



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Gil Hodges School

Public School 193

2515 Avenue L

Brooklyn

NY 11210

Principal: Frank A Cimino

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Reviewer: Jan Lomas

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Gil Hodges School, Public School 193, serves a population of 876 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school houses two gifted and talented programs. The first is a local 'Eagle' program and the second is a district-wide program entitled 'The Center for the Intellectually Gifted'.

This is an Empowerment School. Such schools have more flexibility to make key decisions and control the resources for their school community. Empowerment schools are freed to develop or purchase professional development services, choose which schools to affiliate with and benefit from reduced reporting and paperwork requirements.

The percentage of students known to be eligible for Title 1 funding is 62.2%. This is higher than the average for similar schools but below the City average.

Eight percent of the student body is special education students and 12% are English language learners. The composition of the student population is 52.1% Black, 20.4% White, 14.1% Hispanic and 13.5% Asian and other ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of students who have recently arrived in the country is 10.8% which is higher than the figure for City and similar schools. The places of birth for these students are mainly Pakistan, Haiti and Israel.

The rate of attendance in 2005 was 93.7%, fractionally higher than similar schools and 1% higher than City schools.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal is well respected by the parents and faculty and they appreciate that he wants to do the best by each child in his care.
- Teachers are supportive of each other and of the administration.
- Students enjoy the principal visiting their classes and the interest he takes in their work.
- The school runs smoothly on a day to day basis.
- Students attend to their teachers and are willing to concentrate on their learning.
- Relationships, adult to adult and adult to child, are positive throughout the school.
- The principal and assistant principal work collaboratively and complement each other's skills.
- The school's credo 'be respectful and be nice' is known and followed by students.
- Students enjoy enrichment activities such as the school play, 'senior activities' and sports.

What the school needs to improve

- Strengthen the systematic and rigorous use of data to ensure that all subgroups are doing as well as they can.
- Improve the use of goal setting at individual, class, grade, group and whole school level, in order to raise student achievement further.
- Extend and develop curriculum planning and mapping in all grades and subjects so that it is specific to the needs of the school and scaffolds teaching and learning effectively.
- Develop strategies to provide more time for teachers to collaborate, plan, analyze data and engage in professional development.
- Strengthen teachers' accountability through regular, systematic discussions with the administration about data, goals, plans and strategies that underpin student achievement.
- Improve strategic planning and the structures which enable effective monitoring and evaluation of the school's goals in order to fine tune curriculum planning and instruction.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is an undeveloped school with proficient features.

Gil Hodges School, Public School 193, is well regarded by parents and the local community. The principal's philosophy emphasizes the development of the whole child through the encouragement of emotional, social and academic development. The school credo, 'be respectful and be nice', is known and valued by students and their parents. The faculty sees the school cabinet as approachable, 'hands on' and concerned that each student is enabled to do well. Parents appreciate that the principal knows the students by name and see the assistant principal as caring in her approach to each student. The school is in its first year as an Empowerment School and has made steps forward with the use of periodic assessments which help them to have a picture of the performance of each student. Teachers are developing their use of these and parents welcome the availability of such test data 'on line'. The principal also puts great value on qualitative data in meeting the needs of individual students. However, the school is not yet making full use of all available quantitative data, or the potential of all data tools, to extend the way in which it can understand student performance at subgroup, class, grade and cohort level. Goal setting, monitoring, and evaluation are not always fully informed by sharply focused and timely analysis. There is little doubt that the school leadership works tirelessly towards school improvement, with the best interests of each student in mind. The faculty and parents respect and value this approach. Improvements to the focus of goal-setting and planning through the rigorous, systematic strategic analysis of all data, can only serve to further the aim to raise achievement for all.

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 gathers data using a number of different tools in order to provide a picture of the performance of each student, particularly in English language arts and mathematics. These are supplemented by teachers' records from conferencing about reading. Teachers also create assessment tests in social studies and science. Teachers' confidence and experience with newer methods of assessment are variable at present and more time is needed to ensure that they can all make best use of these tools.

Data for special populations is also collected using the school's routine procedures. For English language learners, the results of the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test are also considered and the assistant principal has begun to organize all data about these students on a single spreadsheet. This latter approach is at an early stage, but is a useful way forward to facilitate the ease of analysis. The assessment system is used well to track the progress of special education students and those whose promotion is at risk.

The school uses the data from formal City and State tests to compare the whole school performance in English language arts and mathematics from one year to the next and disaggregates this to look at achievement grade by grade. It also looks at this data when the achievement of gifted and talented students is removed from the picture in order to track the performance of these discrete groups.

The school is less effective with the analysis and comparison of data about other discrete groups. For example, it does not have regard for quantitative data about groups defined by ethnicity or gender. This means that some opportunities to recognize disparity in performance between such groups or to recognize trends or patterns which might identify areas for attention are lost.

The central collection of some periodic assessments is not yet consistent or organized in a way that enables effective and efficient comparisons of student growth over time. The administration responds to concerns raised by teachers, and follows up issues which might be noticed from data through monthly grade team meetings or with individuals. It does not, as yet, meet with each teacher for periodic, systematic discussions which assure sufficiently rigorous analysis and effective use of data class by class.

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.

Priorities for the Comprehensive Education Plan are agreed through collaborative activity amongst staff and parents. Goals are often measurable but percentages are based more upon notional increases rather than upon the rigorous analysis of data. Individual education plans are monitored by the class teachers and the individualized education program teacher. However, the school does not use data to routinely set predictive or interim targets for all individuals, classes or relevant subgroups. Grade level meetings with the assistant principal are held monthly which provide a useful forum for discussion of ongoing issues and school priorities. However, whilst teachers are supportive of each other, few grades have more regular, planned meetings in order to consider data, collaboratively plan and discuss strategy.

At the end of the academic year, data is used to identify all students at risk to group them for academic intervention services in the following year. Extended day, academic interventions and tutorial support are used to meet the needs of students who need extra help. The school includes plans and goals about students from its special populations in its strategic planning and has recently put in place specific extended school support for English language learners. The school has placed emphasis upon staffing and training for additional support and there is a determination to meet the needs of all students who are struggling. Nevertheless, because insufficient consideration is given to the data for some sub groups, the school cannot be sure if all needs are being addressed.

Parents are supportive of the school and the parent and teacher association is active. Workshops enable parents to understand the curriculum. Parents’ representatives appreciate information provided through report cards and meetings. They feel that the recent availability of periodic assessment data ‘on line’ is a valuable addition. Additional simple reports are now also being provided for parents about issues for improvement for

those receiving academic intervention services. Generic rubrics are sometimes used to enable students to understand expectations in some subjects, but these are not yet used consistently. In the best practice, students are offered short, clear written comments about strengths and areas for development in their work.

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.

The school has implemented Everyday Mathematics as far as grade 3, while grade 4 and 5 will be introduced to the program over the next two years. The coach has also mapped the mathematics curriculum up to grade 3 in order to better meet the needs of the specific school context. The English language arts curriculum is based upon the balanced literacy program but the school has not developed full curriculum maps. French teaching is provided for gifted and talented students and opportunities are given to learn about the visual arts and physical education.

The curriculum is differentiated through the pace of delivery for the Eagles program, accelerating students to work at the next grade level and through extension activities in the second gifted and talented program. Teachers are developing their use of periodic assessments to support their planning for instruction. They use data to group students and to understand their next learning steps. However, the school is aware of the need to enable more opportunities for teachers to meet to plan and discuss data to improve differentiated instruction and accountability. Students are most engaged when teaching is well structured, and learning is interesting, challenging and matched to their needs. Staffing, budgeting and scheduling are used proficiently to further the school’s aims.

Relationships across the school are positive overall and the school places emphasis upon encouraging the social and emotional aspects of each student’s development. The principal knows students well. They enjoy his visits to the classroom and the interest he takes in each child. Older students enjoy participation in drama productions and in senior activities such as the school trip. The school uses a sufficient range of strategies to encourage regular attendance.

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.

Appointment interviews ask about the ability to meet the school’s expectations, about behavior management and the personal and social development of students. Teachers approach to planning is probed which can lead to mention about data use. There are structures in place to identify teachers’ professional development needs. Other support is provided through the mathematics coach, who is particularly working with grade 3 this year. The assistant principal provides professional development at monthly grade team meetings and these have been used to develop teachers’ understanding and use of data. In addition, training has been given to further teachers’ use of Princeton Review. Some staff have been trained in the Wilson and Foundations programs and parents have been

trained in Great Leaps, both designed to directly impact upon student achievement. New teachers are provided with support through mentorship by experienced staff and observe other classrooms. The administration frequently carries out formal and informal classroom observations. Useful written feedback is given to staff and the principal has an overview view of the strengths and areas for development for each teacher.

Although teachers willingly help each other, not all grades plan together on a regular basis. The principal is aware of the need to develop further ways to engage them in collaborative discussions about data, plans, goals, strategies and professional development issues. . The recently formed achievement team is exploring ways of using data through the close analysis of information of a chosen group of students. While this group of five teachers continues with this work, the principal has now chosen not to participate as he is not fully supportive of this approach encouraged by the local empowerment school network.

The principal is respected by parents and faculty who appreciate his concern for each student's personal and academic development. He and the assistant principal are open to other's views. The school runs smoothly on a day to day to day basis. It routinely uses partnerships with other organizations in order to enrich opportunities for students. These include two popular after-school programs.

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 undeveloped.

The Comprehensive Education Plan explains the strategies which will be used to achieve each goal but does not include sufficiently clear time lines or precise success criteria to facilitate accurate monitoring and evaluation. The principal recognizes the plan is not a meaningful tool for staff in focusing their contribution to school improvement. Formal, routine revisiting of the plan through out the year by the senior leadership team is inconsistent. There is a collaborative review of the plan at the end of each year, using teacher surveys as part of the cycle of development for the next plan. Particular emphasis is given at this time to identify those students performing at the lower levels in order to group them for academic intervention services.

However, the school does not yet monitor, compare and evaluate all quantitative data sufficiently rigorously to ensure that all key messages can be taken into account. Teachers are willingly developing the use of periodic assessments to guide their instruction. Support at monthly grade team meetings enables discussion of ongoing issues. The principal's recognizes that there is currently insufficient time for teachers to meet to discuss, learn from and with each other.

The school uses classroom observation and some ongoing monitoring strategies to identify areas which are going well or which need further improvement on an individual or wider school basis. The recent scrutiny of students' journals revealed concerns about the way the science curriculum was being implemented. This has led to useful planning for professional development and review. However, the use of quantitative data to guide the revision and review of strategies and plans is not yet systematic enough to complement the valuable contribution of qualitative data. This means that the school is not always able to focus sharply enough upon emerging patterns and trends in student performance and respond in a proactive and timely way in order to further accelerate progress.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The Gil Hodges School (PS 193)	∅	✓	+
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		