



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Floyd Bennett School

Public School 203

**5101 Avenue M
Brooklyn
NY 11234**

Principal: Lisa Esposito

Dates of review: October 3 - 5, 2006

Reviewer: Renee Middleton

Content of the report

Part 1: The School Context

Background 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

Floyd Bennett Primary School comprises pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school serves 944 students of whom there are 33 special education students in self-contained classes and a further 92 taught by collaborative teaching teams. There are also 36 English language learners. The students come from a range of backgrounds: 79% Black, 10% Hispanic, 6% White and 7% other groups. Approximately 72% of students are Title 1 eligible, broadly average for schools across the City.

There have been significant changes in the student population as noted in mid-semester entries and fluctuation of intake for each grade level. For example, over 200 students have left or entered the school outside of September admissions over the past academic year.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal effectively leads the school, setting challenging goals through clear vision and taking action to sustain high expectations amongst all members of the school community.
- School leaders significantly contribute to strategic plans and curriculum development to improve the quality of instruction.
- The focus on teachers' professional development promotes good teaching strategies.
- Collaborative planning contributes to the effective development of instruction and builds teachers' capacity to accelerate the learning of their students.
- Effective curriculum mapping and the use of instructional programs promotes good teaching in English language arts and literacy across the curriculum.
- Where teaching is good, students are actively engaged and enjoy their learning; as a result, most students meet proficiency levels in English language arts and achieve well in other subject areas.
- The school is a safe learning environment.
- The priorities of the school combine an appropriate emphasis on academic progress together with the effective implementation of character education.
- The students are ambassadors for the school; they want to learn, respect the staff, and behave well.

What the school needs to improve

- Disseminate good practice and inform professional learning by formalizing monitoring logs of lesson observations and giving feedback to teachers with greater consistency.
- Continue the development of rubrics and assessment tools to improve instruction, set individual student goals and differentiate planning to personalize students' learning.
- Develop a more systematic approach to the use of data in reviewing and revising goals in the Comprehensive Education Plan.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well developed school.

The principal leads the school well and sets high standards. School leaders are knowledgeable about what needs improvement and how to raise students' achievement. There are high expectations amongst most members of the school community with effective intervention strategies in place to meet students' identified academic, social and special needs.

The school has embedded an aligned curriculum with well established literacy strategies to enhance all subject teaching. These factors have had a positive impact on learning and student achievement. Most students achieve well. They make particularly good progress in English language arts by focused learning through instructional programs that promote literacy across the curriculum.

The Comprehensive Education Plan and the school action plan guide all school activities and focus on priorities to raise student achievement. However, the effectiveness of plans relies on the rigor of teachers' assessment of students' academic performance, which is not consistent. Dealing with inconsistencies in the quality of instructional practice and ensuring that teachers work collaboratively and become reflective practitioners are points for development. Day-to-day running of the school is effective as roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and appropriately delegated.

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 leaders consistently gather data to understand student performance trends and patterns of learning. Data is disaggregated according to grade level, classroom and groupings of interests, such as student mobility, to understand what actions should be taken to promote good teaching and learning throughout the school. The school uses comparisons over a long period of time and routinely compares them with similar schools. Tracking the levels of attainment of a given cohort from one year to the next shows the academic performance progress made by the students.

School leaders closely scrutinize results over time, which have been in line with the State averages in English language arts and mathematics. They use the information they learn from this analysis to determine which content areas or groups of students need further focus to raise their achievement.

Data relating to the performance of special education students is analyzed in line with reporting changes in student progress against individual education plan goals. English language learners' assessed language acquisition is effectively tracked over time by the

principal, literacy coach, school leaders, and designated bilingual support teachers. Students classified as English language learners receive a modified and aligned curriculum that supports their English language development and academic progress.

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.

A variety of intervention strategies is used to support special education students. Commercial diagnostic and screening test results are used to determine students’ lesson outcomes and assessed work. In addition, the school closely scrutinizes data relating to students falling within levels 1 and 2. There is quick and accurate diagnosis of their learning needs and follow up by the designated academic intervention service teacher. There is recurring assessment of student needs in order to best match intervention and instruction. Students receiving intervention make good progress and many reach proficiency in each grade level.

Children in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten are set goals based on teachers’ daily assessments against learning objectives. These are informed by teachers’ own observations and skills-based analysis. However, as students move into higher grade levels, there are inconsistencies in the frequency of teachers’ own assessment to inform planning, differentiation and grouping of students. In addition, there is inconsistency in how classroom teachers use data to best inform the most appropriate grouping of students and curriculum differentiation.

The parent coordinator is instrumental in drawing parents into the education of their children through mediation between home and school. However, parents do not participate extensively in the life school as many work full time. The school tries a number of strategies to bring more parents regularly into school through evening curriculum events, conferencing and social events, but with limited success. This is an area for development if parents are to understand the goals of the school and to assist their children in homework and learning to raise achievement.

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 effectively uses data to determine curriculum developments and the adoption of programs to meet student need. Administrators are well aware of research and issues relating to the low achievement of Black male students. Keeping this in mind, the school’s culture focuses on raising expectations for all students to achieve the highest levels within each individual’s capacity. Reading material is leveled to ensure that students fully engage with text appropriate to their level of skill and fluency. Actions have been taken to address male students’ preference for reading non-fiction through a comprehensive collection of school and classroom libraries represented by a range of genre, fiction, and non-fiction books. There is a rich collection of resources and technology to enhance learning throughout the school. However, not all teachers have completed classroom libraries to reflect the reading needs of their students.

One strength of the school is the emphasis on English language arts and its impact across the curriculum. The whole-school curriculum map effectively identifies literacy strands in all subject areas as a key factor in raising achievement. The school supplements the curriculum with after-school activities through a wide variety of enhancement activities such as sports, chorus and academic studies to assist students in homework.

The character education program is a strength of the school, assisting students in developing positive behavior, social awareness, and life skills. Students are generally engaged, well motivated and focused on their learning. They respect their teachers and in turn, teachers are committed to helping their students succeed.

Attendance in the school is good with averages of 94%. Parents respond well to the education offered in the school and many have begun to engage actively in supporting their children at home. Good numbers of parents attend themed and curriculum events to gain a better understanding of their children's learning.

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 day-to-day running of the school is orderly and smooth, and clearly focused on learning. The principal has a clear vision and purpose in doing what needs to be done. As a leading force, the principal is taking the school forward in raising student achievement. She works closely with the school leaders and key staff. A strong team leads curriculum development, working collaboratively, and helps teachers to identify students in need of academic intervention. Much effort has gone into improving communication with parents to promote their involvement in the life of the school.

The opportunities for professional development are a particular strength of the school. They have a clear impact on learning. New staff members are well supported and there is a rigorous induction program for new teachers to the school. This year alone, 15 new teachers have joined the school. They were given detailed professional development on assessment and tracking of students, but this takes time to develop into practice.

The school has been recognized by the district for its excellent demonstration lessons showing strategies for effective teaching styles and students' engagement in lessons. The impact of collaborative planning and grade level meetings promote good practice. One good example is the grade 3 teachers' calibration of students' written work.

The principal and assistant principals observe lessons on a regular basis, giving teachers verbal feedback to indicate the strengths and areas for development. The school has identified the need to formalize logs of observed lessons to ensure good communications on how to improve the quality of teaching and in setting goals for teachers based on key priorities identified in the Comprehensive Education Plan.

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's Comprehensive Education Plan clearly sets out key priorities for raising students' achievement and for improving the work of the school by setting challenging goals. There has been extensive involvement of staff in formulating the contents of the plan with identified responsibilities for the implementation of actions set against well defined objectives.

School leaders regularly review the plan's actions for their effectiveness in raising student achievement. Analysis and use of this data is shared with all staff to enable them to focus on specific areas of improvement and to set goals for individual students and for particular cohorts. However, there is variation in how well teachers use this data and adapt their own assessments of students' academic performance to inform immediate changes to the Comprehensive Education Plan priorities and actions.

The school leaders are proactive in dealing with any variation in the implementation of new policies as teachers develop at different rates. For example, training has been targeted to ensure that school's policy on grading students' work includes specific feedback to inform students' next stages in learning.

Some teachers effectively formulate their own assessments against learning objectives. Coaching and 'turnkey' strategies for sharing good practice are beginning to impact on whole-school development of teachers' assessment. However, not all teachers know when to modify and differentiate lesson plans to meet the varied academic needs of their students and adjust groupings of students based on informed assessments. The outcome of students' academic performance does not consistently lead to students being set personal goals to pace their learning at appropriate rates comparable to their abilities. The school leaders have increased calibration of students' work and use of generic rubrics. This has made an impact and improved teachers' assessment and planning. These actions are yet to address the need to adjust the Comprehensive Education Plan priorities and goals according to changes taking place in students' learning.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Floyd Bennett Primary School (PS 203)	∅	✓	+
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 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. 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
1.5 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 each successive phase of goal setting and improvement planning, and each successive phase is characterized by agile and flexible realignment of practices and resources to improve students' academic outcomes.		X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 5		X	