



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Joseph F. Lamb School

Public/Middle School 206

**2200 Gravesend Neck Road
Brooklyn
NY 11229**

Principal: Gemma Carletto

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Reviewer: Cheryl Baker

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Joseph F. Lamb School, (Public/Middle School 206) is a pre-kindergarten through grade 8 school with a population of 1237. White students form the largest single group with 37.2% of the population; 8.8% are Hispanic, 5.8% Black and Asians and others make up 47.6%. Fifteen percent are classified as English language learners and just over 6% are special education students. About 70% students are Title 1 eligible, slightly above similar schools but below the New York City average. Attendance is much higher than other schools in New York City at 95.5%.

Grades pre-kindergarten through 5 comprise a zoned neighborhood elementary school while the grades 6 to 8 are configured as a magnet middle school. Students are admitted through an application process and reflect the diversity of the region.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- It fosters an environment that communicates and supports high academic achievement for all students.
- The principal and cabinet provide strong leadership for high quality teaching.
- Staff use data to identify needs, formulate action plans and measure success.
- Displays of students' academic and artistic work recognize excellence through the use of common rubrics.
- The administration holds teachers accountable for aligning their instruction to State standards.
- The school fosters the incorporation of instructional technology across the grades.
- There is a safe, supportive school culture in which students and parents feel respected and valued as individuals.
- Regular attendance is encouraged and rewarded.
- Specialized programs and interventions address the broad spectrum of students' learning needs.

What the school needs to improve

- Provide further professional development and coaching to support the implementation of Everyday Math and Impact Math.
- Develop teachers' use of data as a basis for effective differentiation of instruction.
- Integrate hardware, software and on-line data bases in order to support data-driven instruction.
- Improve mechanisms for supporting increased demands on teachers to learn new instructional techniques.
- Further incorporate new technologies into instruction.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well-developed school.

The principal sets high expectations for continued academic achievement. The school's record of high performance and its reputation for meeting the needs of all of its students attracts teachers, parents and students.

Students at Joseph F. Lamb School have shown continuous growth in English language arts and mathematics scores over the past three years. Results in 2006 indicate that nearly 84% of students in grades 3 through 8 scored in level 3 or 4 of the New York State English language arts examination. In mathematics over 85% of the students in grades 3 through 8 scored at levels 3 or 4. The school consistently meets its adequate yearly progress targets, has the highest attendance rate in region 6 and employs a fully licensed, permanently assigned staff.

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 and its teachers routinely collect data to inform their daily understanding of students' progress. The school uses multiple sources of information to monitor student progress: State and City test results, interim assessments and the Grow Report. Teachers gather data from student journals and portfolios, classroom test results, running records, teacher observations, grade conferences and class section sheets. Hallway displays of student work, with teacher comments and grading rubrics, serve as very public displays of the high standards that are expected in the school.

Comparisons of progress with the region, similar schools and the City are routine. The school is proud of its status as a high performing school. A slight decline in performance at a grade level sparks immediate analysis of performance by teacher and student. Annual student performance is tracked and analyzed with respect to the success of special programs and interventions.

The school gathers information about its English language learners through home language surveys. Staff test students to determine their language proficiency and then they craft individualized programs to assist students' progress. The schools' success in meeting the needs of these students is demonstrated by the recent New York State test scores indicating that 36% of PS/MS 206 test takers attained English proficiency, significantly higher than the City average of approximately 10%. Special education students are assessed according to their identified needs and receive individual education plans. The percentage of special education students scoring at levels 3 and 4 on the 2005 State tests (37% in English and 60% in mathematics) exceeded that of similar schools by

19 and 40 percentage points, respectively. While the schools' student population represents a number of ethnic groups, data is not routinely analyzed along these lines.

The school uses a wide range of information, test results and anecdotal data to identify students whose achievement or behavior require academic intervention services or an alternate placement, such as a gifted or special education 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 well developed.

School leadership team members analyze data such as test scores, attendance records, incident reports and survey results to identify goals for school improvement. These goals, with concrete success targets and timelines, are set out in the Comprehensive Education Plan which drives the school's annual improvement efforts. The principal and the assistant principals also develop annual goals that include percentage targets for improving student test scores. These goals are communicated to teachers whose instruction is focused on accelerating learning for each student.

Students who are identified for interventions receive swift and targeted attention. This covers learning difficulties, English language learners, attendance or behavior problems, emotional issues, or needs for greater academic challenge. Individual plans and services are developed and monitored through programs for special education, English language learners, and academic interventions. The school provides extra help to general education students through extended day and after school programs. Approximately half of the students attend these supplementary programs even though over 80% score at level 3 or 4 on State tests.

Administrators and teachers are vigilant with respect to the daily progress of their students. They quickly identify needs, bring parents into the planning process and apply remedies successfully.

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instruction: The school aligns its instructional activity and resources, and student engagement around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.

This area of the school's work is well developed.

The school's curriculum and instruction are aligned with the State standards and teachers' lessons show evidence of their understanding of the strands that are to be addressed at each grade level. The school's English language arts program incorporates the elements of balanced literacy. The mathematics program is moving to Everyday Math at the elementary level and Impact Math in grades 6 to 8. Teachers have begun to receive training in implementing these programs, and the school has rightly identified the need to plan further professional learning. Teachers have developed pacing guides for science and social studies curricula across the grades. Students in specialized programs (special education, English language learners, gifted) receive instruction that is informed by the State standards but is appropriately tailored to their needs.

The school provides a rich array of resources for teaching and learning, including instructional technology. Texts and materials for students and teachers are plentiful and current. Staffing decisions are based on keeping class sizes small so that teachers are able to meet the needs of every student. Instructional time is extended for three days each week to meet the needs of those students who benefit from extra help. The middle school schedule includes varying class lengths to accommodate the many interdisciplinary projects that characterize the curriculum at that level. Classroom instruction provides a variety of engaging learning experiences for students. Teachers monitor each student's progress by collecting a wide range of data. Students report that they feel respected and known by their teachers, assistant principals and the principal.

Students like their school and attendance is routinely above 95%. The school contacts the home after two absences and includes absenteeism in its promotional criteria, even for students whose academic performance is acceptable.

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 well developed.

The principal is recognized and respected as the instructional leader of the school. She has the capacity to continue to move the school forward in collaboration with her fellow administrators, teachers, parents and support services. The school is well organized and runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis.

Teachers want to come to work at the school and many continue to work there even after moving a great distance away. The principal selects staff based primarily on their content preparation, their teaching skills and their ability to relate to children as demonstrated by the sample lesson they are required to teach. Less important is their capacity to use data.

The principal and assistant principals visit classrooms approximately three times per week, or more. They offer suggestions to teachers with respect to instructional strategies or ask for updates on the progress of individual students. While teachers report sharing instructional strategies informally, they do not currently have access to a more formalized inter-visitation program to help them learn different teaching techniques. This is especially related to the new mathematics programs, more differentiated instruction and the incorporation of new technologies.

Until the 2006-2007 school year, formal professional development was provided on topics such as Everyday Math, Impact Math, differentiated instruction, data analysis, smartboards, balanced literacy, and inclusion. The school employs specialists to help teachers to develop new strategies in literacy, mathematics and academic support. However, it has not given sufficient thought to devising mechanisms to further support teachers in their professional growth and provide time for their learning.

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.

Staff meet formally and informally to track students' progress, analyze the success of planned actions and interventions and make necessary modifications.

A wide range of data sources are use to measure incremental progress. When the City-wide tests were aligned with the Everyday Math and Impact Math programs, teachers adjusted instruction so that students' scores would accurately reflect their competencies. Then the school decided to implement these programs which had been mandated in other less successful schools.

The school is quick to identify weaknesses and adjust practices for individual students. For instance, when an English language learner continued not to make sufficient progress, his reading skills were tested and he was given support through the Wilson reading program, resulting in dramatic improvement. Another student whose failure in mathematics has caused him to be held back for two years is now being instructed through an interactive on-line program and testing records are beginning to show progress.

Joseph F. Lamb is a school that shows consistent growth. The combination of high measurable goals and relentless attention to the details of each student's learning characterize the culture of this school and its dedication to academic excellence.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Joseph F. Lamb School (PS/MS 206)	∅	✓	+
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.	Ø	✓	+
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.	Ø	✓	+
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.	Ø	✓	+
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