



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Thomas Warren Field School

Public School 299

**88 Woodbine Street
Brooklyn
NY 11221**

Principal: Gloria Turner

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Reviewer: Corinne Brown

Content of the report

Part 1: The School Context

Information about the school

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

What the school needs to improve

Part 3: Main Findings

Overall evaluation

How well the school meets New York City's evaluation criteria

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Thomas Warren Field Elementary School, Public School 299, is located in the Bushwick section of Brooklyn. This elementary school serves 517 students in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade. The majority of students, at 69.4%, are of Black background, which is higher than in similar and City schools, with 28.6% of Hispanic and 1.2% of other backgrounds. The main languages spoken are English and Spanish, also some Haitian Creole. Within the student population approximately 7% are English language learners, which is lower than in similar and City schools and 11% are special education students, which is higher than in similar and City schools. The school receives Title 1 funding.

Attendance is higher than in similar and City schools, at 96%, and represents a significant increase on last year.

The building is on four floors, with science and computer laboratories, gymnasium, auditorium, library, cafeteria and large yard. The school has four self-contained special education classes and one collaborative team teaching class. A United Federation of Teachers (UFT) Teachers' Center has opened this year.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal offers an effective role model and her leadership style embodies the school nurturing attitude.
- The principal is ably supported by her assistant principals who have good insight into their particular grades.
- The school analyzes and uses data to inform instruction and identify individual need.
- The school provides a calm, organized and stimulating environment with clear procedures and routines.
- The staff show enthusiasm, dedication and a desire to work collaboratively to improve student outcomes.
- Attendance is very good and strategies are in place to maintain this.
- Students feel comfortable, respected and work well together.
- The school is reflective and so works to improve school and individual outcomes through strategic planning.
- The school has small class sizes, which helps nurture and develop the individual student.
- The school places great emphasis on literacy and is print-rich.

What the school needs to improve

- In whole school planning, incorporate clear timelines associated with benchmarks, to monitor progress towards goals.
- Using available assessment data, extend long-term goal setting with students into all content areas, and share these with parents.
- Explore further opportunities for cross-grade planning and professional development to share content area expertise, especially in social studies and science, and map connections.
- Extend the use of technology by all teachers to support instruction, record-keeping and use of data.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school with well-developed features.

Thomas Warren Field Elementary School, Public School 299, knows itself well and utilizes its strengths at the same time as building capacity. It is an open school, where all are welcomed, including agencies that support student learning directly and those that support administration and instruction. The atmosphere of the school reflects the calm, nurturing attitude of the principal who oversees the organized yet stimulating small school. This is evident in the celebration of student work that is colorfully displayed in hallways and classrooms. The school works to develop student to become independent learners.

The school is moving forward and building on the firm foundations laid in the early childhood phase, especially in literacy and mathematics, to take these through to fifth grade. It is consolidating the gains made in attendance and addressing student engagement by the use of more interactive and collaborative learning. Students' needs are carefully identified through data analysis and suitable timely interventions are put in place. There is a strong sense of community and collaboration evident in this small school. It is working continually to improve by maintaining an open attitude towards student-centered initiatives that will further motivate students to achieve. Many parents work voluntarily within the school and all appreciate the open, friendly manner of all staff. This exemplifies the collaborative nature of the school, where active engagement for students is a priority so that they enjoy learning and students speak of teachers as, "like a mother to me".

How well the school meets New York City's evaluation criteria

Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor student progress over time.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The school carefully uses a wide variety of standardized tests to monitor student progress, inform instruction and identify individual need. In the early childhood grades, the 'Reading First' program has built-in regular assessments, which are used with data from Early Childhood Language Arts System (ECLAS) and Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) tests. Together with teacher observation and examination of student work, these provide a good picture of skills development and deficiencies. The Teachers' College program is used for literacy in the upper grades, three through five, and has in-built assessments with its units of study. These results are competently analyzed, together with standardized tests results, teacher running records and conference notes, to similarly build a detailed picture. The Everyday Math program, used throughout the school, offers end of unit tests to monitor progress. The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) is systematically used to assess skills, form groups and target interventions. The school has, therefore, appropriate regular detailed information about individual, class and grade performance, particularly in literacy and mathematics.

The school makes adequate use of data by group, particularly its English language learners and special education students. Special education students have, for example, shown growth in that there are fewer students at level one. Other groups and subgroups, such as gender and ethnicity, are considered by the school. It does not as yet formally produce discrete data for these but is looking to use technology for this. The school identified higher achieving students within its population, and through a program devised by the librarian, they were able to explore their interests through literature. There are also valuable enrichment opportunities for such students through art and music in the morning before school as a result. The school compares itself adequately to other schools, such as two other 'Reading First' schools, another with a similar population and another with a different ethnic mix. It was also paired with a school for higher achieving students. These comparisons are not, as yet, formalized and documented.

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.

The Comprehensive Education Plan is carefully drawn up with the school leadership team and instructional team, and is clearly aligned with the Principal's Performance Review. It details relevant goals for the school year, with identified responsibilities. The instructional team set suitable goals for grades in conjunction with lead teachers. Coaches are strategically involved in this broad planning, for example, with mathematics pacing calendars, and teachers meet in teams to fine-tune plans. All plans reference student, class and grade data. Students are involved as teachers share reading goals with them. The school does not routinely set long-term goals with students across all content areas and grades. It also recognizes the need to explore further opportunities for cross-grade planning and professional development to share expertise, especially in social studies and science, and to map connections and themes.

The school focuses particularly on the achievement of its English language learners, special education students and those 'at risk' of promotion. The academic intervention team meetings are purposeful and involve a wide spectrum of providers to tailor support for individual students. Specialist teachers, such as the English language learner teacher, devise interventions in conjunction with class teachers, to include both push-in and pull-out sessions to meet identified needs. The school also makes excellent use of technology to accelerate the progress of identified groups, for example through the Voyager programs in reading and mathematics. Following the 'No Child Left Behind' initiative, the school is also rebuilding the upper school capacity, especially in fifth grade, to ensure consistency in staffing and instruction. The administration is engaged in a continual monitoring process across the school to ensure that school goals and plans are being implemented correctly.

The principal is highly accessible to parents and attends every PTA meeting. Similarly the assistant principals, coaches and teachers are in continual contact with parents to share information, materials and high expectations. A committed core of parents volunteer to help in school and the parent coordinator works diligently with them to involve even more parents, for example through workshops and Saturday parent academy, where students and parents learn together. There is a strong dedication among this small school community to work together for the students' benefit.

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 well developed.

The school carefully selects and customizes the curriculum that is aligned with State standards. There is great emphasis on literacy and so the school is print-rich. ‘Reading First’ and Teachers’ College for literacy instruction are structured programs that are well used to give a good foundation, as does Every Mathematics. Teachers are actively involved in decisions to make modifications based on the school needs, incorporate best practices and also to build more reading stamina. The center-based approach encourages independent student work. The school also uses supplemental aligned materials and which offer more data on progress.

The staff shows enthusiasm, dedication and a desire to work collaboratively to improve student outcomes. Teachers plan together to make learning interesting and engage students. Group- and pair-work within the framework of the workshop model is usual practice and students work cooperatively. Teachers are accountable and use data capably to group students and plan interactive sessions. Student work is regularly used to assess progress and offer further guidance. Planning extension activities for higher achieving students that are built-in is variable practice. Student engagement, however, is very high and is a school priority.

The school uses its budget, scheduling and staffing creatively to support student achievement. For example, cluster specialists for music and art support the morning enrichment program, which was initiated through observation of student behavior patterns. This has had a positive impact on student engagement, particularly of the higher achieving students. Similarly, the small class sizes help nurture and develop the individual student as they receive greater personal attention.

Attendance is very good and has increased significantly since last year. There are sound mechanisms in place to maintain this, with students and parents fully aware of its importance. Students appreciate the school curriculum and say they enjoy learning, feel respected and comfortable to talk with adults about academic and personal issues.

Quality Statement 4 - Build and Align Capacity: The development of instructional leadership, staff, and capacity are aligned around the school’s collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.

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

The school places considerable value on its teachers. They are selected not only for their enthusiasm and content expertise, but also high expectations, nurturing attitude and ability to empathize. As a community, staff are supportive of each other and the administration works to make the most of their strengths. Lunchtimes are frequently used to share strategies, as well as for professional development in ‘lunch and learns’.

Professional development is given high priority in the school as a means to strengthen existing expertise and build capacity. Scheduled common preparation or planning time and team meetings frequently include professional development through input by coaches or sharing best practice. Coaches also model lessons in class after planning with the teacher, so that it is a relevant and encouraging experience. All professional development

is aligned to the school goals and overall plans. Through discussion, surveys, observations and walkthroughs, staff are supported to refine their instructional practice in line with school priorities. There are rigorous checklists to ensure consistency of practice across all grades and the administration work sensitively with staff to effectively implement school plans. Teachers are moved class or grade appropriately to utilize their strengths in the light of data.

The principal effectively leads a dedicated team of professionals and delegates responsibilities to the assistant principals to build on their strengths and area of expertise. They support her well and reflect the calm, nurturing attitude that underpins the principal's leadership. The principal is respected by the school community and is a strong role model. She has galvanized the school into a calm, organized and stimulating environment with clear procedures and routines.

The school carefully invites partnerships to contribute to the life of the school. For example, the Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention Program (SAPIS) worker gives intensive self-esteem input, and many other partnerships also do valuable work to develop the whole student, in line with the school mission.

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.

The school is working hard to improve school and individual outcomes through strategic planning. Reflection means it has taken the opportunity to gain outside perspectives by participation in the Accelerated Schools Academy (ASA) and School Quality Review Initiative (SQRI). The school leadership team has meetings with the latter team at various points in the year and so short- and long-term goals with specific benchmarks have been set and timelines evolved within their action plans.

Regular and systematic review of student progress, for individuals but also across classes, grades and groups is a strength of the school. The staff work collaboratively each year to review the school's progress against its plans and to determine goals for the next year. This works well, both within the administration and in grades. All available data is included to inform decision-making, inform instructional practice and revise interventions. Interim assessments are used to refine planning, such as the movement of special education students from the more restrictive to least restrictive environments. Although plans are detailed, they do not contain timelines and so effective interim monitoring is not formalized. This is a practice the school is looking to rectify in future Comprehensive Education Plans and other planning, by the inclusion of both benchmarks and associated timelines.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Thomas Warren Field Elementary School (PS 299)	∅	✓	+
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	