



**NYCDOE**

**Quality Review: Final Report**

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



# **Quality Review Report**

**Bergen Beach School**

**Public School 312**

**7103 Avenue T  
Brooklyn  
NY 11234**

**Principal: Linda Beal-Benigno**

**Dates of review: September 25 - 27, 2006**

**Reviewer: Margaret Lee**

## Content of the report

### **Part 1: The School Context**

Background 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 school is a pre-kindergarten to grade 5 school of 852 students with 10 special education classes, including 7 inclusion classes. Approximately 63% of students are White and 24% Black, with the remainder of students from Hispanic or Russian heritage. Thirty three percent of students have Title 1 eligibility, significantly lower than is found across New York City generally. Student performance is well above similar schools. School attendance is 93%, close to that in similar schools and slightly above the City-wide average.

The school is well resourced and is the focus of the local community, offering many enrichment activities for students during and after school. There are several positive partnerships with the local community including the regional environmental center next door.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- Data analysis is used to inform grade level teaching plans and the curriculum, and contributes significantly to the learning goals of the whole school.
- The principal is a highly respected leader who takes a personal interest in each child.
- Achievement levels in English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies at grade 4 have each risen since 2004 and the school performs above the City standards in these study areas.
- Teachers, paraprofessionals and members of the school community demonstrate a dedicated, passionate and highly committed approach to their work with children.
- Professional development is clearly based on outcomes of data collation and analysis and is a fundamental part of all teachers' and paraprofessionals' work.
- The students are well-behaved, work studiously and focus rigorously on their learning.
- The school runs very smoothly on a day-to-day basis and student movement around the building is managed very well.
- Targeted use of the school's budget ensures that classrooms are well resourced.
- The parents feel very much a part of the school community; they willingly visit the school and give generously of their time to support the school programs.

### What the school needs to improve

- Clearly record the annual, weekly and monthly assessment data making the processes graphically explicit and more easily explained to new teachers and parents.
- Build in sufficient flexibility in the professional development calendar to allow for more immediate responses to individual teacher need.

## Part 3: Main findings

### Overall Evaluation

#### **This is a well developed school.**

The school bases all decisions on quantifiable data information. The school also uses qualitative information to inform decision making about school practices. The examination of data and the findings are used to inform teaching across the school. Teachers regularly monitor their teaching in relation to students' needs. Additional intensive support is provided to support any student under-achieving where necessary. The teachers' in-classroom support from paraprofessionals is tailored to meet students' needs. School resources are prioritized to support the learning and the development of the whole child. Many enrichment experiences are provided for the students through positive partnerships with local community.

Continuous review and evaluation of student progress and school practices and programs are well established, with each cycle informing the next. Teachers and students practice self-reflection and evaluation of strategies for improvement.

### 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.**

All teaching and learning decisions in the school are clearly based upon the needs of students. Individual needs are identified through the detailed analysis of assessments, teacher conferencing notes and the results of tests and quizzes. The data is rigorously gathered and analyzed for all grade levels in regular, ongoing cycles. The collection and analysis of student data is monitored by the principal and assistant principal. The progress of all teachers in responding to their students' data is carefully monitored by the principal through individual teacher meetings, faculty meetings and direct involvement in classroom visits. As a result, teachers are able to align their instruction and curriculum content to meet the specific needs of individuals and groups.

The progress of special education students is monitored on a weekly basis. There are weekly meetings between all special education teachers to collaboratively discuss and plan work for the students. These students make good progress.

Teachers conduct observation surveys, especially in kindergarten classes at the beginning of the year before Early Childhood Learning Assessment (ECLAS). Teachers at other grade levels undertake diagnostic tests, student conferencing and running records as well as using other commercial testing programs. Teachers use the information as a basis for self-reflection about their effectiveness in teaching.

The outcomes of the teachers' data analysis are used to develop teaching plans and contribute to grade level learning goals. These and other goals are formulated at grade and faculty level meetings. All grade level learning goals feed into the development of whole school goals and the Comprehensive Education Plan. This process occurs in school leadership team meetings and parent meetings.

**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 principal and assistant principal regularly and routinely use qualitative and quantitative data to monitor students’ progress. They are both practical educational leaders. They, together with the school leadership team, set high expectations for staff to be not just a good teacher but ‘the best’ teacher.

The data collected is analyzed by item framed against the standards for each grade level. These results show teachers the next teaching points for each student. From these, teachers establish weekly learning goals for their classroom. Teachers maintain student conferencing records and regularly refer to them in preparation of teaching points. Flexible groupings of students based on interpretation of data are evident in classrooms. Each classroom has a range of learning centers and teachers construct learning materials to meet particular needs. However, information is not always presented in a simple enough form, for example in graphs or charts, so that teachers can access it quickly and easily.

Paraprofessionals are very attentive and involved in the learning of each child. They work closely with teachers in planning and teaching of group activities in response to analyzed need. They participate in their own and teachers’ professional development, which includes understanding of data.

Learning and behavior routines are reinforced and emphasized at the beginning of the school year. Students are interested and involved in their learning tasks. They work calmly, and diligently. Students are able to articulate what they are learning. At all grade levels students practice higher order thinking skills, for example, explaining reasons for personal preferences or explanations as to how they gave answers to problems.

Parents support the work of the school and take a keen interest in student development. There is a strong after-school program for students needing additional one-to-one support, and students are carefully allocated to these on the basis of analysis of their performance. Where students are not able to attend after-school due to transport problems, alternative opportunities are created during the school day.

**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.**

Instructional practices and content are changed and modified according to the data on students’ learning. The emphasis on teaching points and the allocation of time for activities are carefully matched to the needs of each student.

The school’s budget is directed well at classroom instruction and additional instructional support, based on the needs of students as revealed by the data. It is also used effectively to provide a rich range of classroom books in the central book room and a well resourced library. The well-resourced technology classroom provides access to

computers for each child. To enable the school program and teacher response to special needs of all students, additional staff and support staff are employed to allow time for teachers for testing, to collate classroom-based student work and to provide evaluation and curriculum development time. The impact of the employment of literacy and mathematics coaches to support teacher development can be seen in the improvement of results, particularly in mathematics

With support from grants and other external funds, the school is able to offer a wide variety of enrichment and extra-curriculum activities such as arts and athletics. The school funding provides student clubs for a wide range of interests, from theatre to business and cheerleading.

The school demonstrates high levels of cooperation, care and concern for all students and between all members of the school community. The care for student success is exemplified by the program called 'Adopt a Child' where each teacher 'adopts' a child to provide additional social and emotional support for their learning. The school day operates smoothly and efficiently. It is well organized and transition from one program to another is responsibly managed by students. Attendance is in line with similar schools.

**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.**

Staff are selected to ensure teambuilding at a faculty level, qualification for grade level and with skills and talents as teachers to meet the needs of students. The selection and assignment of support staff are determined on the basis of identified student need.

Professional development is planned on the basis of staff input and identified whole-school needs. It is conducted by the principal and/or staff members, although staff have the opportunity to attend local and City training and workshops as appropriate. The principal, assistant principal and coaches model lessons and tailor these to meet the needs of teachers or to present new materials. Grading students' work is a particular and regular focus. Staff also conduct study groups based around a professional reading piece. Differentiated professional development is also offered for individuals and at grade and faculty level, and is carefully planned over the year. Some of teachers' learning needs are identified through walkthroughs, but it is not always possible to respond to these in the short term. The school recognizes that there is insufficient flexibility in the professional development calendar to ensure rapid response to some individual teacher needs, and the issue is presently under review by the administrators.

The principal and assistant principal regularly conduct learning walks throughout the school. There are also frequent classroom visits to work with teachers in the classroom, supporting special education students. The school administration knows at first hand the learning conditions of each classroom. They also review student work regularly. They are highly respected for their direct involvement with and leadership of classroom practices.

The school has a partnership with the local Bergen Beach Youth Organization enabling many after-school programs and enrichment activities to be available for all students. There are also many other community links which have a positive impact on student's 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 well developed.**

The formulation of school learning goals stems directly from classroom goals and they are modified following regular monitoring of student progress. The school routinely assesses students' development and progress and plans differentiated activities to address any specific needs. This practice is a foundation to the teachers' daily work with students. It has a high priority and is referred to in weekly faculty meeting and academic intervention service meetings.

The principal and assistant principal, the staff leadership team and faculty members all review progress towards goals. Teachers are responsible for the monitoring and management of student progress and feed the information back to the administrators. There are many avenues of on-site support to do this well. In response to identified needs, modifications are made to both the curriculum pacing calendars and professional development calendar.

The review of data is well developed within the classroom. The teachers' ongoing assessment and conference notes are reviewed regularly in line with the agreed cycles. Through these, teachers are able to guide students to the next level. Students are articulate about their level of learning and can explain clearly what they are learning and why.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: Bergen Beach School (PS 312)</b>	∅	✓	+
<b>Quality Score</b>			<b>X</b>

<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>			<b>X</b>
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>			<b>X</b>
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>			<b>X</b>
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.			<b>X</b>
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>			<b>X</b>

\* 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.			<b>X</b>
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.			<b>X</b>
2.3 Particular attention is given to improving the performance and progress of students in greatest need of improvement.			<b>X</b>
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.			<b>X</b>
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.			<b>X</b>
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>			<b>X</b>

<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>	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
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>			X
<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>	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
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>			X
<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>	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
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>			X