



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

School of Journalism and Technology

Public School 506

**330 59th Street
Brooklyn
NY 11220**

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Public School 506, the School for Journalism and Technology, serves 757 students in grades pre-kindergarten to grade 5. The school enrolment comprises 75% Hispanic, 21% Asian, 3% White and 1% other students. There are almost 5% special education students, taught in three self-contained special education classes. There are 215 English language learners (28%). Some of these students receive instruction in kindergarten through grade 3 in self-contained English as a second language classes. English language learners in grades 4 and 5 are placed in general education classes and receive either a push-in or a pull-out mode of instruction.

At over 93% attendance is above similar and City schools. This school was restructured from the former Public School 314, whose students were equally divided between the two new schools which are now housed in the same building. The principal was assigned in July, 2006. The school receives Title I funding.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school uses a variety of data effectively to track student progress.
- The principal is a focused leader who has established a culture of respect for all and a high regard for learning.
- School-wide committees such as the pupil personnel team work collaboratively to ensure a quality educational program.
- Budgeting and staffing decisions are based upon the needs of the school.
- Student attendance is over 93% due to a safe and nurturing environment and the respect of staff for the students.
- The workshop model for balanced literacy is consistently utilized and supports the use of curriculum maps for each grade level.
- Parents feel well respected and valued and as a result are actively involved in the daily operation of the school.
- School routines are well established and as a result the school runs smoothly and the school tone is excellent.
- Student achievement is celebrated by displaying samples of student work which represent the high expectations of the staff.
- The instructional team meets weekly to discuss and plan professional development activities based upon the data and the concerns of the staff.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop the analysis of data related to English language learners, special education students and other categories of students needing additional support.
- Implement additional strategies and programs to support English language learners as well as to train all staff in English as a second language methodologies.
- Provide training opportunities and develop resources for staff to consistently differentiate instruction for all students.
- Use performance data to set goals for individuals and groups of students, and then follow these through into measurable whole-school goals.
- Develop systematic ways to monitor and assess the effectiveness of school plans and interventions.
- Further develop the relationship with community-based organizations to support students who have the greatest need for additional academic services.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school with some well-developed features.

This is a restructured school which was established in July, 2006 at which time the principal and the administrative team were selected. Staff were selected throughout the summer as were the students. The supervisory staff work well together, and has created a culture of respect for staff, students and parents. The principal has started to train staff in committees to focus on developing curriculum and intervention activities. As a result, there is a positive learning environment in every classroom. School routines have been well developed which accounts for a smoothly running school. Parents also feel well respected and enjoy participating in school activities.

The school gathers data from standardized exams as well as from the programs it has implemented. Teachers assessment binders are utilized well to collect data concerning student progress in reading and mathematics. The school is focused on improving the instructional program and utilizes the workshop model. Staff receive training on a regular basis. A collaborative spirit exists at team meetings, where supervisors and teachers work together to improve the school program. At this time, the school has identified areas for improvement but some procedures are not completely developed.

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 utilizes data from standardized tests to review performance, as well as a good range of teacher-generated data and some from commercial tests. As a part of the workshop model of instruction, individual teachers develop data in the form of running records of progress in literacy and class progress logs in mathematics. Assessment binders maintained by every teacher are reviewed by the supervisory staff. Although data collection and analysis are increasingly part of regular classroom practice, not all teachers have yet fully understood the value of this, rather than seeing it as an additional task.

Grade team meetings identify those students in the greatest need and refer them to the academic intervention and pupil personnel teams for additional support. Interventions are prescribed and progress is monitored. Data forms have been developed to note the type of intervention service being offered and to track each student's progress. Test results for English language learners are also reviewed and appropriate intervention services are provided although not all teachers understand how best to assess these students and plan instruction to meet their needs.

The school does not yet systematically review assessment data concerning specific ethnic groups and special education students. As the school is relatively new, it is difficult to compare the scores to similar schools as well as across subject areas and ethnic groups.

The school focuses its attention on meeting the needs of those at greatest risk. The staff continues to discuss these issues and is planning further articulation.

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.

As the school was recently restructured, it was unable to conduct a collaborative process to compile the Comprehensive Educational Plan. Nevertheless, the school has a very clear direction in terms of the instructional program. School leaders have developed teams that are working collaboratively to develop school-wide plans to set and reach specific goals appropriate to each grade as well as the needs of the students needing additional academic support.

The academic intervention team has focused on providing service for every student in need and is in the process of involving all staff in this activity. The school sets high expectations for its students and shares this information with the parents. A parent teachers association has been formed with the intention that their participation will become an integral part of the planning for the future. Parents and teachers have established a good rapport and they share information about the children regularly.

All teachers use an assessment binder as a means of maintaining instant access to the progress of students. The school leaders and the teaching staff are all involved in monitoring this process which keeps the lines of communication open so that the school can plan the next steps for individual students.

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.

The school utilizes the mandated curriculum and recognized that additional supplementary materials were needed in reading and mathematics. The mandated curriculum provides various assessments which are utilized to track progress and additional materials are employed to strengthen this process. The school follows the curriculum of Teachers’ College and there are opportunities to monitor progress built into the program. The school provides a great deal of support to teachers in developing the school program and in utilizing the data. Enrichment programs in violin, theater and dance are provided for a cross-section of students. In addition, the school’s theme is enhanced by a focus on the media and technology. This allows the school to appeal to the interests of students.

Staff take opportunities to work collaboratively within their grades to learn from each other as well as to seek help as needed. Meeting time is provided and members of the instructional team are an integral part of these planning sessions. The school has implemented the learning standards and a pacing calendar to guide lesson planning. Coaches support the process by helping teachers understand how to utilize curriculum maps. Lessons are based upon the students’ needs and they are monitored by the instructional team. Teachers modify lessons based upon their observations and

knowledge of the students, and group students for attention to particular skills or content. However, student data is not yet fully used to plan differentiated instruction matched to the next step for individuals and groups.

Budgeting and staffing decisions are planned to support the needs of all students. Teachers were hired to support special education students as well as small group sessions for English language learners. In addition, academic intervention and reading recovery teachers were hired to support students in need, and cluster positions funded to support the development of the school's journalism and technology themes. Scheduling is based upon the needs of students and it provides blocks for literacy and mathematics. English as a second language and intervention programs are included as a part of the school day. Students enjoy their lessons and are actively engaged in the instructional program. They are beginning to take responsibility for their learning as they understand how to correct their writing and how to select books at an appropriate level.

It is evident that students are well respected, as illustrated by the positive way staff speak to students and the high expectations they have of them. Students recognize the respectful treatment and respond accordingly, trusting that adults will help them when necessary. Student attendance is over 93% which is above that for the City as a whole. In part, this success is due to the fact that students feel safe and happy in the school. Parents are pleased with the school and they make every effort to guarantee that their children attend daily. The school team follows up student absenteeism swiftly by communicating with the home.

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.

There is a rigorous selection process to secure new staff. Teachers are expected to have a clear understanding of the workshop model and a willingness to be a part of a collaborative team, using data to drive instruction. Where necessary, support is given to develop these skills in data use if the candidates are otherwise suitable. The process has proven to be successful in securing a capable team of teaching staff.

The professional development program is based upon the needs of the students, with a range of effective strategies including support for new teachers, demonstration lessons, mentoring and coaching, workshops and presentations. Staff are in agreement as to what they need and respond well to training. The instructional team considers staff concerns and provides next steps. Collaborative planning sessions and classroom inter-visitations allow teachers to share their best practices and to maximize their teaching skills.

The principal visits classrooms on a daily basis with a particular focus. She is well respected due to her professional manner and her knowledge of the subject matter. Her suggestions are accepted and acted upon. The staff are aware that the principal has a clear vision for improving the school and have accepted the goals and plans that have been introduced. The process to plan and evaluate results is underway. School leaders meet with the staff in teams to consider student progress.

School routines have been developed and are followed by the staff and students. Parents feel that the school runs well and helps to support these routines. Routines are changed when necessary, especially when they improve school tone and the safety of the school

community. The school has a partnership with a community-based organization but the program is not sufficiently integrated with the needs of the school. The program does not focus sufficiently on improving the academic skills of all students and providing enrichment activities.

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.

In some ways, the school effectively monitors its plans and makes revisions according to new information. The school is focused on assessing students and utilizing the data to improve instruction. The literacy results are monitored four times a year and intervention services are provided based upon progress checks made by the staff and the instructional team. Teachers also compare writing samples to the standards and review them utilizing a school rubric. There is a set school calendar for test preparation. Princeton results and mathematics unit tests are also utilized as assessments. Staff meet to discuss the instructional program. The teachers collect and interpret data in grade level teams, which is productive in developing consistent practice. As a consequence, teachers are becoming more skilled at identifying intervention services for their students. Teachers revise teaching methods as they note a lack of student progress, although this is not yet consistently flexible enough.

Although there is developing practice in goal-setting, data is not yet used systematically to set goals for individual students and groups, and then aggregated these to form whole-school goals. As of yet, procedures for monitoring and revising of goals are not fully an integral part of the school culture, either at individual student, group or whole-school level. The system of reviewing school goals and determining the effectiveness of intervention programs needs to be more fully developed so that school leaders can be certain that all students are equally serviced.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: School of Journalism and Technology (PS 506)	∅	✓	+
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.	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
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.	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	
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.	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	
Overall score for Quality Statement 5		X	