



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Andries Hudde School

Intermediate School 240

**2500 Nostrand Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11210**

Principal: Elena O'Sullivan

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Reviewer: Peter Lewis

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Andries Hudde School is a middle school with just over 1700 students in grades 6 through 8. The number of students has declined over the last three years. Nearly 75% of students are Black, a percentage that is higher than both similar and City schools. The proportions of Asian, White and Hispanic students are broadly equal. A high proportion of students enter the school with low levels of achievement in basic literacy and mathematical skills. Nearly 20% are special education students and nearly 15% are English language learners.

The school is not eligible for Title 1 funding. Attendance has been a priority for the school; rates are above those of City and similar schools, and the school has introduced a number of strategies which have been successful in maintaining this.

On her appointment, just under two years ago, the principal was faced with a number of issues that had to be tackled urgently, particularly in relation to student attitude and school safety. Because of this considerable time was spent in establishing a calm, safe and orderly environment in which the school could build a culture of high expectations.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal has, over a very short period of time, introduced changes to the school which have already established a positive climate for learning and which have the potential to secure further improvement.
- Senior leaders are thoroughly professional and committed to their students and to the process of improvement and so provide very good support for the principal.
- In the best instruction, clear agendas and focused lesson planning enable students to make rapid gains in their learning.
- Students are attentive in lessons and, in the best instruction, are eager and focused learners.
- Attendance is monitored closely, appropriate action is taken swiftly and, as a result, is now above average for City schools.
- Students with identified difficulties in their learning make good progress in reaching the targets that are set.
- Parents are pleased with the changes that have been introduced and with the information given them by the school.

What the school needs to improve

- Improve the rate at which students achieve, particularly in mathematics.
- Implement planned strategies to develop students' writing skills further, particularly through science and social studies.
- Ensure that student data is presented in such a way as to indicate the comparative performance of subjects, grades and classes and that this information is used in setting measurable goals for improvement.
- Provide teachers with information that identifies the latest achievement of their students, together with targets for the progress that they are expected to make.
- Ensure that all teachers make good use of data in setting clear objectives for what will be learned in lessons by different groups of students, and in planning challenging and differentiated activities that support these objectives.
- Improve whole-school development planning by using evaluation and accurate interpretation of data to set goals, with named staff made responsible for monitoring progress towards achieving these goals within an annual cycle.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is an undeveloped school.

Although Andries Hudde School is an undeveloped school overall it has taken huge strides in the two years since the principal's appointment.

The principal is well supported by her assistant principals and much has been achieved over a short period of time. The culture of the school is now positive; students are enthusiastic learners and describe improvements in behavior which enable them to focus more on their studies. Staff in leadership positions demonstrate a strong commitment to the school and, led very well by the principal, have been at the forefront of establishing the school's initial plans to improve teaching and learning. Clear action is taken to respond to tardiness or absence, with the result that attendance is good. Leaders have a developing understanding of what the school is doing well and of where improvement is required because of the recently improved use of test and other assessment information. There are indications that the use of this information is achieving success, for example in improvement in the achievement of lower-attaining students, particularly in English language arts. The school knows that it needs to focus more closely on the actions that are required to further improve student achievement, and on its strategies for planning actions and monitoring their effectiveness.

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.

School leaders have a rapidly developing understanding of aspects of students' learning that are successful, and where improvement is required. However, because the school's systems for gathering and interpreting data are only recently introduced, full use has yet to be made of the information. For example, while comparisons of performance are made across grades and, to a lesser extent, across classes, there is little evaluation of patterns of achievement across subjects or by gender. This limits the school's ability to identify where it should adapt its curriculum or strategies for instruction.

The school has rightly concentrated its development on establishing student safety, and on establishing a climate in which learning can take place. In this it has achieved considerable success and the school is now moving toward making full use of the information it has on student performance. Appropriate use is made of test information in monitoring progress, so that the school is able to compare students' progress against past performance and in relation to similar schools. Good systems are in place, including the school's own assessments, to enable the school to plan appropriate support for students who have identified learning difficulties. As a result work is closely focused on their needs and they make rapid gains in relation to regularly reviewed goals.

The school is less successful at identifying average attaining students who might be under-performing. While the school recognizes that there is a need to build teachers' understanding of and confidence in using data, currently these are too varied, limiting the school's ability to respond rapidly to shortfalls in students' learning.

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 undeveloped.

The school now collects a wide range of assessment information that it is beginning to use to inform its planning. However, because these systems have been so recently introduced, the school makes insufficient use of the information available in evaluating student performance, or in using this information to set targets for student achievement.

The principal and assistant principals have very high expectations of their students, and are aware of those areas in which improvement is required. They have made a good start in setting challenging targets, for example, for students who are attaining at the lowest level. Students with learning difficulties are well supported. Expectations are high and teaching and content are pitched at the right level to meet students' needs. Individual education plans identify the small steps needed to ensure progress. Regular meetings involving teachers and support staff ensure a rapid response to emerging issues and the outcomes are reported to parents, ensuring their full involvement.

As yet these strategies have not been applied across the school so that all members of the community are actively involved in securing improvement. The school has begun to provide teachers with the information that would enable them to target instruction according to students' needs, but too much variation remains in the degree to which teachers plan and set work which challenges all students. Because of these features, students and their parents are too often unaware of the level at which they are working or of what they need to do in order to improve or reach the next level. Parents are generally pleased with the level of communication with the school.

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 proficient.

Even though the school's use of data in planning, reviewing and modifying the curriculum and in securing teacher accountability for student achievement is undeveloped, none the less strengths, particularly in budgeting, scheduling and the care of students mean that this aspect is proficient overall.

The school has made a good start in ensuring that the curriculum is planned and modified according to the needs of the students. Scheduling changes have ensured that students spend less of their time in moving from one room to another and this has had a positive impact on teachers' ability to sustain pace and concentration in their lessons. Special education students are well supported through a well focused range of activities, which promote progress in short and accessible steps. In the best instruction teachers

demonstrate a good awareness of their students' abilities and use this well in focusing attention on those students in particular need. Increasingly activities are planned that are relevant to their students' attainment, although the lack of clear objectives for learning limits the impact of this. The school recognizes the need to establish differentiated instruction across the curriculum. Although a good start has been made in this, through focused professional development for example, the school also recognizes that practice remains too inconsistent for teachers to be fully accountable for their students' learning. As yet it is too early to identify particular gains that have accrued to students' learning as a result of these initiatives.

Relationships between students and teachers are very well modeled by the principal and assistant principals and are reflected in the range of interactions between students and adults across the school. The strong emphasis placed by the principal on securing academic success is reflected in the concentration which characterizes the work of the majority of students. Attendance is carefully monitored and the school has a range of well-understood systems in place to monitor attendance rates and to trigger action as appropriate. As a result, attendance has shown a steady improvement, with the overall absent rate being low in comparison with other schools in the City. These strategies promote a very positive attitude to learning among the students. Students describe their enthusiasm in class and the degree to which teachers make learning exciting for them. Teachers know their students well, including those who experience difficulties in their learning, and use this information to create a safe environment.

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 proficient.

The school recognizes the importance of professional development of its staff to its success. Senior managers have successfully established a culture of reflection in which the commitment to secure continued improvement is increasingly shared and has resulted in positive changes over a very short time. Staff deployment has recently been planned to capitalize upon strengths that are identified through monitoring, and recruitment is planned to cover any outstanding needs. Good practice is increasingly shared through peer observation. Strategies for staff development are increasingly focused on identified areas for improvement although weaknesses in the use of comparative data limit the effectiveness of some aspects of this. A good example of this is seen in the range of effectiveness of instruction which the school recognizes remains too broad. Staff development is strengthened through well planned strategies of monitoring, support, and guidance. A good understanding of the quality of instruction is developed through very well structured conferencing, lesson observation and feedback schedules. Learning walks are undertaken by senior leaders and these inform the development work undertaken by coaches. These activities have enabled school leaders not only to identify strengths in teaching and the curriculum, but also to make a good start in reinforcing the analysis of data to evaluate provision and plan for improvement. Because of this the school has considerably improved its ability to identify strengths and areas for development in its curriculum and instruction, and has made a good start in refining plans to secure improvement.

The principal's very high expectations of both staff and students are clearly communicated across the school, and the good range of support that is provided, both through the school's own resources and by external agencies, has had a positive impact on the quality

of teaching across the school. Procedures are clear and well communicated so that the school runs smoothly.

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.

The review confirms the school's evaluation of its performance against this quality standard as undeveloped. However, there are proficient aspects of its practice which demonstrate the school's capacity to secure further improvement.

Student data is increasingly used in establishing whole-school goals and in assessing the degree to which improvement has been secured. The school has accurately identified inconsistencies in the degree to which this information has been used across grades both in identifying areas that require improvement and in modifying goals. Planning for whole-school improvement is comprehensive and includes a wide range of data from tests, other assessments and both formal and informal evaluations of teachers' and students' work. The school has yet to refine this planning to include measurable targets for improvement over an achievable range of priorities and, as a result, has difficulty in measuring its progress towards meeting its objectives. In its present format this planning lacks sufficient detail, particularly in relation to clearly defined "mileposts" against which progress towards the identified goals can be measured, and modification undertaken if necessary.

Since the principal's appointment in 2005 there is clear evidence of improvement in the school's ability to analyze its performance and to plan for improvement. Attendance has remained high. Parents, students and staff point to the success of the school's clear focus upon creating an environment conducive to learning. Time taken in improving the building, relationships and student attitudes meant that initiatives designed to have a direct impact upon student learning necessarily took second place. For example, the school is only now at a point where it can begin to implement previously discussed plans towards modifying the science curriculum to better promote students' skills in reading and writing.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Andries Hudde School (IS 240)	∅	✓	+
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		