



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Edward B. Shallow

Intermediate School 227

**6500 16th Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11204**

Principal: Brenda D. Champion

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Reviewer: Clive Parsons

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Edward B. Shallow Intermediate School is located in the Bensonhurst area of Brooklyn. It serves nearly 1350 students across grades 6 through 8. It is the only barrier free middle school in the area and so provides learning for physically challenged students. The proportion of English language learners, at 21%, is higher than in similar schools and almost twice as high as in schools across the City. The number of special education students, 119, is less than in similar schools, but about the same as in schools across the City. A significantly higher proportion of special education students are taught in a less restrictive environment, however. Approximately 3% of students are Black, 30% are Hispanic, 40% are Asian or Pacific Islander and 27% are White. A much higher proportion of students than in other schools have arrived into the country recently. Many of these students were born in China, with others born in Poland and Pakistan. Attendance, at around 93%, is higher than in other schools and student mobility is lower. The school receives Title 1 funding. Student suspensions are significantly higher than in other schools.

The school divided into 3 academies in 1997. The academies are: The School of the American Experience, The Renaissance Project and The School of Environmental Studies. Each academy has a guidance counselor, dean and assistant principal. A fourth assistant principal has responsibility for special education students and English language learners and testing procedures.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal is driven by the goal of effectively meeting the needs of all students so as to maximize their achievements.
- Academic intervention is well managed so that the school has good systems to diagnose specific barriers to learning for individual students and increasingly effective procedures for overcoming them.
- There is some very effective support provided to individual and small groups of students.
- The school achieves above average attendance because it is afforded a high priority and is well managed.
- Resources are being well targeted to support the changes being implemented to improve the students' outcomes.
- The school provides a calm and orderly learning environment.
- Some instruction engages the students very well so that they are keen to be involved and enjoy their learning.
- Roles and responsibilities have been streamlined effectively to ensure that the impact for students is maximized.
- The school's coaches are supporting curriculum and classroom changes well.
- The principal knows the school's needs well as a result of rigorous and candid evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that all staff consistently demonstrate respect for individual students so that they respond to the students' personal needs in the most effective way.
- Improve the management and support for special education students and English language learners.
- Ensure that the vision, plans and goals established to improve student performance drive all members of the school community.
- Ensure that all lessons have explicit learning expectations, with data being used effectively to differentiate the support and challenge provided to students.
- Ensure that instruction engages every student more effectively and provides greater opportunities for students to work cooperatively in pairs and in small groups.
- Ensure that all staff reinforce and complement the actions of others so that the procedures and expectations established by the principal are met consistently by all.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is an undeveloped school, with proficient features.

The principal has initiated a number of significant changes since her arrival. These have focused upon ensuring that the needs of students are met more effectively, so that the levels they achieve are raised further. This has included changes to the roles and responsibilities of some staff, as well as changes to systems and instructional practice. Most staff recognize the necessity for these changes and the improvements that they are intended to produce. Some staff would like to feel more involvement and be able to take greater ownership of how the changes are being implemented. Some staff, however, are currently finding it difficult to fully embrace the direction in which the school is moving and the vision for improvement being developed by the principal.

This report recognizes many examples of proficient and effective practice. It also highlights that significant aspects of the school's work suffer from a lack of consistency in their implementation. This lack of consistency is especially applicable to the experiences of students, both within classrooms and around the school in general.

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 undeveloped with proficient features.

City and State test data is analyzed appropriately, with a focus on the performance of key groups, such as ethnic groups, English language learners and special education students. The principal also compares this performance with the school's prior history, as well as with that of other local schools. The school then uses a mixture of formal and informal assessments to provide an ongoing picture of the performance of individual students. The school coaches work with individual and groups of teachers and this is helping to bring a consistency to the assessments being made. The principal has been able to provide occasions for teachers to meet, so that they can plan and review together. This is also enabling greater congruence between those teachers who have taken advantage of the opportunity. The principal is looking to provide this time within all the teachers' schedules for next year.

Diagnostic tests are used to identify specific barriers to the progress of those students performing at the lower levels. Targeted interventions are then used effectively to overcome the difficulties identified. The progress and performance of these students are monitored well. The school is also concerned to review the progress of those students close to the level 3 boundary. Individual student data is not aggregated sufficiently, however, to provide a constantly updated picture of the current performance of key groups. The school is therefore not able to compare and contrast the progress of groups of students, within and across academies for example. It also means that evaluating the impact of actions and strategies is not always sufficiently timely and specific.

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.

There is a good focus on supporting and developing those students most at need of improvement and academic intervention is well managed. The school has good systems for diagnosing the specific barriers to learning for individual students. The range of strategies and programs available to overcome the difficulties identified is being increased and the support provided to individual and small groups of students is effective. Their performance and progress is then carefully monitored and tracked, so that changes to programs are made as found necessary. Good use is made of technology to support academic intervention. The management and support for English language learners and especially special education students is significantly less effective, however. Too much time is spent reacting and responding to incidents and issues, so that too little time is used for strategic planning and evaluation to ensure that fewer difficulties arise in the first place.

The expected range of people has been involved in developing the school’s Comprehensive Education Plan. An appropriate use is made of the data available to establish goals for the continued development and improvement of the school. Some of these goals have success indicators or objectives which are easily measurable. Not all members of the school community have yet found it possible to participate fully in a collaborative process to first establish the goals and to then use them to drive their work and actions. The principal has high expectations of staff and students alike, which are clear and communicated to all. She is driven by the goal of effectively meeting the needs of all students so as to maximize their achievements. She is also concerned to increase the number of families who are directly involved in the life of the school and in supporting their child’s progress. The principal has brought about a number of new initiatives to support this, including regular parent / principal meetings to identify and address any concerns. The school’s coaches also provide workshops for parents to help them understand aspects of the school’s 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 undeveloped with proficient features.

Each of the three academies offers the same core curriculum to its students, but supplements this with experiences reflecting their particular nature. The school is Title 1 funded, currently implementing a school-wide project program. It is adopting the workshop model and a balanced literacy approach to instruction. Writing portfolios are being developed to provide evidence of each student’s performance and progress. Budgeting, including resource, staffing and scheduling decisions are appropriately based on the school’s plans and development priorities. This is enabling successful implementation, as well as encouraging staff to take responsibility and to try new ideas and strategies.

The teachers are held accountable for improving the quality of their instruction and for student outcomes. Walkthroughs provide the principal with evidence of the impact of current initiatives and the degree of consistency being developed. This evidence

supplements that provided by more formal observation. Teachers do not consistently plan for specific and measurable objectives. Instruction is not always sufficiently informed by current data. Pupil groupings, as well as the support and challenge provided to individual students, are consequently insufficiently differentiated. Some instruction engages the students very well so that they are keen to be involved and enjoy their learning. Opportunities are too frequently missed, however, to engage every student effectively and to provide opportunities for the students to work cooperatively in pairs and in small groups.

Attendance is well above that achieved in similar schools. This is because attendance is afforded a high priority, with immediate intervention provided when required. The portfolios of students receiving academic intervention include specific attendance plans, underlining the importance the school places on the connection between being in school and making secure progress. Students confirm that there is an adult in school to whom they would turn should the need arise and relationships are mostly good. There remain instances, however, where staff do not respond to students in the most appropriate manner. Consequently not all teachers are consistently demonstrating respect for individual students in order to meet their personal needs in the most effective way.

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 undeveloped with proficient features.

Care is taken when selecting new staff to appoint those with a potential to increase the expertise and effectiveness of the team. The principal has also taken care to streamline and focus existing roles and responsibilities across the school team. This is helping to improve the effectiveness of the team and to ensure that the impact for students is maximized. Professional development is aligned with the needs identified and the improvements that are planned. The school's coaches are increasingly active in classrooms and support this work well. The principal and assistant principals observe teachers, with feedback from learning walks helping to inform their practice. Some teachers take the opportunity to observe their peers in action, but this is limited. Again, the opportunities provided to meet in teams are not consistently taken. There is insufficient candid self and peer evaluation targeted at improving instruction so as to improve student outcomes.

The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis and a calm and orderly learning environment is achieved. The school explains the high suspension level as the result of a zero tolerance policy. Procedures and expectations are clear and generally followed, but not by all. Not all staff consistently reinforce the actions of their colleagues so students do not experience a uniform implementation of systems and rules to help them to conform with expectations. The principal has a good capacity to effect the changes planned and has gained the support of most of the school community to do so. They recognize the necessity of the changes and the potential for them to improve the students' outcomes. Some staff, however, have found it difficult to embrace fully some of the developments taking place. The school has established effective partnerships and collaborations with several community-based organizations, although the principal has recognized the potential of strengthening and broadening these links.

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 with proficient features.

The principal knows the school's needs well. This is the result of her rigorous and candid evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses. The principal's assessments and evaluations are driving the school's improvement planning, together with her passion for wanting the best outcomes for all students. Planning, such as the school's Comprehensive Educational Plan, are based on the data available and contain clear and measurable goals. Appropriate structures are in place to review the progress being made and to ascertain whether the school is on track to achieve its goals. Nevertheless, these interim evaluations are not always informed fully by comparisons of student progress, between classrooms and academies for example. Consequently revisions to plans are not always sufficiently timely. More generally, however, as plans are evaluated and revised the principal is careful to ensure that practices and resources are realigned to meet the modified intentions.

Lessons are not always planned on the basis of specific and measurable student outcomes. As a result, teachers are not consistently able to determine the progress being made by students as the lesson or sequence of lessons progresses. Consequently the refocusing and differentiation of the support and challenge provided to individual and groups of students are not always sufficiently timely.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Edward B Shallow (IS 227)	∅	✓	+
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		