



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



# **Quality Review Report**

**Shirley Tanyhill School**

**Public School 288**

**2950 West 25 Street  
Brooklyn  
NY 11224**

**Principal: Ms. Joelene-Lynette Kinard**

**Dates of review: January 22 - 23, 2007**

**Reviewer: Joan L. Johnston**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

The Shirley Tanyhill School, Public School 288, is located in the Coney Island area of Brooklyn and enrolls 585 students in pre-kindergarten through grade 8. Recent statistics for the school indicate that 53% of the students are Black, 41% Hispanic, 4% White, and 2% are Asian and other ethnicities. Approximately 13% are special education students and 11% are English language learners, mainly of Hispanic ancestry. Both proportions are typical of similar and City schools.

The school receives Title 1 funding. Student attendance, at 89%, is below that of similar schools and the City-wide average of 92%.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school now has a sense of purpose which is focused on raising student achievement.
- The administration and teaching staff are using classroom assessment data to better meet the instructional needs of a high needs and under-achieving student population.
- Teachers are now involved in planning and aligning the curriculum and pacing instruction to respond to the New York State standards and assessments.
- Concerted effort has led to the school becoming a safer and more structured learning environment for students.
- The school building has been transformed into an attractive and welcoming place for students, parents, and visitors.
- Efforts to improve student attendance, especially during testing periods, are beginning to pay off in higher achievement.

### What the school needs to improve

- Analyze data on the performance and progress of individual students and different groups and use the information to target resources, and to realign interventions and programs.
- Monitor classroom instruction and individual student progress rigorously to inform and establish more effective systems for differentiating instruction and to support teachers in classrooms where students are not engaged and so not succeeding.
- Provide training for analyzing and using data and implement an accessible system for tracking individual student performance data over time to aid school monitoring and evaluation activities.
- Provide regular and focused opportunities for teachers to share ideas and discuss the strengths and areas of development of their work and to observe the good teaching that is effectively engaging students, improving learning and accelerating progress.
- Evaluate academic intervention services to assure both their effectiveness and that they are targeted to meet the needs of individual students.
- Develop an effective plan to increase parental involvement and engagement in the school.

## Part 3: Main findings

### Overall Evaluation

**This is an undeveloped school with proficient feature.**

The Shirley Tanyhill School represents a 'work in progress.' Over the past three years, with the arrival of the new principal, the school has undergone a period of rapid change. The school is now a safe place to learn. The school's physical appearance is more attractive and better supplied with equipment and instructional resources. Teachers have received extensive professional development. Attendance has increased. Curriculum is better aligned with State assessments. Data reports are beginning to be used more effectively by administrators and teachers to set goals for school improvement and student progress. The school's culture now recognizes that all students can succeed.

Student achievement on both State and interim assessments is still not close to where it needs to be to assure student success and retention in high school. Instruction, which has improved over time, is still not powerful enough to address the needs of the small proportion of students who often do not come to school ready to learn. Student support services are not tackling issues sufficiently well to establish more parental involvement and outreach at the school.

### 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.**

Based on their third year as an America's Choice school, this school has learned to effectively gather data about student performance and progress. They are now beginning to use this information to monitor progress. For example, a review of annual student performance on the New York State assessments and interim assessment data on the Princeton review reports has enabled the school to pinpoint precisely the areas in need of improvement. These include topics such as measurement and problem-solving in mathematics and comprehension and vocabulary development in English language arts.

The administrative staff at the school recognizes the importance of using available data and generating their own to better monitor the progress of populations such as special education students, English language learners, and the performance of ethnic groups. However, an adequate and accessible data system to track individual student performance and that of different groups over time is not yet available. School-based training in how to understand data and how to use it to improve student performance has not yet taken place.

The school has not yet benchmarked progress with similar schools or made comparison studies across grades. However, when assessment data reports indicate a problem, the principal makes appropriate decisions that will assure that the problem is not repeated the following year.

**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.**

School leaders use available data to develop annual school-wide goals and to identify priority areas for improvement. Most of these goals have been developed as a result of the school being identified for restructuring in English language arts and mathematics. Some of the goals have a particular subject area or grade level focus, for example to improve student proficiency in literacy and mathematics at fourth grade. Well-developed plans and timelines to accomplish the goals, with a focus on the individual student or each classroom, are not yet in place. Individual conferencing as a regular routine to assess student progress is not yet a shared practice at the school and so students are not all clear about their goals and what they need to do next to improve.

The school recognizes that a greater percentage of students must achieve at the proficiency level in both English language arts and mathematics. There is a goal to provide additional academic intervention services to students performing below level. As teachers receive interim assessment reports, they assign students to before-school academic support sessions. While many students attend these early morning classes, not all attend regularly. After-school and Saturday tutoring takes place, but a system to assess the effectiveness or impact of the instruction at these sessions has not yet been created.

When the principal arrived three years ago, the school was in disarray. The building has now been upgraded with new furniture in classrooms and bright colors in hallways. Safety was another issue that required immediate attention. Most students now comply with the discipline code. The classrooms have ample resources for teaching, whereas before materials were left in unpacked boxes or locked closets. All of these are preliminary ways in which the principal is conveying her expectations and belief in students. By highlighting graduation from grade 8 as an expectation, students and parents look forward to attending the subsequent ceremony.

However, there is still a long way to go before teachers, parents and students develop a culture based on high expectations with a consistent and fully committed drive for improving student achievement. Few parents are actively involved in the school. Teachers indicate they are taking “baby steps” in the process of improving student performance. An example of early success in this area is evidenced by the fact that students have recently met the participation benchmark for State assessments.

**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.**

The school primarily utilizes the mandated curriculum required by the Department of Education. With the assistance of instructional coaches, teachers have adequately aligned the curriculum with the requirements of the State and interim assessments. New textbooks and materials have been provided to support the planned programs. Many student-based initiatives have been implemented throughout the school. These include a

Weatherbug station, a chess club, book of the month selections and violin lessons. These opportunities are making a difference to students' learning.

While teachers have received training, many are still in the early stages of differentiating instruction based on needs revealed by individual student data reports. Teachers have not yet received passwords to access data reports although they do receive printouts of results. Teachers are pleased that they now have a voice and are involved in the process. They are beginning to believe that they are working to achieve common goals and recognize that they will now be held accountable for improving student outcomes.

Budgeting, staffing and scheduling decisions are made by members of the school's cabinet, which includes the principal, three assistants, and director of operations. They consider student data, but this information does not always drive decision-making. They know that the entire faculty is not yet on board with all the changes. They recognize that it will take time to see the impact of their decisions on student achievement.

Suitable emphasis is given to students' personal development alongside their academic achievement. Most feel confident to ask for help with work if they are struggling. Students recognize the qualities of good teachers, but wish that more would push them harder to achieve even better. Students like classes that are practical and fun such as science, gym and art. However, there is still too much work where students sit still and listen for too long and so is not as engaging. Nevertheless, extensive professional development over the past two years has resulted in a significant improvement in the quality of instruction in most classrooms.

The school has been effective in using attendance data to implement a plan to improve participation on State testing dates. They have updated student biographical information, and used an automated messaging system to contact parents immediately. The attendance teacher and family worker visit homes of chronic absentee students to reinforce the school's high expectations. The principal is pleased that the implementation of the required attendance plan is beginning to make a difference, and proud of the trophy that the school received to celebrate that achievement. Parents acknowledge that not all families are prepared to get their children to school every day on time. However, students and parents believe that the more orderly school environment has made a difference in motivating students to come to school.

**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.**

With so many other areas in need of attention the past few years, the school is now beginning to focus on capacity building. The principal has identified a new process for staff selection that includes a team interview. She looks for faculty members with a passion to teach and who have experience in motivating students at different performance levels and with different experiences and backgrounds. In order to use and consolidate the school's strong commitment to students, paraprofessionals on the staff who live in the neighborhood are training to become teachers.

The school's two years of participation in the America's Choice initiative have resulted in considerable professional development for faculty and administrators. However, at this point, training does not focus on use of data. The principal recognized a need to develop

the instructional and curricular knowledge base of her faculty as a first step and so planned training accordingly. The administrators have been trained in conducting structured classroom walkthroughs and, as a result, their frequent visits focus on progress towards and achievement of the school's goals. This information is beginning to inform the evaluation process. Teachers do not routinely observe in other classrooms although that option is available. Staff meet in teams to discuss their work and student progress. However, there is not yet the sense of team effort or collaboration when groups are working together.

The principal is respected by parents, students, faculty and fellow administrators for the difficult changes she has had to enact to put the school back on track for success. Although not all staff and parents are on board, it is recognized that the school is now safe and orderly, and the building more attractive and well-organized. Procedures have been established and expectations communicated clearly. As a result, the school now runs smoothly.

The pupil personnel team does not always have a clear sense or come to consensus in a focused manner on how to best provide student support services. A community-based human services organization, Beacon Heartshare, operates within the school and provides good family services and activities during the day and after school. Brienza Academic Advantage provides supplemental educational services in an after-school program to effectively enrich and extend learning.

**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 school has set improvement goals and reviews them annually. Improvement gains or losses are identified and reported at the end of the year. However, systems are not yet in place to regularly monitor progress towards the goals.

At the classroom level, most teachers make effective use of interim and diagnostic assessments to monitor progress. After students are identified for academic or supplemental support services, held both before and after school, reports of their progress are then put into assessment binders in classrooms. However, a commitment to their use is inconsistent and so this information is not used in a meaningful way to monitor or adjust classroom instruction on a daily basis in all classes.

With the addition of an administrator for operations, data is now more widely distributed and student reports are generated. Teachers have curriculum maps and pacing charts, but do not regularly monitor and adjust these based on interim assessment reports. Students in many classrooms are not at the proficiency level and the school recognizes that more powerful interventions are needed.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: Shirley Tanyhill School (PS 288)</b>	∅	✓	+
<b>Quality Score</b>	X		

<b>Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor student progress over time.</b>	∅	✓	+
1.1 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• each student, classroom, grade level,</li> </ul>		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"> <li>• ethnic groups, English language learners, special education students*</li> </ul>		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"> <li>• all other categories of interest to the school*</li> </ul>		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		
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>		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.

<b>Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use available data to understand each student's next learning step. Through collaborative planning and student and parent engagement, they set high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating each student's learning.</b>	∅	✓	+
2.1 Using data, school leaders and faculty engage in a collaborative process to set demanding, objectively measurable goals for immediate and long-range improvement, and to develop plans and timeframes for reaching those goals.		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		
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>		X	

<b>Quality Statement 3 – Align Instruction: The school aligns its instructional activity, resources, and student engagement around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.</b>	∅	✓	+
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3.1 The school selects the curriculum based on how well it aligns with or implements the mandated curriculum and on the curriculum's capacity to generate meaningful interim data about progress towards goals and to support the school's high expectations and improvement plans.		X	
3.2 Teachers are accountable for improving instruction and student outcomes. They plan and differentiate their instruction based on the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.	X		
3.3 Budgeting decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.		X	
3.4 Staffing decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.	X		
3.5 Scheduling decisions about the use of teacher and student time are guided by the needs that emerge from examining student data and by the focused plan the school develops to improve student outcomes.		X	
3.6 Instructional programs actively engage students.	X		
3.7 Staff know and respect students and respond to their academic needs, as well as their personal needs that affect academic performance. Each student knows and trusts an adult on the staff who is concerned about him or her.		X	
3.8 Student attendance and engagement are high priorities. High rates and patterns of absences trigger immediate intervention.		X	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>			
<b>Quality Statement 4 – Build and Align Capacity: The development of instructional leadership, staff, and capacity are aligned around the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.</b>	∅	✓	+
4.1 Leaders, faculty, and staff are selected based on their high expectations for student performance and progress and based on their commitment and capacity to use data, compare outcomes within and across classrooms and schools and develop and revise plans and methods to improve performance and progress.	X		
4.2 Professional development decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes. Professional development is designed to help leaders, faculty, and staff use data, self- and peer-assessments, and collaboration with peers to achieve goals for improved school and student outcomes. Professional development and self- and peer-evaluation are aligned and overlap.		X	
4.3 The principal frequently observes classroom teaching and has a considered strategy for improving the quality of each teacher's instruction. Teachers frequently observe and support each other's classroom instruction with the goal of improving student outcomes.		X	
4.4 Planning, evaluation of results, and revision of plans takes place in teams. Leaders and faculty inform each other of their goals and results, candidly evaluate themselves and each other, and use what is learned to drive improvement.	X		
4.5 The principal is respected and has capacity to effect change.		X	
4.6 The school runs smoothly. Procedures are clear, communicated to all, and are generally followed.		X	
4.7 The school aligns youth development and support services around stated academic goals. Partnerships with outside bodies are routinely used to achieve academic goals.		X	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>			
<b>Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has built-in structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year, recognizing weaknesses in its improvement plans and teaching practices, and flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.</b>	∅	✓	+
5.1 All school plans and other interventions include frequent interim goals and diagnostic assessments of progress designed to reveal in objectively measurable ways whether the plan is being effectively implemented and reaching stated goals.	X		
5.2 Comparisons of student progress within and across classrooms and schools are used in making interim diagnostic assessments and measuring the progress of plans and interventions.		X	
5.3 Information generated by periodic assessments and diagnostic measures of progress and comparisons is used to revise plans immediately in order to reach stated goals. Interim and final goals are modified when data objectively demonstrate that revision is required.	X		
5.4 Each plan's interim and final outcomes drive successive phases of goal setting and improvement planning, and each successive phase is characterized by agile and flexible realignment of practices and resources to improve student academic outcomes.	X		
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>			
	X		