



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Toussaint L'Ouverture School

Public School 221

**791 Empire Boulevard
Brooklyn
NY 11213**

Principal: Clara Moodie-Kirkland

Dates of review: October 3 – 4, 2006

Reviewer: Alan Boyle

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

P.S. 221 is an elementary school with 655 students in grades pre-kindergarten through 5. 95% of students are Black, just under 3% are Hispanic and just over 2% are White. The student body is becoming more diverse with recent immigrants from Russia, Poland and the former Yugoslavia. Thirty eight students are classified as English language learners and 3% are special education students. Last school year, 72% of students were Title 1 eligible; this is in line with the City average. Student attendance was 92.2% in 2005, compared with the City average of 92.8%.

The number of students enrolled has been falling each year, for several years. This makes budget planning more difficult for the principal.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Using data from students' achievement and test scores to set specific improvement targets across grade levels and in different subjects.
- One to one meetings between classroom teachers and members of the administration to monitor progress of individual students in each class.
- Detailed curriculum mapping and pacing calendar prepared by the professional development team, with associated resources.
- Combining information from students' attainment data with lesson observations and teachers' own identified needs to plan and provide effective, school-based, professional learning.
- Activities to engage parents and draw them into the school; successful partnerships with parents that are focused on students' achievement.
- Effective partnerships with a wide range of community support services to enrich students' learning and raise standards.
- Use of rewards and efforts to 'catch students doing something good' which modifies students' behavior and helps them to gain independence and have pride in themselves.
- Commitment and collaboration of whole staff; they work above and beyond the call of duty for students' benefit.
- Calm, purposeful leadership of the principal and her determination to support student achievements.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that all classroom teachers have support to enable them to analyze student achievement data so that they can use it more effectively to differentiate instruction according to students' prior achievement.
- Assist classroom teachers to aggregate their learning objectives for individual students into improvement targets for the whole class so that they can feed through to school targets across each grade in the comprehensive education plan.
- Ensure sufficient time is provided to enable class teachers and administrators to meet to discuss student progress.
- Explore ways of accessing test information more rapidly so that it can better inform the school target setting process.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school with some well developed features.

P.S. 221 is a school where students arrive happily and leave reluctantly. Staff are clearly focused on raising standards. A wide range of data about students' achievements is collected and analyzed by the school. The school leadership team sets challenging targets for performance in City tests. Additional support is provided for those students who do not keep up with the pace of learning. The curriculum is carefully planned and additional resources have recently been purchased by the school to help teachers stretch every student. Students' progress is carefully monitored by administration and classroom teachers. Information from this and from lesson observations is used to plan and provide professional development in the school. This is well-developed and one of the school's many strengths.

Other strengths include the use of rewards and efforts to 'catch students doing something good'. This modifies students' behavior and helps them to gain self-confidence and be proud of themselves. The whole staff has a serious commitment to the school, above and beyond the call of duty. They do everything possible to support and help the students. The principal sets an example with her calm leadership. Her determination to succeed unites the school with a common purpose.

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 is data rich. It collects a wide range of information about students' achievements by using different commercial source materials. Teachers add their own assessments from running records and other internal assessments. This data is then put onto charts to plot the progress of each student, class and grade. The charts provide a clear understanding of the progress of individual students and also of different groups of students, such as English language learners, across the school. The principal uses these charts to check the progress of groups, classes and whole grades.

Strength in this area is the ability of the principal and the school's professional development team to assemble and make use of this data. The time lag between City tests and the publication of itemized results restricts the formative use of this test data. Consequently, the school must rely more on its own data to drive instruction. The quantity and complexity of all this information means that classroom teachers are not yet confident to fully analyze student achievement. Because they do not fully understand what the data can tell them, they are not yet using it effectively to differentiate instruction according to students' prior attainments.

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.

Collaboration is effective in this school; it is focused on student achievement. The school leadership team meets each month through the year. The cycle of meetings goes from planning the Comprehensive Education Plan, to monitoring, and evaluation. At the planning stage, the team uses data from students’ achievements and test scores to set specific improvement targets in terms of percentages of students moving up levels across each grade and in different subjects. These progress targets and timelines are monitored over the year and evaluated when the results are published. Delay in publication of test scores hinders this evaluation. The process would be improved if these grade level targets were drawn from targets set by each class teacher, combining their own assessments of students with high expectations.

The school already has an effective system to improve the progress of students who require additional support. The student staff support team meets to review the progress of individual students across the school and to match their needs to the different interventions. Effective support is available in the school and also from community-based organizations. The team represents the interests of all members in the school community, including the parent coordinator who organizes the voluntary learning leaders in the school.

The principal effectively conveys the school’s high expectations to the parents of all students. She has a deep understanding of the issues that some students face outside school and she works hard with the parents to do the best for their children.

Quality Statement 3 – Build and Align Capacity: 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 detailed curriculum mapping and pacing calendar prepared by the professional development team is a significant strength. These well-developed plans enable the school to generate the data needed to drive instruction. As indicated already, teachers need more support to enable them to analyze this data in order to make most effective use of it.

Budget decisions over the last four years have been focused on these plans and the school has invested wisely in a wide range of resources that support the curriculum plans and provide teachers with materials to help students make progress. Many new resources, for example in mathematics, have great student appeal and teachers use them effectively to engage students as active learners in the classroom.

Students like school and attendance rates are good. Appropriate systems are in place to follow-up any student absences. The principal and her assistant principals have a detailed knowledge about the personal needs of many students, as well as their academic needs. All teachers show respect for the students and this is reciprocated. Each student knows that everyone in the school is concerned about them and they trust all adults in the school.

The principal works within the constraints of her budget to deploy staff effectively, according to the students' identified needs. There is a low turnover of staff and this provides students with consistency and stability in the school. It also means that the school benefits from the considerable professional expertise it is accumulating.

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.

All staff in the school demonstrate a strong commitment to student progress and they willingly give up their own time for the school. The professional development team was selected partly on their capacity to use data to compare progress of different groups of students within PS 221 and between other similar schools.

The way that the school reaches decisions about professional development is well-developed. The process combines information from students' attainment data with lesson observations and teachers' own identified needs. The principal and the professional development team plan and provide effective, school-based, professional learning. This is evaluated by ongoing data collection.

The principal and assistant principals make frequent formal and informal lesson observations. They are focused on students' progress and provide information for meaningful one-to-one discussions with classroom teachers about what support is needed to accelerate students' learning. Support is readily available in school and the collaborative approach fostered by the school encourages the sharing of good practice. Grade teams meet to jointly plan and evaluate their work.

The principal is well respected by the whole school community. Her calm and purposeful leadership engages everyone: staff, students and parents, with a clear focus on high expectations for student progress. Her respect for others' opinions combined with her deep professional determination provides the school with well-developed capacity to implement change.

The school runs very smoothly even when it has more than its fair share of incidents. There are clear procedures that are followed by all staff. The school provides a calm and safe learning environment for students. The school works hard to develop links with community-based organizations. Students' learning is enriched by the wide variety of activities available after school. They are all focused on student achievement.

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.

Monthly meetings of the school leadership team provide an appropriate structure to monitor and review progress with the school's comprehensive education plan. Targets set for the City tests are reviewed when the itemized scores are received and analyzed by the

school. While the target setting process is helpful to drive instruction in the school, a nine month delay in receiving the results means that the school must set targets for the following year before it can evaluate its performance in the previous year.

The school relies on more useful data that it collects itself to analyze students' progress across classrooms and grades. This is frequently reviewed by the principal and other leaders in the school to evaluate the success of different intervention strategies. The school adjusts or modifies its plans based on student attainment data gathered in the one to one meetings between classroom teachers and members of the administration, to monitor progress of individual students in each class. Finding time for these meetings is sometimes difficult but the school continues to give them high priority.

Information is also gathered by other staff working in the school, providing various forms of intervention and support for special education students or for students classified as English language learners. The regular assessments and measures of progress help the school to evaluate its work.

Meetings of the Staff Student Support Team draw all this information together and discuss how best to realign the resources to improve student progress. This works well and has a direct impact on students' learning.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME Toussaint L'Ouverture School (PS 221)	∅	✓	+
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	