



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Lexington Public School

Public School 170

**7109 6th Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11209**

Principal: Christina Tettonis

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

This elementary school has about 766 students on register from kindergarten through grade 5. A high proportion of students are English language learners when they first start at the school. Currently almost 33 percent are English language learners, some of whom have recently joined the school. There are a smaller proportion of Special Education students than typically found in similar schools. The school receives Title 1 funding. At 95%, attendance is above similar and City schools.

The school's population comprises of 44% White, 34% Asian, 19% Hispanic and a small percentage of Black and Native American students. The school follows the America's Choice school design that focuses on teaching and assessing using the New York State standards. Thirty-four teachers are new to the school.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school uses data very effectively to put strategies in place which accelerate the progress of all students.
- The professional development program is excellent and ensures all staff work together as one team for the benefit of the children.
- The principal, assistant principal, coaches and staff set very high expectations and drive through improvements with energy.
- Students are very well behaved and are respectful of adults and each other.
- The curriculum is well planned and so develops instruction systematically, is interesting and motivates students' learning.
- The staff has a very good commitment to ensuring all students do as well as they can both personally and academically.
- Parents support the school well by giving of their time voluntarily and by making a commitment to helping their children with learning.
- The school works well with a range of people to provide valuable support for special education students and English language learners.
- A comprehensive arts program makes a significant contribution to students' experiences.
- Members of staff work very well together to check individual student's progress and plan programs of instruction that meets the range of specific needs.

What the school needs to improve

- Extend the way it analyzes results by including an analysis of boys' and girls' achievement.
- Establish a consistent whole school approach to recording and tracking progress in science.
- Develop additional ways to support and accelerate progress of English language learners who join the school other than in the kindergarten.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well developed school.

The school's mission, 'From many places we come together, learning is our goal forever' is evident from the moment you step inside the door. The excitement for learning and celebration of its many cultures meet visitors at every corner. Students are very well behaved, are polite and respectful and have very positive attitudes to school. Teachers are committed to developing the whole child and so students develop good social skills as well as academic success. Parents value the way the school cares for their children's personal and academic needs in equal measure. The warm relationships between students and teachers help to create a family climate in school.

The principal, assistant principal and coaches give extremely focused leadership and are constantly looking for ways to further improve the good quality instruction and curriculum. The strong commitment to meet the personal and academic needs of each individual is evident in classrooms during the day and before and after school when many students attend clubs and extra activities. Classrooms are welcoming and purposeful and the commitment of teachers and students to do the best that they can has established a very strong climate for learning. As a result, there is a strong upward trend in the school's performance in City and State tests.

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 and analyzing a wide range of data relating to the performance and progress of each individual student. In addition to performance in mandatory tests, the school has its own comprehensive procedures for measuring progress in reading, writing and mathematics against the New York State standards by implementing the America's Choice school design. These clearly set out exactly what students should achieve and by when they should achieve it. In addition, teachers collect a considerable range of additional data in all aspects of the curriculum. The principal, assistant principal and coaches analyze the data closely and compare the progress of students in each grade and class. They identify those students who need extra help and those who could do better to exceed the standards. They share this information with all teachers at very frequent and regular meetings. Consequently, all members of staff have a good and clear understanding of what each student is able to do. This means that they know what to plan in class that will help students to do even better. Progress in reading, writing and mathematics is carefully plotted on a school record sheet. This enables everyone to see at a glance whether individuals are doing as well as they should to reach or exceed the standards. While individual teachers record performance and progress in science, there is no whole school approach to this activity.

The school pays particularly good attention to the progress of special education students and English language learners and so staff know precisely what these students can do

and what they need to learn next. As a result, the proportion of students reaching grades 3 and 4 is increasing year on year. The school keeps a close eye on how well students from all ethnic groups are doing and so notes any differences in performance early. This is not yet the case with boys' and girls' progress and so the school does not yet have as clear a picture as to whether these groups could do even better. The school compares how well it is doing with its performance in previous years and against similar schools.

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 analysis of data drives forward the improvement goals contained in the school's Comprehensive Educational Plan. School leaders use the information extremely well to guide decision making and to plan the next steps of development for the school. These detail precisely the expectations and when they will be achieved. The America's Choice school design forms the basis of planning for development and improvement goals focus closely on grades, classes, subjects and all individuals and groups of students.

Particularly good planning is in place for supporting all special education students. Regular meetings give teachers good opportunity to discuss those causing concern and to take immediate action to organize learning through suitable programs. Opportunities are taken for teachers work in pairs to teach those students requiring support in small groups in order to assist their progress. Frequently, students join the school with little or no English. The school immediately springs into action with plans for support and intervention to help these students succeed. The school recognizes that this is still not as effective as it could be in all classes and is striving to put plans into place to help these students access the curriculum more quickly and so accelerate their progress.

Parents are fully informed and consulted about their children's needs. They welcome being able to come into school when they choose to discuss any concerns they may have. At formal consultation meetings, the school's long-term goals are at the front of all discussions and actions. Teachers explain the standards their children are expected to reach by the end of the year, and progress towards these is used as a basis to review the goals mid-year.

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 in the third year of using America's Choice school design, a curriculum which structures learning against the New York State standards. The curriculum map for reading, writing and mathematics has been established and the process is being adopted successfully in science and social studies. Links between aspects are being developed, for example developing students' knowledge and understanding of writing informational texts within a science and social studies context. This is making the curriculum more interesting and so students are engaged in lessons. The visual arts curriculum, before and

after school activities and visits to places of interest support the curriculum very well and extend students' experiences very effectively.

Teachers have a very good knowledge of their students' academic and personal development and are committed to accelerating the progress of every child. They continuously assess how well each student is doing through individual and group conferences in class and through checking students' work. The writing workshop approach is established and effectively structures learning in this aspect of student work. Portfolios of writing are kept for each genre. These enable teachers to build on each student's first piece of work and monitor every small step in achievement they make as they progress towards publishing their writing at the end of the unit. Teachers plan together and this enables them to use each other's strengths and ideas in supporting students equally across classes. Expected standards are displayed in every classroom with helpful prompts to aid learning and these help students to work independently. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are talked about during individual conferences with students. As a result, they have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve and are accountable for their achievements.

The school places equal importance on students' personal development and so has introduced 'Young Ambassadors', a scheme that encourages fourth and fifth graders to make a contribution to the community and build social values. Personal and academic achievements are celebrated through 'Student of the Month', an initiative which is liked and valued by students and parents alike. Regular reviews of the curriculum and progress against goals inform staffing decisions, scheduling and budget decisions. Attendance is the principal's main priority and so the school rigorously follows through on any absence not reported convincingly. As a result, attendance is high.

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 principal is well respected by staff, students and parents. She is a skillful leader who has high expectations of herself and others. Consequently, when selecting staff, the school chooses those who have high expectations of student performance and who are willing and able to work with others to build an effective and accountable team. The school has successfully established a climate where teachers talk openly and honestly about their own strengths and where they need to improve. This is resulting in successful teaching, which is a major factor in ensuring good progress and improving the school's results.

An extensive range of professional development is securely based on the strong commitment to improve students' progress. Following rigorous analysis and evaluation of students' progress and performance all staff are involved in identifying training needs. Planned training links directly to the school's goals for improvement. For example, teachers are confident in assessing students' writing but would like more opportunities to meet together to check that they have assessed pieces of work at the right level. This is in order to assist them in identifying smaller steps of progress to help them structure learning even more carefully. The school is creative in the way it approaches staff development. When teachers attend courses they are expected to share the information with others and so make a difference to learning. Regular visits to other classes enable teachers to learn from each other by sharing successful methods and gaining new ideas.

The principal, assistant principal and coaches regularly observe teaching and the feedback given leads directly to considering agreed strategies to make instruction even better.

Teachers work together in teams to plan instruction to meet the varying needs of students in their classes. Teachers from support services are part of the team and use data from assessments to help students reach academic goals. Good partnerships with community groups help the school achieve its goals.

The school runs very smoothly on a day to day basis and procedures are followed. The principal has very good capacity to effect change.

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 principal has put into place an excellent structure for checking how well the school is doing. It ensures all staff is involved in monitoring, reviewing and evaluating how well the school is doing and adapting plans to make things even better. The question 'How can we accelerate this student's learning?' is constantly being asked by the principal, assistant principal, coaches and staff at the numerous meetings and activities held to review and evaluate the school's actions. Discussions in meetings are always candid and open. Meetings are places where teachers acknowledge the school's strengths but also where they challenge each other to find solutions to the difficulties some students are having in class. Everything is checked and re-checked to make sure systems are as effective as they can be and decisions reached lead to a realignment of practices and use of resources to improve students' progress and performance.

This is a school where the glass is always half full. This thorough and positive approach to evaluation and review ensures staff and students are confident to talk openly about their areas for development and so make a contribution to the developments of the school.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Lexington Public School 170 (PS 170)	∅	✓	+
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