



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Eugenio Maria Dehostos School

Intermediate School 318

**101 Walton Street
Brooklyn
NY 11206**

Principal: Fortunato Rubino

Dates of review: April 18 - 20, 2007

Reviewer: John Hudson

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

This intermediate school provides education for 1400 students from grade 6 through 8. Two thirds of the students are from Hispanic backgrounds, about one in six is Black, and one in ten White. There are smaller numbers of Asian and American Indian students. Less than 4% of students are English language learners and 6% are special education students.

The proportion of students with Title 1 eligibility, at 70%, is close to other similar schools and City schools. At 95%, attendance is much higher than in City schools and similar schools.

The school makes use of its resources to aid the learning of students, providing classes, clubs and other educational activities for selected students from 7:20 a.m. each day the school is open until late in the evening.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal provides inspirational and highly effective leadership.
- All members of the school community are deservedly proud of the school's considerable popularity and achievement.
- The administration has a very good understanding of how data can be used to drive up achievement.
- The school has successfully developed software to access standardized, non-standardized and diagnostic assessment results for all students.
- Teachers make effective use of available data to identify the academic strengths and areas for development of individual students.
- There is a climate of mutual respect and relationships are very good throughout the school.
- The quality and range of activities available to students is outstanding.
- Patterns of absence and lateness are analyzed promptly and rigorously, ensuring excellent attendance and punctuality.
- Staff, students and parents share a vision of educational excellence.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue to develop the use of data to track the performance of ethnic groups of students to ensure performance goals are met.
- Continue to develop the use of data to monitor the progress of students, classrooms, and other groups of students across the full range of subject areas.
- Further develop differentiation of instruction, based on student needs, to improve student outcomes.
- Further develop methods for comparing the progress and achievement of groups of students, with corresponding groups in other schools, to ensure academic standards continue to improve.
- Provide necessary professional development on the use of data to further improve the quality of learning and instruction across the school.
- Monitor of the implementation of all school plans to evaluate their impact on student progress and achievement.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school.

The school administration has a very good understanding of how assessment data can be used to drive up achievement. Teachers are encouraged to use the data available to match work to the developing needs of students. The performance of individual students, classrooms, grade levels, is tracked very well, although much of the evidence is derived from achievement in English language arts, mathematics and science.

The progress of English language learners, special education students and students in greatest need of improvement is monitored very closely so that immediate action is taken when a student is not making at least the expected progress. The progress of ethnic groups is not so frequently monitored. The school makes very good use of data to monitor the progress of other groups of students, including those who excel, whose learning is accelerated, who are gifted and talented and who are aiming towards admission to popular high schools.

The principal has very high expectations of student progress and achievement and takes a deep personal interest in the development of every student. He is ably supported by his assistant principals and other senior staff. There is a strong emphasis on the need for excellent attendance in order to improve academic outcomes. A learning focused ethos, supported by appropriate challenge and support, ensures that everyone strives for success.

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.

The school makes very good use of all available test results and assessment data. These include objective, standard-based State and City exam results as well as periodic diagnostic outcomes, attendance and punctuality data. Results of individuals, classrooms and grades are analyzed with considerable care by the principal and his senior staff to ensure that each student is making at least the expected progress. Subject teachers track individual student progress to detect significant exceptions, and appropriate action is taken.

The school takes particular care to track the progress of special education students and English language learners. Accelerated learners, students who are just below grade level, and those on the borderline for promotion, gifted and talented learners, bilingual students, those with limited English proficiency and students in greatest need are tracked with considerable care. The progress of distinct ethnic groups is tracked annually from State standard-based test results. The frequency and objectivity of tracking student progress in English language arts, mathematics and science is more advanced than in other subject areas.

Great attention to detail ensures that teachers continuously strive to achieve challenging goals. The principal and his senior staff have tracked the school's performance over an eight year period to ensure student performance continues to rise. Annually published data on English language arts, mathematics and science are used to gain a clear understanding of school performance in comparison with similar schools and with schools City wide. This data indicates that the school has maintained its position as one of the higher performing schools in the area. The school has not yet fully developed the means of comparing its performance with other schools across all subject areas or by targeted groups of students.

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 with well developed features.

Regular review of performance data at subject planning meetings enables the principal and his staff to track the academic and personal progress of all students and categories of students of interest to the school. In this way the impact of subject study plans on individual students are assessed in detail and succeeding learning steps identified.

School goals and action plans are set annually and published in the comprehensive education plan. These plans are substantial. For example, the school has planned to improve the ability of all students to communicate in all areas of literacy by means of achieving short term objectives in succeeding years. The list of tasks is substantial in each year of the program, which aims to fully implement a balanced literacy curriculum in English language arts. The school monitors its performance in achieving interim goals.

The school is particularly effective at improving the performance and progress of students in the categories it has identified. Students in greatest need of improvement, English language learners and special education students benefit from day-to-day adjustments to teaching and learning programs as a result of constant analysis of data. The school keeps a record of interventions made for each student as they move through the school and the impact each has had on their academic progress.

Students who excel, whose learning is accelerated, who are gifted and talented and who are aiming towards admission to popular high schools are a priority. A section of higher achieving students attend additional classes on a daily basis. All students are able to benefit from an outstanding range of activities at the school, including a chess club which has just won its seventh consecutive national championship and a very successful marching band. These activities depend upon the very strong support of parents and caregivers. Students are aware of high expectations and know that their engagement in school activities, including homework, is being tracked both at home and at school. The school runs workshops for parents which are well attended and much appreciated.

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instruction: The school aligns its instructional activity and resources, and student engagement around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.

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

The school places great emphasis on enabling students to achieve as highly as possible in State exams. The mandated curriculum, subject plans, resources, staffing levels and scheduling decisions about the use of teacher and student time are fine tuned to ensure each student achieves the highest levels they are capable of. The collection and tracking of rigorous interim assessment measures are not fully developed across all subjects for all individual students and target groups and continuous progress cannot be assured. Opportunities to modify curriculum plans may not always be taken quickly enough.

The principal analyses available data and makes frequent observations of classrooms to measure the effectiveness of teachers, who are held accountable for the progress of each student. Staff are aware of the need to modify their planning for all students, including the higher achievers. Work is differentiated to meet the needs of students, who are consistently challenged by set activities. Some instruction is of a high order and student engagement is good.

Budgeting decisions are driven by needs the school identifies. The school targets its resources and assigns its staff to where they will be most effectively used. Students benefit from the principal’s skills in raising money to support out of hours provision. There is very good practice in providing curriculum courses and other activities which stimulate student learning and broaden their outlook. Scheduling decisions are made on the basis of progress of individual students and groups. The school makes particularly imaginative use of staffing resources to meet the needs of special education students, English language learners and students in greatest need of improvement.

Staff know their students very well and the school benefits from a climate of mutual respect. Relationships are very good throughout and students are confident that they can discuss personal issues with members of staff. Students are happy at the school, parents and care-givers support the school, and attendance levels are very high as a direct result.

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

This area of the school’s work is proficient.

The principal takes great care in the selection of staff on the basis that they have high levels of expertise, relate very well with students, both in and out of the classroom, have very high expectations and are good team workers. Staff are motivated to helping students reach their full potential. Staff make regular use of data, including interim assessment measures and portfolios of graded work, to track student progress towards carefully considered goals. Staff meet in teams, including planning meetings, grade review meetings and department meetings, to plan and revise units of study and discuss the progress of individuals and groups.

The principal, who makes frequent classroom observations, is aware that teachers need further training to enable them to analyze data more effectively and gain a deeper understanding of student progress and achievement. Other training needs and the sharing

of best practice are identified through planning meetings although teachers do not regularly observe each other's teaching neither is peer- or self-evaluation greatly developed.

The school is a very effective learning environment and runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. It is characterized by high standards of behavior and mutual respect. Students and teachers agree that the principal is highly visible about the school and very good at his job. Parents find him very helpful, particularly when individual student's home circumstances are disrupted. Parents report that they would like their children to stay at the school in grades 9 and above, rather than move on to high school.

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 makes good use of annual State test outcomes, but the availability of other diagnostic data is increasing. The emphasis is currently on performance in English, mathematics and science but other subject areas are introducing regular assessment processes. The school focuses on special education students, English language learners and the performance of groups of particular interest to the school, including high achievers, other groups, including ethnic groups, boys and girls are kept under review. Teachers and administration staff meet regularly during the school year to review and analyze available assessment data and as a result the school is gaining an improving understanding of the overall performance of its students. This understanding will broaden when all subjects are included and the number of student groups is increased. As systematic use of regular diagnostic assessment procedures becomes more established and the coverage of data gathering and analysis increases, the school will gain a deeper knowledge of its students' progress and achievement.

Towards the end of the school year, and in the course of the annual comprehensive education planning cycle, this understanding of student progress and achievement is used to review the impact of overall school goals on moving student achievement forward and the effectiveness of plans. Goals are revised and new or modified plans established. Over the course of the succeeding year regular collaborative planning meetings track student progress and fine tune plans and interim goals to match student needs. In this way plans remain responsive to the needs of learners and the school is able to carefully align its resources and practices. The cycle of review, revision and fine tuning drives successive phases of goal setting and improvement planning.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Eugenio Maria Dehostos School (IS 318)	∅	✓	+
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	
X3.4 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	