



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

**The Nostrand School
Public School 269**

**1957 Nostrand Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11201**

Principal: Phyllis P. Corbin

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Reviewer: Cheryl Baker

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Nostrand School currently serves 538 students in grades 3 through 5. According to the most recent available data, the student population is 89% Black and 8% Hispanic with a few White and Asian students. Thirteen percent are recent immigrants, largely from the Caribbean. Ten percent are English language learners and 10% are special education students. Approximately 87% of students have Title 1 eligibility; this is higher than similar and City-wide schools. The school's attendance and student stability are on par with similar and City schools and the number of reported police department incidents is below that of schools of similar size. Student performance on State and City tests continues to show annual improvement and the school succeeded in overcoming its corrective action status in 2004.

The principal, in her fifth year as the building administrator, has put many programs and practices into place to address the needs of the Nostrand school community. Her efforts and leadership garner enthusiastic support from students, teachers, parents and her administrative staff and were nationally recognized in 2005.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal and her administrative team provide strong, focused leadership for continued school improvement.
- They communicate and enforce clear management procedures that result in a smoothly functioning institution.
- Regular professional development programs result in a smoothly functioning school.
- The school provides regular support and feedback to teachers through routine formal and informal classroom observations.
- Staff select a research-based curriculum that aligns with City and State standards and provides teachers with the support necessary for effective delivery.
- The school supports an array of practices and programs designed to meet the needs of students most at risk of failure and utilizes data to monitor their progress.
- The school capitalizes well on community-based youth development support services to supplement the academic and extracurricular program.
- There are high expectations for attendance and achievement and success is rewarded at the student, classroom and school level.
- Staff know, respect and nurture each student and work effectively to support their academic, social and emotional needs.

What the school needs to improve

- Increase collaboration and data sharing among and between groups such as classrooms and grades to increase accountability for students' progress.
- Use data to more precisely to identify the needs of all students, and to develop concrete plans of action to support their academic growth, assess their progress incrementally, and adjust the plan as they experience success and meet new challenges.
- Continue to build a strong, informed team of leaders with the capacity to effect change in a data-based environment.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well-developed school.

The culture of this school which has emerged under the current leadership is one that exhibits caring and respectful support of all school constituencies. The school is aware of the areas that require further development. There are collaborative efforts to overcome deficits and these continue to move the school on a path of continuous improvement. School leadership fosters an environment in which effective teaching and learning can take place.

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 overall.

In addition to analyzing the results of State and City-wide testing, the school uses an array of data to determine the needs of its students and monitor their progress. In the area of English language arts, the school measures students' entry levels in reading. This information is then used to inform instructional grouping and measures incremental progress in achieving monthly benchmarks. Progress in acquiring reading skills is measured through the use of running records and assessments of fluency and comprehension, as well as the information gleaned from the Grow Report and through student-teacher conferencing. Students' knowledge of mathematics is assessed through entry and end-of unit testing.

The progress of English language learners' acquisition of English is measured through incremental assessments of fluency and through State testing. The progress of special education students is monitored on a daily basis as part of the instructional programs determined by their individual education plans. The school's academic intervention program, designed to address the needs of learners who do not fall under special education management, utilizes a good range of resources to identify needs and monitor progress accurately.

The principal monitors the school's progress with respect to similar and neighboring schools, setting goals for improved academic performance which are communicated to students, teachers and parents. She requires that teachers submit evidence of their students' progress to her on a regular basis. She uses this data to monitor individual students' progress, monitor classroom progress, and to maintain a basis of understanding of each child that can be communicated to parents. The principal has identified that explaining and sharing the existing data among and between classroom teachers and support staff, including cluster and academic intervention services staff, is a goal not yet fully achieved.

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use available data to understand each student’s next learning step. Through collaborative planning and student and parent engagement, they set high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating each student’s learning.

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

School leaders, faculty, and parents collaboratively develop plans aimed at supporting school improvement that include measurable goals and action steps. The school leadership team develops the Comprehensive Education Plan with input from staff, students, and parents. It is reviewed and revised annually in response to student achievement and other significant data or mandates. Similarly, the school safety plan is revised annually.

The principal’s leadership team meets weekly to discuss progress relative to the implementation of curricular and support programs designed to increase student achievement. Academic coaches and support personnel are integral members of this team. This provides an immediate source of data to the principal regarding student progress, teacher effectiveness and professional development needs. The pupil personnel team meets weekly to identify, plan interventions and monitor students at risk of failure. Qualitative and quantitative data are considered when planning next steps for these students.

The parent association and the parent members of the school leadership team play a significant role in assisting the principal in communicating high expectations for students’ academic achievement, attendance and behavior. They produce a newsletter and advocate for increased parent participation in the life of the school. Family mathematics, literacy and science nights have made a significant impact in informing parents about the high expectations that their child’s academic program holds for all students. Parents experience lessons and are supported in interpreting data in the Grow Report so that they can be participants in the progress of their children.

High expectations for students are communicated by the principal at the beginning and end of each school day. They are reminded of the immediate academic goals for their classrooms and are well supported in making sound decisions regarding their personal behavior.

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 well developed.

The curriculum is aligned with the mandated City curriculum and State standards. Everyday Mathematics, Balanced Literacy and Reading First all contain assessment components that provide meaningful interim data regarding student progress. Similarly, the project-based science kits and the school’s focus on data-based questions in social studies provide teachers with information about students’ understanding of the taught curriculum. Teachers are held accountable for implementing the components of the adopted curricula and are assisted in planning and differentiating lessons by the literacy, reading, mathematics and academic intervention coaches, and through grade level collaboration.

The principal and her leadership team make purposeful decisions regarding staffing, scheduling and program development based upon the needs revealed by student data. For instance, in order to provide students with an introduction to high-interest subjects and to broaden their exposure to a broad spectrum of topics, the school supports a range of cluster classes.

Common planning time supports teacher collaboration and professional development, while an academic intervention team provides academic support in the regular classroom. Extracurricular clubs and activities provide challenge and opportunity for children with special talents and interests.

Active engagement is integral to the curricular programs in place in the school and teachers demonstrate a broad range of skills in delivering challenging lessons that exhibit the principles of learning. Students receive encouragement and rewards for good attendance from their teachers and from their principal, and attend school at rates nearing the 94% benchmark.

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 overall well developed.

Staff are carefully selected according to the needs of the school. Professional development is strength in the school. The principal is the acknowledged instructional leader of the school and has a deep understanding of the relationship between developing highly skilled teaching and increased student performance. In collaboration with her leadership team, targeted professional development activities are well promoted to support the delivery of the curriculum and continued efforts to maintain a safe environment for learning. The leadership team, which also functions as the professional development team, uses student data, teacher surveys and information gleaned through classroom observations to determine the focus of training. Recent topics include literacy, sustained school-wide social and emotional learning, data analysis, components of reading first, writer's workshop, looking at student work and mathematics lab.

Delivery of professional development is now embedded in the school day through the coaching model and is enriched by the principal, who makes use of her regular classroom visits to provide teachers with suggestions as to how to improve their instruction. Activities such as learning walks, peer observation and feedback, mentoring and grade level conferences provide opportunities for professional growth towards improving student achievement.

The school runs smoothly and, from the moment that students line up for entry into the building, a tone of business-like attention to learning prevails. The principal provides students and teachers with the utmost clarity regarding her expectations and support for high quality teaching and attention to learning. The school and its students are fortunate to have an in-house youth development program that provides extensive academic and extracurricular support to students in their extended day program.

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.

As described under previous quality statements, the school uses a rich array of data in planning for school and student improvement. Plans are revisited and with varying rates of regularity according to need and requirement. Revisions may be frequent, as in the case of academic interventions for students at risk. In other cases, as with the Comprehensive Education Plan, revision is annual.

The school has more fully developed structures for evaluating the progress of identified students than for the student body as a whole and recognizes the value of increasing collaboration and data sharing among and between groups such as classrooms, grades, and the neighboring pre-kindergarten through 2 school that provides the majority of the school's incoming students.

The school also recognizes the potential value of consolidating some of its data gathering, analysis and planning structures to increase the surety that every student's progress is evaluated throughout the school year. Thus, weaknesses in improvement plans and teaching practices may be recognized and modified to ensure improved academic outcomes.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The Nostrand School (PS 269)	∅	✓	+
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