



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Alfred E. Smith Elementary School

Public School 01

**8 Henry Street
New York,
NY 10038**

Principal: Amy Hom

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Reviewer: Chip Morrison

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Public School 1, which occupies an historic, well-maintained building in the heart of Chinatown, has been educating immigrant children for more than one hundred years. The school currently serves 620 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. Approximately 73% are Asian, 14% Hispanic, 11% Black, and 2% are from White or American Indian heritage. Special education students are in self-contained special needs classrooms and, at 4%, the proportion is smaller than found in similar and City schools. The proportion of English language learners at 30% is far higher. The school receives Title I funding. Average attendance is 96%, which is significantly higher than that for similar and City schools. Approximately 90% of students remain enrolled throughout the academic year, which corresponds to student stability in similar schools.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Although relatively new to the position, the principal is a strong instructional leader who effectively translates her vision for high-quality instruction.
- The principal and her leadership team have created a culture of reflective practice and continuous professional learning.
- The school's leadership effectively draws on data from a range of sources and supplements this with teachers' own assessments and observations.
- Instructional quality is consistently high throughout the school, and lessons are focused, well organized, and intellectually engaging.
- The school offers a full range of high-quality academic support services for students.
- Instructional leaders, coaches, and staff developers pay close attention to what is going on in classrooms, visiting most classrooms at least once each day.
- The school makes effective use of partnerships with external organizations and there is a special emphasis on combining academics with the arts.
- The principal is especially effective at recruiting and retaining high-quality staff and making the best use of their unique talents and experiences.
- Although many students are English language learners, they consistently achieve well.

What the school can improve

- Set more objectively quantitative goals for student performance by grade and class level and for ethnic and gender groups.
- Set and use interim goals to measure the school's progress towards meeting these goals.
- Continue working with classroom teachers to develop a set of standardized generic rubrics for evaluating student work across grade levels and subject areas.
- Expand the use of lesson study, creating additional opportunities for small groups of teachers to design, observe and discuss lessons collaboratively.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well-developed school.

Under the stewardship of a young but exceptionally knowledgeable principal, this school is continuing a tradition of helping a largely immigrant population attain high academic standards. Although large numbers of students are English language learners, the school consistently and substantially outperforms similar and City schools on State tests. It is on the basis of results that the school has been identified by the Chancellor as a high performing school.

These remarkable outcomes are clearly the result of a combination of critical factors. These include high expectations for all students, a detailed knowledge of the strengths and academic needs of individual students, a solid, school-wide alignment of curriculum, standards and assessment and classroom instruction that is of especially high quality.

While the school does sets overall goals for individual student achievement and monitors progress closely, it does not yet set interim goals for different groups of students by class, grade, gender and ethnicity. Good focus is given to professional development. Further consideration is taking place of how to sustain the consistency of the current high quality instruction should any changes of staffing occur.

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 makes effective use of existing student performance data to identify academic needs and track progress over time. In addition to data from State and City testing programs, the school uses interim diagnostics and a wide range of recognized assessments. Teachers receive frequently up-dated summary data sheets showing the progress of individual students over the course of the school year. Consistent with the principal's vision that every teacher in the school bears some responsibility for the success of every student, all teachers see the data on every student in the school. Instructional leaders also have access to, and use, reports to gain a clear overview of performance and progress disaggregated by classroom, grade-level, subject, ethnic group, and other relevant categories.

The school pays close attention to data that shows how its students perform in comparison to students in similar schools. Conference notes, writing portfolios, and reading logs are shared during grade meetings, faculty conferences, and sessions with staff developers to update information about each student's performance. Teachers frequently get together to review and discuss samples of student work, under the guidance of staff developers. Teachers have different systems for evaluating students that enable them to keep close track of students in their class. However, there is no consistent framework for measuring the quality of student work across classrooms, subject areas, and grade levels. As a

result, information from reviews of student work is not captured systematically to provide school-level data on what students know and are able to do with their knowledge.

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.

All members of the school community have an especially strong commitment to helping each student move forward academically. This goal drives their work. While the ultimate goal is to have all students meeting or exceeding State standards, the day-to-day focus is on identifying where individual students are academically and then successfully targeting instruction to those specific needs. Through focused collaboration, staff development, and grade-level meetings, teachers have a clear understanding of what each of their students need to achieve academically by the end of the year. As a result, all students achieve well in all subject areas. However, the school does not yet articulate specific interim or long-term goals for growth by class, and grade level, or by ethnic group and gender. As a result, it is difficult for instructional leaders to measure school-wide progress in these areas as rigorously as they might.

The school gives good emphasis to accelerating the progress of special education students, English language learners and those at risk of not reaching grade standards. To help meet identified needs, students receive a full range of academic support services. These include one-on-one and small-group tutoring during the school day, during the extended-day period after school, and during a Saturday academy that is staffed by trained volunteers. These supplementary instructional activities are carefully monitored for quality by the principal and her leadership team.

The school, parents and students have equally high expectations for everyone’s achievement. Considerable efforts go into helping parents support their children’s learning. Data from a needs assessment survey is used effectively to plan workshops for parents and fully involve them in the life of the school. In this way, workshops on dental hygiene, internet use, and culinary arts are targeted specifically to need. During bi-annual parent-teacher conferences, teachers explain where each child is academically, what the specific goals are, and what is being done to help ensure that these goals are met. As a result, parents have a good understanding of what they can do to help their children in school and at home. All oral and written communications with parents are conducted in and translated into the home language.

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.

The school has exceptionally capable literacy and mathematics coaches, who work closely with classroom teachers, giving model lessons and ensuring that they understand the curriculum for their grade level and for the grade level above them. All classrooms are print-rich environments. Most are well-organized, with displays of instructions and guidelines, word walls, and well-stocked, well-used classroom libraries. In literacy,

teachers use assignment-specific rubrics to evaluate student work and there is good emphasis on the writing process. The school uses a progressive mathematics curriculum that emphasizes conceptual understanding through inquiry. Exempt from the mandated curriculum, the school makes sure that its curriculum is fully aligned with State standards.

Teachers take full responsibility for students' learning. Through classroom assessments and close work with individual students, they have a good understanding of student needs. Grouping of students is flexible, based on emerging identified needs as these change from one unit to the next. Instruction is of a very high quality and fully differentiated. Students are well behaved and fully engaged in lessons. Classrooms are well organized and well resourced. In the lower grades, there is good use of grouping and independent work at learning stations, allowing teachers to focus on the identified needs of a small group of students, while others are fruitfully engaged in the station activities. There is a successful emphasis on higher-order questioning, peer sharing, and accountable talk.

Budgeting, staffing, and scheduling decisions are focused on improving student outcomes, especially for students in need. The principal is continually juggling her schedule, budget, and staff assignment to ensure that staff are available where they are most needed. She is especially concerned to make the most of teacher's unique skills and talents, and shifts staff around to put them in positions where they can be most effective.

Good emphasis is given to students' welfare and personal development. A full array of services, including counseling and social work outreach is available for students in need. Students feel confident to ask adults for help and support with concerns of an academic or personal nature. Attendance is monitored rigorously and any prolonged absences trigger immediate attention.

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 staff selection process is very rigorous. Short-listed applicants spend three days in the school, getting to know other teachers and, on the third day, teaching a demonstration lesson. The principal is successful at identifying high-quality teachers who can begin contributing immediately and able to use data to inform their instruction. The school manages to attract and retain a large number of energetic, well-educated young teachers. The leadership team effectively mentors newly appointed teachers, and provides a range of opportunities for professional learning. New teachers unanimously express appreciation for the support they have received from the principal, staff developers, and colleagues.

Professional development is driven by identified needs and is largely embedded in the daily work of the classroom. The literacy and mathematics coaches spend most of their time in classrooms modelling lessons, co-teaching, and discussing instructional issues to further develop teachers' knowledge and expertise. There has been some progress in establishing the use of lesson study as a focus of professional learning although this is still in an initial stage. Professional learning for untenured teachers is focused around a system of portfolios that teachers compile to document their learning in a particular area over a year.

The principal is in classrooms every day, and in particular focusing on and giving feedback to new and less skilful teachers. The principal has developed excellent contacts with other

principals and instructional leaders within the district. She and her staff frequently visit other high-performing schools in the district to share and learn. For example, the school has identified the need to improve its pre-kindergarten science curriculum and is currently visiting other schools that are known to have special expertise in this area.

Teachers meet regularly to review and discuss individual student progress, using classroom observations and samples of student work to focus the discussions. The pupil personnel and academic intervention services teams meet regularly to discuss the progress of students at risk and to devise strategies for meeting their needs. Learning is planned collaboratively through a series of well structured and regular team meetings within and across grades. At these meetings, teachers evaluate their practice and teaching methods, and share ideas that have been particularly successful.

The principal has a well-deserved reputation as a strong instructional leader who has good ability to effect positive change. The school runs smoothly. Students are especially well behaved. Teachers and students clearly respect each other and have built positive relationships. Discipline is light handed but effective.

Over the years, the school has developed an especially broad range of strong and useful partnerships with outside organizations. One of the longest enduring has been the National Dance Institute partnership, which has been sustained for 20 years. This is consistent with the principal's belief in the importance of the arts in children's education.

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.

Monitoring of student progress toward goals is embedded in the daily work of the school. To this end, teachers and instructional leaders use a range of assessment data sources successfully to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of programs and interventions and make adjustments as necessary. This information is used to obtain a continuous and constantly updated picture of which skills and concepts have already been mastered, and which remain to be taught and learned by the end of the year. There is a particular emphasis in this school on reflective practice, in which teachers are expected to continually evaluate the impact of their teaching on student learning, both individually and in collaboration with others. However, because the school does not compare the performance and progress of different student groups across classes and grades rigorously, the school's systems are not yet well developed in this aspect

Goals in the school's Comprehensive Education Plan are revisited twice annually, once to share with staff, and later to review individual goals and plan for the coming year. In this way, the plan is a living document and evaluation is ongoing. The school does not set specific and quantitative interim goals for the progress of all groupings of students and so does not have an objective measure to rigorously evaluate progress toward reaching whole-school goals.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Alfred E. Smith Elementary School [PS1]	∅	✓	+
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	