



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Granville T. Woods School

Public School 335

**130 Rochester Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11213**

Principal: Laverne Nimmons

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Reviewer: John Hudson

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

This public school provides education for about 470 students from pre-kindergarten to grade 5. The proportion of Black students is 85%, 12% are Hispanic and smaller proportions are White and Asian. The main language spoken is English. Just over 10% of students are English language learners and about 2% are special education students.

The proportion of students with Title 1 eligibility is 90%, which is much higher than similar and City schools. Attendance, at 90%, is below similar and City school averages.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal, who is highly regarded by students, staff and parents, is an effective leader of change and improvement.
- Conferencing folders provide teachers with a readily accessible source of continually updated data on individual student achievement and progress.
- Collaborative teams make good use of up-to-date data in a continuous process of goal setting, tracking achievement and fine tuning instruction, curriculum and resources to raise performance.
- The principal holds teachers accountable for the quality of their instruction, high standards of engagement and attendance and their capacity to raise achievement continuously.
- The school makes very good use of its resources to meet the needs of learners.
- In making staffing decisions, the principal places a strong emphasis on teachers' ability to inspire trust and cultivate a climate of care and respect with students.
- Students, staff and parents strongly support the principal's high expectations for student and school achievement.
- A wide range of high quality services is available to students and parents throughout the school year.
- Students benefit from excellent displays of their work in hallways and stimulating, learning-focused classrooms.

What the school needs to improve

- In different subject areas, by class, grade level and school, compare the performance of boys and girls and different ethnic groups.
- Continue to develop teacher skills in the analysis of diagnostic assessment data to ensure immediate realignment of goals and plans in response to student or group under achievement.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well-developed school.

The principal and her staff use readily accessible and regularly up-dated data with confidence and skill to gain a growing understanding of student achievement. The school is particularly effective at tracking the progress of special education students, English language learners and students in greatest need of improvement but is less effective in setting goals for students who are under achieving. Collaborative teacher teams support each other to identify students' next learning steps and set demanding goals to improve teaching standards and student performance. Students and their parents feel involved in this process and support teachers in aligning the curriculum, instruction and resources to ensure learning needs are met and each student, classroom and grade level is progressing well.

Good relationships are based on a firm foundation of mutual respect between teachers and learners and high standards of care for the individual. Teachers know their students well. The school is well ordered and procedures are clear and followed by all. All members of the school community share high expectations for student 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 proficient.

The school cabinet and collaborative teams of teachers and other senior staff use a broad range of regularly updated student data including teacher notes, student portfolios, attendance records and assessment outcomes to give them an objective understanding of student performance. Assessment events include State tests and a wide range of other intermediate assessments. Cabinet and grade level teams regularly review the progress of individual students, classrooms and grade levels in English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. Classroom teachers make very regular use of detailed conferring folders and other data to note changes in student achievement and keep track of progress.

Particular attention is given to the progress of English language learners and special education students with the goal of assimilating these students into general education classrooms as quickly as possible. The school tracks the progress of students who struggle with reading and mathematics on a very regular basis. The performance of the different ethnic groups enrolled in the school is tracked annually across the school but not across subject areas, classrooms and grade levels. The school does not analyze and compare the performance of girls and boys as separate groups by subject area and across classrooms and grade levels although it does monitor other sub-groups such as students in particular need of improvement. The school analyzes its overall performance in State tests with other schools and is developing methods of comparing subject area outcomes.

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 school uses a well-established and very effective process for setting challenging, objectively measurable goals for immediate and longer-term improvement. The process involves the school cabinet and school leadership team in setting long-term goals for State test outcomes in English language arts, mathematics and social studies for the school as a whole and for each grade level over the next school year. Literacy and mathematics coaches work with grade level collaborative teams at the start of the school year to match individual student, classroom and grade level goals with overall school goals. Intermediate assessment events include at least two practice tests in advance of State tests. Improving the quality of reading is a priority for the school and intermediate goals are set. Student progress is tracked effectively by recording the number of words students are able to read per minute. Goals for special education students, English language learners and students who are struggling with reading and mathematics are set by collaborative teams and are impacting positively. A special program targets parents of special education students to involve them in goal setting and planning. Other specially targeted groups include students identified as being in particular need of improvement.

The principal has been very effective in creating a climate of very high expectation among students and parents as well as teachers and other staff. A 5th grade student reported he was preparing for college and a good job. Parents reported they felt very much involved in improving their children’s performance. The parent coordinator arranges courses to enable parents to understand the achievement data the school provides for them and develop the skills they need to raise their children’s achievement. Parents, after school partners, staff and students feel the school is driven by ever higher achievement targets and that standards of achievement are continually rising.

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.

Through a highly collaborative process, the school is very successful in aligning instructional methods, classroom management and learning resources to the mandated curriculum. The quality and range of available data and the skills of analysis in use ensure that progress towards challenging interim- and longer-term academic goals is tracked well. Collaborative teams support individual classroom teachers in realigning curriculum and instructional plans and resources as soon as under performance has been identified.

Teachers are accountable to the principal for effectively differentiating their instructional plans and enabling individual students and classrooms to achieve demanding goals. As a result, in the classrooms observed, levels of engagement were high. Students report they find lessons interesting and that teachers are helpful. Parents report their children tell them what they have been doing in school, what they have learned and what they need to do next.

The school manages its budget well, matching resources to the needs of learners in order to achieve challenging goals. Staff are assigned to match student needs and the school’s

overall plans and goals. Group sizes are appropriate and the ratio of students to staff in individual classrooms is clearly related to needs revealed by student achievement data.

It is clear that staff respect students and students respect both their peers and their teachers. Teachers respond well to students' academic needs within and outside the school day. Students have no doubt they can confide in their teachers if and when they need to. All this results in the climate of mutual respect and trust that pervades the school.

Student attendance is a high priority. Parents are contacted when a student is absent and a home visit takes place if absence is extended or persistent. Students are responsible for catching up on work they have missed. Very high student attendance is celebrated.

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 seeks teachers with excellent teaching skills and high expectations of student progress who care for, respect and relate well with children. Professional development is enabling staff to analyze student data and gain a deep understanding of student achievement. All staff use their knowledge of what students can do to identify specific learning skills which if developed further, can facilitate subsequent learning. Teachers contribute very positively to well-organized collaborative planning meetings to revise plans to improve student performance. Staff skill and expertise in using data to raise achievement is shared through a range of activities including inter-classroom visitations, collaborative planning and review meetings. Self- and peer-assessment and review are developing with the goal of improving student achievement.

The principal and her assistant make frequent structured walkthroughs with one teacher from each grade to observe best practice in targeted lessons. Collaborative meetings take place soon after when the practice under review is analyzed by the whole staff and best practices shared. The school holds weekly planning meetings for all teachers and senior staff. Meetings are focused by clear agendas, include everyone in discussion and take appropriate decisions. For example, the cabinet was observed making decisions on school schedules and goals while the intervention and support team decided on the plan for one student identified as a recent but persistent under achiever. Planning, evaluation of results and revision of plans are aimed at driving school improvement and raising student achievement.

Students, parents and staff agree that the principal has the capacity to lead change. She is greatly respected across the school. The school is well ordered with a clear mission to challenge students to highest achievement in all areas of the curriculum. The quality of information to parents and students, so they are aware of and can be involved in school activities, is impressive. The school has excellent relationships with partners, one of whom has sponsored a technology laboratory which is open to students and parents before and after school. Very good after school provision includes homework support for students and popular programs in arts, sports and robotics.

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 school has been careful to ensure that each school plan includes regular interim goals and diagnostic assessments enabling collaborative teams to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan in reaching its longer-term goals. For example, goals are set the previous summer for State tests in English language arts, mathematics and science and student performance is tracked by analyzing the outcomes of regular practice tests. The plan is monitored by the cabinet as well as the appropriate grade level and subject team and revised as required. At the level of individual students, the plans may be realigned more regularly.

Comparisons of student progress within classrooms and across classrooms are made by cabinet, subject area and grade level teams. Comparisons across schools are restricted to overall performance and are made by the cabinet. Overall results are not compared across schools by subject area. Where they are made, the school uses comparisons of performance to assess the progress of plans and interventions. Plans are revised as necessary in order to reach goals. Interim- and longer term goals are revised. In the case of academic achievement goals, these may be revised upwards if progress is more rapid than expected.

The school has developed an effective process for driving successive waves of goal setting and improvement planning. At the end of the school year the cabinet reviews the previous year's goals and outcomes, comparing results with similar schools and the school's previous performance. It revises goals and plans at school and grade levels for the following school year. Collaborative grade teams review performance over the past year and set goals and plans for individual students, classrooms and subject areas to match goals set for grade level and the school. Communication within the school is good and teams and individual staff members are aware of what is required of them. Plans, practices and resources are realigned carefully but responsively to changing circumstances to ensure academic outcomes continue to improve.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Granville T. Woods School (PS 335)	∅	✓	+
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