



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Bath Beach School

Public School 163

**1664 Benson Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11214**

Principal: Maryann Wasmuth

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Reviewer: Denis Pittman

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 163 was built in 1908 and is located in the Bath Beach-Bensonhurst section of Brooklyn. This pre-kindergarten through fifth grade school serves a population of 488 students from culturally diverse backgrounds. The community is home to many new immigrants from the Middle East, Mexico, Eastern Europe and Asia. Despite the building being 98 years old, it is well kept and students' accomplishments are prominent in the numerous displays seen around the school. The ethnic composition of the school is, White 41.4%, Asian 36.5%, Hispanic 20.1% and Black 2.1%. About 14.6% of the students have individualized education plans (IEP's) and receive the full range of services including special educational support. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding. Attendance levels are at 93.8% which is above both State and City figures.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The Principal's leadership has created a supportive culture based upon high expectations.
- The school promotes a strong family ethos; students and staff are valued as individuals.
- The collection of data is very detailed and is used well to monitor and review the progress of students.
- Staff are hard working and self-critical, continuously looking at their practice in order to improve their performance.
- The budget is used efficiently and effectively to promote student's learning, progress and active engagement with the curriculum.
- The curriculum provides extensive opportunities for development of students through its enrichment activities.
- The school is well run providing a safe and orderly environment for everyone.
- Parents are very supportive of the school and value the work it is doing to help their children.
- The school has effective monitoring and review procedures to evaluate its work on a regular basis.

What the school needs to improve

- The school should continue to focus its professional development on promoting activities which help in the design of differentiated instructional programs.
- The school needs to continue to develop the use of technology to add variety to teaching methodologies.
- Communication procedures with parents need to further improve so as to encourage more to take an active part in their children's education.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well developed school.

Bath Beach is an effective school which has high expectations for each student. It values them as individuals and seeks to find and develop their innate abilities. The principal leads the school very well; all staff know their students well and are committed to raising achievement. Individual students are supported effectively and are given the help which reflects their specific needs. This help and support is based upon good relationships and mutual respect. Teaching is purposeful and students concentrate and behave well. They enjoy school, particularly the opportunities provided in an innovative enrichment program and the extra curricular activities after school.

Staff use data very well to monitor and analyze student's progress and as a result student achievement is good. Professional development takes place in an environment of support and constant dialogue about student achievement. The school is looking to develop its use of technology to facilitate its instructional programs. Parents are very satisfied with the school and pleased with the progress their children make. Despite the school's efforts, some parents remain difficult to reach in order to engage them more directly in their child's learning and progress.

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 has very effective systems for collecting data of all kinds relating to the performance and progress of individuals and groups of students. Apart from the collation of standardized scores which come from the City testing procedures, each teacher compiles an assessment portfolio. The cross referencing of this data which has been built up on the basis of recent and past assessments gives an accurate picture of each student's achievement and progress. This information is used to identify students at risk of falling behind and those who with increased effort could to improve their scores and move up a level. The school has built up its own substantive data about the individual performance of students by using a purchased diagnostic assessment program called 'Rally'. This system identifies the relative competences of a student in relation to reading and mathematics. The school is able to effectively analyze its data across classrooms and within the grade levels. The quality of the data enables the school to make effective provision for those students who are English language learners. The data collected about English language learners' needs is detailed and informative. The school is particularly interested in those students whose assessments indicate that they have made sufficient progress and are now held to the same promotional standards as the general education population. These students are particularly vulnerable at this transition stage as they move from the extensive support which they received under the English language learners' program. The school keeps detailed information about these students so that they don't regress. The administration is conscious of its performance against similar schools and the data

committee provides evidence to the senior leadership team as to how the school of performs in relation to these comparisons.

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 has worked diligently on collecting and analyzing a wide range of assessment data to gain a detailed awareness of precisely at what level of each student is performing. This information is then made available to faculty leaders and teachers who are expected use it effectively to guide and inform curriculum planning and instruction. The sustained progress students are making owes much too how well data is used to drive forward this agenda of improving performance. Whilst the administration provides the context of this work, the collaboration between staff is a major factor in sustaining these improvements. The discussions within grade levels are an important aspect of promoting common goals and plans to address the needs of students. A group which is of particular concern to the school is those who are English language learners (ELL). The school is concerned to increase the performance of ELL students who perform at level 1 and 2 in English and mathematics examinations. Strategies to support the students include intensive academic intervention, differentiated instruction and after school programs.

The principal has high expectations of students. These expectations are equally conveyed to staff and parents through regular meetings about the progress of students. Students are appreciative of the extra help that is given to them by staff in order for them to make improvements in their work. The useful data exchange of information between teaching colleagues and some of the parent body enables the school’s goals to be re-enforced. For example the focus on writing and aspects of balanced literacy such as guided reading emerge from such collaborative discussions. The effective use of rubrics is another example of the way high expectations are conveyed to students.

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’s curriculum is closely aligned to the analysis of data and reviews of outcomes. Assessment information is used well to identify programs and interventions to supplement the mandated curriculum to ensure that students make good progress. An innovative program (SEM-School-wide enrichment model) is greatly enjoyed by students. They can choose from a range of courses to follow activities which they have expressed an interest in. The commitment and motivation shown in these courses is reflected in the high standards of work produced. It is in the context of these courses that students are able to practice and develop the writing skills which have been focus of the school’s improvement planning. The journalism program is particularly popular. Teachers are held accountable for their student achievement, partly through grade discussions but also in addition to the one-to-one meetings which are held with members of the administration. In these meetings there is a close examination of the data and discussion of the way forward for each student. Discussions are firmly based on improving teaching methodologies and

using the work of other teachers to improve their practice. The school recognizes there is a need to achieve greater consistency in the way that teachers differentiate the work of students to match the levels of ability within their classes.

The analysis and use of data is central to decision-making in the school. The budget is used creatively to develop curriculum opportunities such as the enrichment program described above. Staffing decisions appropriately reflect student need. The intervention strategies for students with special education needs are provided with the necessary support staff to make the program work effectively. The progress made by students with special education needs is evidence of the success of this commitment. The scheduling of a common prep time enables the sharing of ideas between staff and promoting cohesion and continuity in their instructional programs. The work done in these sessions is reflected in the way that students positively respond to the activities which are presented to them.

Attendance and punctuality are good. Attendance levels are higher than comparable schools. The school takes good care of its students, who are confident that they can bring concerns to members of staff. In lessons students are attentive and concentrate well on their work. These factors ensure that students continue to make good progress.

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 selects staff carefully using a range of criteria, mainly to do with teachers' interest in developing student's learning, a willingness to be a team member and a commitment to professional learning. The school is successful in retaining staff and appointing those who share the school's values.

Professional development programs evolve from the commitment to improve student achievement. The principal recognizes the importance of professional development and is creative in the use of resources and time to ensure that an effective provision is made. For example, staff have received training in the use of technology in their classrooms. More staff feel confident about the use of computers and laptops; this work is enhancing the quality of instructional activities which are planned for students. It is recognized that there is a continuing need to provide support for teachers in the use of Smart Boards as an aid to teaching. The impact of professional development is closely evaluated using data from the monitoring of students and teachers performance.

The principal is respected for her professional knowledge and her capacity to make change happen successfully. She has created a nurturing environment where staff feel valued. The principal and the assistant principal regularly observe teaching and give constructive feedback about the outcomes of these observations. They are fully aware of the strengths and areas for development of all teachers. They plan collaboratively along with other senior staff, such as the math and literacy coaches, to improve instruction

The school is welcoming to students, parents and visitors. It is managed well and effective systems and procedures ensure that the school runs smoothly. Students know where to go and what to do. The school works well with outside agencies and institutions. The school maintains strong ties with institutions of higher learning such as Brooklyn College and St Francis College. These institutions regularly send student teachers to act as student mentors. This adds another dimension to the support students have at the school.

The school provides opportunities for assemblies to be conducted by community groups these include the senior citizens centre, the police and fire departments. Parents are encouraged to take part in the school. Parents have been successfully involved in a project called 'parents as art partners'; this is a collaborative activity with students who all work together on Saturdays to create murals in the school.

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.

The school has drawn up a detailed Comprehensive Education Plan which is the focus for what the school is seeking to achieve. Teachers are actively engaged in collaborative work to set the goals and targets for the school. The Comprehensive Education Plan outlines how the needs of all students are to be met including effective intervention strategies and programs for those students in greatest need. The school reviews the outcomes of these plans well. The analysis and use of data collected in these reviews is central to the school strategies for improvement. Staff at all levels are actively encouraged to take responsibility for assessing and analyzing students progress so as to identify requisite changes and take remedial action where necessary. The school has shown itself to be adaptive in its use of assessment procedures. For example, through the introduction of the 'Rally' diagnostic assessment program the school has produced a substantial evidence base in relation to student skills in math and reading. This enables it to be flexible in amending programs during the course of the year if necessary to maximize student outcomes. The effective review procedures which the school has put in place show that it has the capacity to sustain its change and improvement for the future.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Bath Beach (PS 163)	∅	✓	+
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