



# **The New York City Department of Education**



# **Quality Review Report**

**Lady Deborah Moody School**

**Public School 212**

**87 Bay 49<sup>th</sup> Street  
Brooklyn  
NY 11214**

**Principal: Josephine Marsella**

**Dates of review: December 11 – 12, 2006**

**Reviewer: Bruce Berry**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

The Lady Deborah Moody School is an elementary school with 574 students, from kindergarten through grade 5. The school is very diverse with 30% Hispanic, 26% Asian, 25% White and 20% Black students. Twelve percent of the students are identified as English language learners and 10% are identified as special education students.

There were 100% Title 1 eligible students in 2006, higher than that for similar schools and City schools. Approximately 10% of students live with foster parents. The attendance rate is 92.9%, which matches the average for similar and City-wide schools.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal provides high quality strategic leadership which is focused on raising student achievement.
- The school leadership team and instructional team have created a culture of continuous improvement throughout the school.
- The school uses data extremely effectively for tracking student progress, setting goals and differentiating instructional practice.
- The school is highly effective in meeting the needs of special education students and English language learners.
- Team structures ensure good communication and consistency in planning, instruction, assessment and goal setting across the school.
- Teachers work very well to create a vibrant instructional environment which fully engages students.
- The school is a well-ordered community, with a very caring family ethos.
- The broad curriculum is enriched by the coordinated creative arts program.
- The partnership between the school and the parents is very strong and parents are very supportive of the school.
- Students enjoy school and show great respect for one another and for the staff of the school.

### What the school needs to improve

- Research ways of bridging the gap between the different achievement levels of the ethnic groups in the school.
- Introduce the planned Foundations program for general education students in order to further accelerate literacy skills development

## Part 3: Main findings

### Overall Evaluation

#### **This is a well-developed school.**

This elementary school provides an excellent education and social environment for its students. It is a school where students enjoy learning and where the staff are caring and dedicated. The principal sets the tone of high expectations and has developed team structures to ensure high quality communication and collaboration. Teachers use data and set goals consistently well to provide a good education for students of all ability levels and with particular needs, such as English language learners. Teacher assessment and goal setting are combined effectively with the test outcomes to inform instructional practice and intervention strategies for each student.

The school caters extremely well to special education students and English language learners. The gifted and talented program also provides the necessary pace and challenge for high achieving students. The creative arts program provides enrichment and an invaluable cultural experience in the lives of the students.

The leadership team, instructional team and teachers work together as a harmonious group in creating a school where students enjoy learning and make good progress as they move through the school. Parents are partners in the education of their children and the school reaches out to the parents, with adult literacy, curriculum awareness and social awareness raising workshops.

### 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 is extremely effective in collecting and using data at all levels to track student progress. The school has adopted the 'Monitoring for Success' program which uses regularly updated data to keep the progress of students at all levels under constant review. The program is used effectively by teachers and leadership to track educational progress at individual student, class and grade level. Intervention strategies are initiated for students in the 'at risk' and 'should make it' categories.

The support for special education students is highly effective. Teachers regularly assess student progress in respect of goals in individualized education plans and are supported by the pupil personnel team who meet regularly to review the progress of individual students. The school has after-school programs to give extra support in achieving the planned goals. Academic intervention services are used to target other students with identified needs.

The assessment, goal setting, support and teaching for English language learners are very effective in meeting the needs of the students. English language learners are integrated into general education classes and are well supported by two specialist teachers. The

specialist language teachers have produced language development strategies to assist classroom teachers in supporting English language learners.

The achievement of Black and Hispanic students and, to a lesser extent, of White students in the 2005 State tests was well below that of Asian students in English language arts and mathematics. The school acknowledges the differences and has analyzed the impact that the number of special needs students and English language learners within each ethnic group had on the results. The school plans to research the impact of different learning styles on the achievement of the different ethnic groups in order to bridge the gap.

The school has a gifted and talented program which accelerates progress for identified students. These students are sufficiently challenged with work which is differentiated to raise their achievement at a pace appropriate to their abilities and interests.

With the level of need within the school population and in the community the school serves, the school has performed well in the State tests over the past few years and is always seeking ways to use data to improve performance of the school as a whole and for particular groups or cohorts.

**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.**

Assessment and goal setting are well developed in the school and drive activities for all members of the school in their efforts to raise achievement for all students. Teachers set short-term goals within their teaching. Individual or group interventions are used when needed to ensure that goals are met. The leadership team and the grade teachers set longer-term goals for each student and track progress through regular assessments. The leadership team tracks each student’s progress through the Monitoring for Success program. A range of intervention strategies, within and beyond the school day, are used for students identified as ‘at risk’ or needing additional support to reach the standard.

There is consistent assessment and goal setting practice at class, grade and whole school levels. Monitoring takes place at grade level, with regular meetings of the teachers in each grade, together with a grade leader, to evaluate progress and decide on intervention strategies. The instructional team regularly collects and analyzes data and maintains an overview of progress being made across the school, at grade, class and individual student level.

Students identified as being in greatest need of improvement have individual intervention strategies designed to meet their needs. Interventions available include individual or group work at class level, academic intervention services, after school programs and individualized education programs. The pupil personnel team meets regularly with individual teachers to discuss students causing concern.

The teachers have very high expectations of the students, which were confirmed, during the review, by both students and parents. The parent/teacher conferences provide an opportunity for parents to discuss their child’s progress, but parents can arrange a meeting with the class teacher at any time and teachers contact parents if necessary. Parents

have a useful orientation day when the teacher goes through the curriculum the students will be covering in the year ahead.

**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 is aligned with the mandated curriculum. All curriculum areas generate progress data which is aligned with the school’s assessment policy and procedures. The data is analyzed in respect of the progress made at individual student, class, grade and whole school level against the goals established in the Monitoring for Success program. The school has successfully used the Wilson program to improve achievement of special education students and is planning to introduce the ‘Foundations’ program to have a similar impact with respect to the acceleration of literacy skills’ development for general education students. The curriculum is enriched by the school’s distinctive arts program, including fine arts, dramatic theater, choral and instrumental music, which enriches and broadens student experiences.

There is a vibrant instructional environment in classrooms which fully engages students, who are enthusiastic learners. Teachers regularly meet at grade level to plan and design curriculum activities to meet the needs of the students and effectively differentiate instruction within their classes.

Budgetary decision making is informed by the needs of students as identified by the continuous analysis of data across the school. Resources are targeted towards areas of identified need and towards enhancing opportunities so students can experience a broad range of curriculum activities. Staffing and scheduling decisions are driven by the needs of students as identified through the school’s excellent assessment and data tracking system.

The school has a very caring family ethos. Staff and students show great respect for one another and students’ academic and social needs are fully catered to by the school. Students stated that their teachers, and the principal, were always helpful, supportive and caring. Parents confirmed their own satisfaction at the very caring environment the school provides for their children. Student attendance is consistently high and attendance monitoring is used to trigger intervention when attendance issues are identified.

**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 procedures for the selection of teachers are very thorough and focus on teaching, learning, data analysis and student management skills. New teachers are supported by a mentor and the school coaches during their induction period.

Professional development is a very strong feature in the school. Development is driven by the analysis of data and is targeted toward the identified areas in need of improvement. Professional development opportunities include individual coaching, in-school and offsite

training. Teachers complete an assessment survey of their personal development needs at the start of each year, which is used, together with other information and whole school goals, to formulate the program for the year.

The principal observes classes both formally and informally. Follow-up sessions are planned on any areas identified for improvement resulting from the observations. Teachers are given the opportunity to observe good instructional practice in other schools and observe one another's teaching practice.

The school has a very strong and well-coordinated team structure which aids planning and communication across the school. Grade teams reflect upon and evaluate curriculum activities, analyze assessment outcomes, and plan instructional activities to further improve student achievement. There are also teacher meetings as students move to the next grade, when discussion of students' portfolios ensures continuity is maintained.

The principal has, in four years, gained the respect of students, teachers and parents alike, has successfully created an ethos of continuous school improvement and has the capacity to effect change in order to bring about further improvement. The parents described the principal as a 'bundle of energy', extremely hard working and dedicated to the students and the teachers, with students describing her as very caring. The school's well-established systems ensure smooth day-to-day organization.

The services within school fully support student development. The pupil personnel team review student progress against academic goals and liaise with parents and external agencies in providing the level of support necessary to improve the achievement and social well-being of individual students.

**Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has built-in structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year, recognizing weaknesses in its improvement plans and teaching practices, and flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerated learning.**

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

The principal's strategic leadership of the school is very strong. The objectives in the school's Comprehensive Education Plan are clear, measurable and highly relevant for the ongoing development of the school. The teachers play a part in writing the plan and are central to the delivery of the key objectives.

The instructional team has overall responsibility for monitoring and evaluating progress against the key objectives and regularly tracks progress against the plan's interim goals in order to reassign staff and resources, realign the curriculum or initiate additional training of staff. The school also analyzes all available data to check on progress at school, grade or classroom level in each tested content area. Ongoing meetings, throughout the year, ensure that teachers understand the part they have to play in meeting the school's goals and their competence in using data enables them to contribute to decision making.

The school's assessment and goal setting procedures are well established across the school. Analysis of data and comparisons of student performance takes place at all levels. Classroom teachers continuously review student progress, as do grade teams and the leadership team. The tracking of the progress of individual students is rigorous and is not only linked to the standards but also to the individual student's potential.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: Lady Deborah Moody School (PS 212)</b>	∅	✓	+
<b>Quality Score</b>			<b>X</b>

<b>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.</b>	∅	✓	+
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"> <li>each student, classroom, grade level,</li> </ul>			<b>X</b>
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"> <li>ethnic groups, English language learners, special education students*</li> </ul>		<b>X</b>	
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"> <li>all other categories of interest to the school*</li> </ul>			<b>X</b>
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.			<b>X</b>
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>			<b>X</b>

\* 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.

<b>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.</b>	∅	✓	+
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.			<b>X</b>
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.			<b>X</b>
2.3 Particular attention is given to improving the performance and progress of students in greatest need of improvement.			<b>X</b>
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.			<b>X</b>
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.			<b>X</b>
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>			<b>X</b>

<b>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.</b>	∅	✓	+
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
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>			X
<b>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.</b>	∅	✓	+
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
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>			X
<b>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.</b>	∅	✓	+
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
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>			X