are used by teachers to create exciting and engaging lessons. Laptops allow students to work independently and access the internet to complete project-based assignments. Students who show responsible behavior and attention to schoolwork are part of a one day a week work-study program. While there is some evidence of creating alternative opportunities for students to be actively engaged in learning this is not consistent. The school does not integrate curriculum into the ‘specialties’ to maximize students’ educational experiences. The school’s behavior modification program encourages students to be responsible for their work and conduct. Participation in clubs and trips provides motivation to earn points. Systems are in place to hold teachers accountable for improving student outcomes. Comprehensive classroom instruction and environment checklists provide guidelines and create high expectations for teachers. Student grades are based upon rubrics and teachers maintain class records that are reviewed by administrators. These systems have not yet fully impacted on the school.

Decisions of budgeting, scheduling, and staffing are driven by the focus on improving student outcomes and creating a safer environment. Monies are allocated for classroom materials and programs and tangible rewards for positive behavior. Cluster teacher, coach and dean positions support efforts in learning and positive behavior. Class schedules are reflective of keeping student transitions to a minimum thus reducing the times of difficulty.

“They treat us like young adults.” “When you’re feeling down or depressed you go to your counselor.” The entire school community is working towards maximizing the school experience for students. Students are encouraged to attend regularly and be punctual. While there has been a 5% increase in attendance thus far this year it is still below standard and lateness continues to be an issue. The school does not have consistent measures in place to support systemic improvements in this area.

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 with some well developed features.

The stability of the staff over the past two years has helped the school create a positive environment. Staff and administrators work together as a community maintaining high standards of instruction and behavior. New staff members are mentored and expected to meet the challenges of this population.

Opportunities to participate in professional development are offered on and off site. Coaches support teacher use of data to drive instruction and provide help to colleagues in accessing information from New York Start and the Princeton interim assessments. Training for new initiatives is offered to teachers and paraprofessionals. While there does seem to be planning between teachers and paraprofessionals it is not consistent. Clearer directions could optimize their work. Classroom inter-visitations are encouraged and teachers work collaboratively on creating standards for student work. Insufficient use is made of the common meeting time to allow teachers to share best practices to support the school's focus. There are insufficient opportunities for classroom inter-visitations. Except for committee meetings and full day staff development days inter-site visitations do not take place. The school maintains positive relationships with their host schools and administrators have joined staff in inter-school instructional activities.

The principal and administrators are well respected and highly visible. They visit classrooms often and engage in conversations with teachers to monitor classroom and student progress. Although each administrator has grade specific responsibilities formal observations are shared. School procedures are clear and communicated with staff. They are appreciative of the positive changes to the school climate and work diligently to support all efforts put forth. Service providers support students and are knowledgeable of the students and family issues. They work collaboratively with staff at both sites to maximize student learning and positive behavior and are part of transitioning students to other programs. The parent coordinator is accessible and goes out into the community to work with parents. "Read to Achieve" partnered the school with the Knickerbockers, a professional basketball team, to encourage student learning.

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 has set challenging goals for itself and is working collaboratively to reach them. The Comprehensive Education Plan highlights programs and initiatives and is revised as needed. Members of the school leadership team including teachers and parents are part of this process. Instructional and behavioral data from on-going assessments provide information that allows the school to revisit and revise plans. A 'Behavior Support Committee' meets weekly. Teachers, administrators and students work jointly to monitor progress of students and classes and implement initiatives to encourage positive behaviors throughout the school. Recent results from the English language arts standardized examination are being reviewed to address instructional needs of students

and classes. Recently allocated monies are being used to provide additional academic intervention services in mathematics after school. There is a commitment by the entire school community to work together and all constituents echoed that “this is the best year yet.”

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Public School 140	∅	✓	+
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	