



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Sheffield School

Public School 190

**590 Sheffield Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11207**

Principal: Stephaun Hill

Dates of review: May 31 – June 1, 2007

Reviewer: Mary Ayala

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

The Sheffield School, PS 190, is a school serving 347 students in grades pre-kindergarten through five. Built in 1923, it is a vibrant and well-maintained site in a residential neighborhood of East Brooklyn. The school's diverse population consists of 81% Black students and 17% Hispanic students, with the remaining 2% coming from White, Asian, and other backgrounds. Students who receive special education services constitute 16% of the overall population, slightly higher than found in similar and city schools. English language learners account for only 5% of the student body, less than the averages for City and similar schools. The school receives Title 1 funding for 81% of its students, a proportion that is slightly less than in similar schools but higher than in all City schools.

The student attendance rate for this year to date is 90.1%, which is lower than the average for City and similar schools. Because the school's space is not fully utilized, Intermediate School 311 occupies the fourth and fifth floors. In addition, the school provides educational services to children in three shelters.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal's compelling vision and drive to secure success for all students inspires and motivates staff.
- A positive culture and well-defined routines and procedures enable the school to keep a sharp focus on academic achievement.
- High expectations are effectively communicated and modelled throughout the school.
- The school's mission is underscored well with attractive displays of student work and hallway artwork that highlights a variety of well-known authors.
- An emphasis on collaboration and team building among staff leads to improved student outcomes.
- A well-rounded arts program successfully helps students build confidence that can be transferred to classroom achievement.
- Staff use a variety of data well in order to understand what students know and are capable of doing.
- Tools such as portfolios and exit project assessments are used well to monitor student progress.

What the school needs to improve

- Design a way to co-ordinate and measure the impact of any academic intervention services.
- Refine the use of data to include comparisons (for example, by ethnic groups and with similar schools) as a way to measure that achievement is high enough.
- Develop a strategic plan for the use of technology across the curriculum to support improved student performance.
- Establish ways in which external partners might contribute more directly to academic gains.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school.

A sense of pride pervades this school community and the principal is determined to make the school 'one of the best in New York City.' The school's mantra is 'Only Strong Minds Ascend Higher.' Student work is highlighted in classrooms and hallways and three-dimensional murals are works-in-progress that feature popular authors.

The school has done well in developing a positive culture that supports academic achievement. In addition, students and their parents are invited to be part of a variety of cultural excursions that extend learning beyond the school walls.

The newly-appointed principal and assistant principal provide instructional leadership to staff and jointly promote an overarching goal to have every child reading at or above grade level by the end of the third grade. In order to achieve this goal, all staff are encouraged to be part of the team that works on behalf of the success of all students. As the principal states, 'Everything we do here is for the children'. As a result of these values, the school has made steady gains in improving standardized test scores and has been recognized as one of the most improved schools in the State of New York.

The school faces some challenges as they plan for continuous improvement. It does not currently use its performance data within a comparison framework (for example, between ethnic groups or with similar schools) to determine whether students are achieving well enough. Secondly, their external partners do not contribute directly to the achievement of academic goals. Finally, there is no systematic way to measure the impact of academic intervention support to determine which strategies have the most impact.

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 does well in collecting a variety of data in order to understand what each student knows and is able to do. Standardized test results, interim assessments, and practice test results complement the information provided by running records, science performance tasks, exit projects, and portfolios of students' work. Teachers use this collection of information effectively to update their understanding of the progress of individual students and their class as a whole, while the cabinet looks at school-wide performance by classroom and grade level.

In scrutinizing this data, staff look at the performance of a variety of groups to make sure each student is making sufficient progress. To that end, they look at the performance of specific ethnic groups, special education students, as well as English language learners. To a limited degree, the school uses the comparison of data by looking at classroom and grade levels and by charting overall progress over several years. However, staff do not

use the comparison of the performance of ethnic groups or a comparison of its progress against that of similar schools to help determine whether or not sufficient rigor underscores its academic program.

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 school is successful in setting goals for immediate and long-range improvement. The achievement of individual students, whole classes and grades is reviewed regularly so that goals and plans can be adjusted. A five-year plan is aimed towards Sheffield becoming one of the best schools in the City. Staff collaborate effectively to draw on a variety of data sources to generate school-wide goals. The cabinet meets on a bi-weekly basis to monitor plans and timeframes and to satisfy themselves that school goals are yielding the desired results.

When individual students or groups of students are considered not to be making adequate progress, the school acts decisively and quickly to address the need. Although all students participate in the morning extended program, struggling students are placed in smaller settings so that intensive help can be provided. Students can also take advantage of after-school and Saturday programs in order to accelerate their academic progress. In addition, all students in grades 3 through 5 receive academic intervention support one period a day for four days a week. The school does not, as yet, adequately coordinate and monitor this array of additional services. As a result, it is currently not possible to evaluate the impact of its efforts.

The school does an excellent job of communicating high expectations to all members of the school community. A curriculum evening at the beginning of the school year is well attended by parents and caregivers who receive information that helps them understand what academic challenges their children will face. Weekly progress reports are used to keep parents informed and to give them a way to provide additional information to the school.

Goals and plans for improving student performance are well communicated and drive the activity of all members of the school community. Parents regularly receive calendars and flyers about important school events and are active members of the school leadership team and the parent teacher association. Staff routinely discusses goals and plans at faculty conferences and during common planning periods.

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.

To supplement mandated requirements, the school makes well-informed decisions about curriculum selection by looking at data and determining how best to address the instructional needs identified by the analysis. For example, when results from diagnostic testing revealed a problem with phonemic awareness in the early grades, the decision was

made to select a reading program that included sufficient emphasis on the use of phonics. Staff use assessment data from the existing curriculum well and are now developing performance tasks to measure how well students are doing in science.

The administrative team's emphasis on collaboration and cooperation has produced the desired result. Teachers are willingly held accountable for improving instruction and student outcomes because they are sufficiently supported and encouraged. They use a variety of teaching approaches in order to help all students master new skills and new material. As one teacher said, 'We care for the whole child'. The variety of instructional approaches combined with well-resourced classrooms is a formula for success that actively engages students in learning. There was little evidence of disruption or off-task behaviors in all classrooms observed. A variety of routines are in place to make sure absent students are accounted for and parents informed of absence.

The administrative team has also used its key resources of staff, budget, and time well to aim for success for all students. Classrooms are well resourced and the school also has a teacher resource center. During the last school year, the school purchased a wireless classroom laptop program with 28 computers and established a computer lab. This year, 10 smart boards were purchased for upper grade classrooms. However, there is currently no strategic plan of how best to infuse technology across the curriculum in a way that ensures accelerated student learning.

Staff at this school know and respect students and respond decisively to their academic and personal needs. Students confirmed that there are many adults in their school that they would seek out for help.

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.

Staff at this school understand well the importance of setting high expectations for student performance and using data to guide their instructional decision-making. As a result, student achievement is frequently the major topic of discussion at cabinet meetings and during common planning periods. The principal encourages teachers to dig deeply into the data to discern how best to help students. In order to help teachers do this effectively, professional development is provided on how to use data as an instructional tool. Literacy and mathematics coaches provide additional professional development with demonstration lessons. The principal has also looked to staff to share their areas of expertise. As one teacher stated, 'We know who's good at what'.

The school uses time well to make sure the schedule supports opportunities for teachers to meet and plan together. Teachers use common planning time as well as time before and after school to good effect to look at data, share best practices, and arrange for possible intervisitations.

The principal is highly regarded for the clarity of her vision for student success and for her drive to constantly improve the quality of teaching and learning. She is constantly looking to the future and is considered an agent of change by her staff. Under her leadership, the school runs very smoothly and procedures are clearly communicated and followed. For example, in order to use her time most effectively, she asks staff to put their requests on the 'parking lot' with the understanding she will respond within 24 hours. Both the principal

and assistant principal visit classrooms frequently to observe instruction and they provide thoughtful feedback for improving teaching practices.

The school has a wide variety of external partners, many of whom provide unique programs and services to the school. However, these partners are not directly aligned with the school's academic goals.

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 a variety of practices in place that allow it to monitor student progress and adjust its plans when evidence suggests changes are needed. The Comprehensive Education Plan is revisited on a monthly basis and, based upon available data, revised accordingly. Students receive weekly progress reports that allow parents to respond quickly when problems arise. In addition, staff look at samples of student work periodically in order to determine whether or not the work products show sufficient understanding and skill mastery. In grades 3 through 5, exit projects are being used very successfully as a way to measure how well a student understands a given fact or topic.

When data is made available from interim assessments or practice tests, staff use it well to compare student progress within and across classrooms. A binder of selected work is collected on behalf of each student and follows that student from grade to grade. As a result, teachers are able to make well-informed decisions about their students' instructional needs.

When an analysis of data reveals insufficient progress, staff act quickly to adjust their plans and practices. Students may be recommended for additional services or supports or teachers may receive professional development on how best to address the problem.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Sheffield School (PS 190)	∅	✓	+
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	