



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Public School 771

**1075 Oceanview Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11235**

Principal: Sharon Meyers Izzo

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Public School 771 is a school for special education students located on six sites in the south of Brooklyn. It provides education for 394 special education students from kindergarten through grade 12. All students have disabilities including emotional disturbance, hearing impairment, autism and physical challenges. Students come from across Brooklyn and many students have long journeys each day. There are 46 classes across the sites, where instruction is provided in the following student to teacher to para-professional ratios; 12:1:1, 8:1:1, 8:1, 12:1:4 and 6:1:1. One third of students follow standardized assessments and two thirds alternate assessment. Forty six percent of students are Black, 15% Hispanic, 33% White and 6% Asian. Eight percent are English language learners and sixty one percent of students are Title 1 eligible.

Attendance is currently at 89%.

There is an overall school principal and two assistant principals, each of whom manages three of the sites.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal is a well-respected leader of the school community, who makes clear her mission to improve the school and students' learning outcomes.
- Extensive data is gathered on standardized and alternate assessment students to give a full picture of their progress and performance.
- Teachers and support staff work well together to provide whole school programs.
- There is a clear focus on high expectations to enable all students to develop and learn.
- The school is creative in overcoming limited facilities at host sites, so that students can receive the curriculum they need.
- Curriculum materials are carefully selected and matched to individuals students' needs.
- Student absence is followed up diligently, which has led to increased attendance.
- Classroom observations are part of school routine and underperformance identified through this process is constructively challenged.
- The school works well with other community-based organizations to support adults in making progress.
- Rigorous evaluation of progress is used to influence the school's goals for the subsequent year.

What the school needs to improve

- Engage all teachers in using data to compare the performance of different groups of students.
- Continue to extend the ways in which administration and teachers analyze data for patterns and trends.
- Ensure that all staff use data routinely and consistently to plan differentiated instruction.
- Ensure that all agreed procedures are implemented and sustained at all sites.
- Define measurable goals with interim measures in the Comprehensive Education Plan.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school.

The principal provides sensitive and purposeful leadership, challenges under-performance and strives for special education students to be regarded as equals with other students. She is clear about the need for continual improvement to provide the most effective support and instruction for students at all sites. The principal leads the school in gathering data and which is presented to teachers at all sites. This is currently not fully utilized by staff to influence instruction and define plans. The school has embraced technology, particularly to support students in communicating independently. Working partnerships are well-used and enable the school to provide integrated service programs.

Interaction with parents is encouraged and the school works hard to involve more parents in their children's school life. Students form close, supportive relationships with staff, which is reflected in students wanting to share vacation highlights with them.

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 gathers an increasing range of data about the progress and performance of all standardized and alternate assessment students. In order to increase objectivity in teacher-marked assessments, some teachers mark tests for students from sites where they do not teach. This is supplemented by informal observations from staff so that a full picture of students is available to staff. The principal draws together scores so that she has a clear understanding of the performance of students in every class.

The school uses its' knowledge of students well, for example in determining the level of support needed for English language learners. Information is not specifically gathered on any particular group as numbers are low, but the performance of each student is recorded alongside all other students. Staff receive a high level of support from coaches and administration to help overcome a lack of confidence or resistance to gathering data. Some information is gathered to show what students can currently do, but this is not routine, which limits the overall information and comparisons on rates of progress and performance.

Some comparisons of data are made, for particular circumstances, but this is not part of routine. The principal uses data to indicate progress made in different classes but does not analyze data to highlight variations between different sites or groups of students, for example boys and girls, even though this is clear from report cards.

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.

Teachers, support service staff and coaches collaborate regularly to review information on students at each site. Teachers weekly common planning time is focused on reviewing weekly progress and identifying changes for the coming week, whilst longer term progress is reviewed termly for all students at grade meetings at each site. The focus of these meetings is more on short and medium term goals than on longer term goals or on how the progress each student makes links to the school’s overall goals in the Comprehensive Education Plan. Teachers are not yet probing the data presented to them, in order to identify trends and patterns which affect progress and performance. This limits the development of plans with defined time-scales for students to achieve goals.

The process to review individual education plan goals is established and uses information from all the professionals and staff involved with the student. Psychologists maintain clear records of reviews and changes made to goals and plans for students so that the impact of changes can be evaluated. The school provides additional, focused support for students where data shows little or no progress. Additional intervention classes and after-school programs are continually adapted to meet students’ needs. The school is currently evaluating the impact of additional intervention, in order to determine how best to support students further.

When student reviews show that they are making unexpected levels of progress, the administrative team acts promptly to review goals set. Amendments to individual education plan goals are agreed to ensure that all students are sufficiently challenged. Students are informed of what they need to do in lessons, but are less clear about longer term goals. Parents are informed of goals at the annual individual education plan meeting and workshops are arranged to inform them about school life. Where students have little spoken language, home-school books are used daily to inform them of the day at school and how they can be supported at home. The school works hard to engage parents.

Service providers meet regularly with the staff involved with each student to review activities and progress for individuals. Those involved include therapists, psychologists, social workers and education staff. These meetings ensure that the individual programs integrate input from different services and that all staff are driven by the goals and plans for each student.

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 ensures that all students receive the mandated curriculum and works hard to overcome restricted access to shared facilities at host schools. The school is persistent in seeking full access to host schools, so that these students can be treated equally. Students in the inclusion programs receive the full curriculum alongside general education students. The school is creative in adapting subject content to minimize the impact that limited access to facilities makes to the delivery of the curriculum and student learning

outcomes. Teachers also work successfully to find age and content appropriate materials, especially for alternate assessment students. Particular attention is paid to students' learning styles and the staff is very adept at incorporating visual, auditory and kinesthetic approaches into their classes. A range of technology is widely used at all sites to enable students to access the curriculum and communicate independently. Each month this is carefully reviewed to ensure that it is used to best effect by both staff and students.

There is inconsistency in the way that data is used by teachers. The principal makes clear that data is to be used as the basis for instruction and used to monitor student progress regularly. However a minority of teachers do not work in this way which leads to variations in how well instruction is matched to student needs. Ongoing support is provided to enable teachers' practice to change.

The principal actively reviews the contributions of support staff and monitors their activity logs systematically to verify that they support learning effectively. She knows that some alternate assessment students are uncomfortable with changes of staff and addresses this well by adapting the schedule to allow for continuity. Where host sites do allow access to shared facilities, the school adapts its' overall schedule to fit around the host school times.

Alternate assessment students engage well with classes that use technology, which allows them to express their own views. They contribute answers for themselves which adds to their self-esteem. Student representatives are positive about students being challenged in classes, using technology and opportunities they have for independent work. Teachers know the students well and are sensitive to changes in the behavior and responses of all students, including those with no verbal communication. Symbols and technology are effectively used to support them through any unsettled periods.

Addressing non-attendance is a priority for the school. The average attendance rate of 89% includes lower than average attendance by medically fragile students. Long term absence is tackled rigorously and the attendance teacher has frequent and direct contact with students' families to address poor attendance. This attention has led to the school reaching its' current attendance level.

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 is unwavering in her drive for teachers to use data routinely and seeks information about this from potential members of the team during the recruitment process. The content of professional development is influenced by what is needed to support the introduction of new programs and initiatives and areas highlighted in the yearly self-assessment carried out by teachers. The principal also ensures that areas highlighted during classroom observations are provided for in professional development. Whilst professional development is well-planned, resulting changes and the overall impact are not formally evaluated. Coaches play a lead role in delivering professional development, but are not yet held to account, by showing the impact that it makes.

The routine for assistant principals to carry out formal and informal classroom observations each year is well-established. The principal ensures that standards are uniformly applied at each site through her informal observations and formal observations when under-

performance is suspected. Teachers share good practice through observing each other, mostly within the same site, but some staff from different sites also have observed classes. The principal is a visible leader at all the school sites and is well-regarded as supporting staff development and students in their learning. She is a well-respected leader of the school community, well-liked by students and appreciated for her calm and quiet manner. Students know the implications of poor behavior and are well-supported in developing strategies to minimize any outbursts.

Procedures to be applied by teachers at all sites to ensure that the school runs effectively have been agreed, but these are not implemented consistently. This leads to variable approaches to instruction and indicates ineffective monitoring of staff performance at those sites. Where this occurs, the principal holds assistant principals to account and monitors their work and practice to ensure that agreed systems are applied.

Excellent use has been made of the relationship with Brooklyn College's Assistive Communication team who have assessed student suitability for communication devices and provided technological aids that are well-matched to their needs. The principal holds community-based services to account through her rigorous processes for monitoring their contribution and seeking evidence of the impact this makes.

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 has defined processes to review Comprehensive Education Plan goals and establish goals for the next year. These are not yet used to the full, as goals lack precision in overall and interim measures. The school routinely reviews progress at student and school level through the year. During their observation visits to all sites, the leadership team checks what progress is being made against the Comprehensive Education Plan. This process is limited by the lack of definition in the goals and insufficient focus being given to the impact of actions. At the start of each year, the Comprehensive Education Plan goals are discussed with staff but the goals are not broken down and defined to make clear the contribution needed from each site, grade and class.

Progress against each individual education plan is reviewed by the coaches and an assistant principal twice each year. Established systems take test scores, Brigance data and behavior scores into account when evaluating student progress. Improved results and informal observations lead to transfers to less restrictive environments and changes of intervention techniques. Flexibility in using staff and changing plans is evident at one site where the analysis of data on student behavior identified times of frequent crisis. Changes to staffing at this site have led to increased support at this time and a reduced number of crises. Information from other support services also triggers changes to intervention and support. For example, communication assessments by speech and language specialists have highlighted the need to change communication devices for students. Individual education plans are routinely amended following changes in communication.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Public School 771	∅	✓	+
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	