



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Anna Silver School

Public School 20

**166 Essex Street
New York
NY 10002**

Principal: Felix Gil

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Reviewer: Ted Solow

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Public School 20 is a pre-kindergarten through grade 5 school located on the Lower East Side in Manhattan. There are 648 students enrolled at the school. The ethnic balance of the student body is 63.5% Hispanic, 30% Asian, 5% Black, and 1.5% White.

Spanish is the main language youngsters and their families speak at home. English language learners comprise 40% of the student body. These students are served in English as a second language push-in and pull-out models of instruction.

The special education program provides services for 10% of the students who are in one self-contained class and classes supported by the school's special education teacher support services. These classes also use the push-in and pull-out models of instruction.

The average daily attendance is approximately 95% which exceeds the rate of similar schools throughout the City. This school has received Title 1 funding for the past four years.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal demonstrates strong leadership qualities and fosters an atmosphere of collegiality among all staff members.
- The principal focuses on teaching and learning within a school philosophy of high expectations for all students.
- The principal and assistant principal are highly visible, supportive, and caring.
- English language arts and mathematics data are used to address the needs, strengths, and interests of the students in each class and grade.
- Grade teams work collaboratively to provide optimal teaching and learning conditions for the school.
- The curriculum map developed by the staff shows the month by month progression of content areas for each grade.
- The building is well maintained; the hall and classrooms bulletin boards exhibit many examples of student work reflecting current classroom activities.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop further strategies for engaging parents to become more active partners in their children's learning.
- Use existing data to analyze the performance of specific groups of students, including ethnic groups, to check whether all groups do equally well.
- Create measurable goals for students to monitor their own progress.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well-developed school.

The principal is beginning his third year at the school, the second as principal. He selected an instructional specialist with a background in English language learning from the region to be the assistant principal. Together they have made a positive impact on the entire school community. When surveyed, the teachers, students, and parents gave high grades for the changes being made at the school. The building is well-maintained and the halls and classrooms are beautifully decorated with many examples of current classroom endeavors.

There is a feeling of family at this school. Teams of teachers in each grade work harmoniously with the two literacy coaches and the mathematics consultant to improve instructional strategies in the classroom. There is an in-house data base, created and maintained by the academic intervention specialist, who updates it weekly to track every student in the school. This system allows for the classroom teachers to get current information regarding the performance and needs of their students.

The principal has put several programs and professional development activities in place to provide information about how to address differentiated instruction in the mixed ability classroom. He has also been working with the community to increase participation in the parent-teacher association. This year the school community is developing strategies for parents to become active partners in their children's education. The school's data shows an increase of 11.6% in the English language arts test in levels 3 and 4 over the past 3 years as a result of the effective use of data to guide instruction.

How well the school meets New York City's evaluation criteria

Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor student progress over time.

This area of the school's work is well developed.

Teaching and learning are the guiding principles at this school. To that end, the staff use all available data to monitor and track student progress. Students are tracked in the lower grades by specialists in literacy, using objective tools such as Early Childhood Language Arts Assessment System (ECLAS-2), Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), Terra Nova, and Peabody. These tools, along with classroom assessments, observations, conferencing, and running records are reviewed and updated every two weeks to observe development. In the upper grades, mathematics and literacy students are given quarterly Princeton Review assessments which inform teachers of deficits and strengths. Results are reviewed with the mathematics consultant and literacy coach at weekly grade meetings. Teachers are adept at using, interpreting and analyzing data. These skills enable them to target students' areas of needs and strengths.

Assessment data is used to assist professionals in targeting students who are at risk, falling behind, English language learners, and special education students. To help the

teachers use and interpret all assessment data, professional development activities are in place to enhance their skills.

The administrative team reviews its performance from year to year to observe annual progress as well as how the school fares with similar schools and schools that perform on a higher level in the City. Results are analyzed and areas for improvement are identified which allows for setting goals for the future. The school does not target specific ethnic groups when they analyze performance. Some comparisons are made between academic subjects and classrooms, to check whether all groups do equally well.

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.

A collaborative culture has been established at this school. The staff share ideas with the common goal of improving student progress. Teachers set student goals during conferencing sessions, parent meetings, and with their colleagues at weekly grade conferences. The staff is well versed in using student data to plan and set goals to meet individual student needs. Teachers know how their students make progress because they keep running records, use the school’s data bank of assessment information, and routinely examine student work folders. Conferences are held with other teachers and support personnel to discuss experiences and insights in order to provide multiple approaches to meeting the needs of their students. Predetermined benchmark intervals are developed to support teachers in collecting and analyzing data in order to help expedite the actual alignment of data with instructional practices.

At-risk students are referred to the academic intervention team and those students are tested. Classroom strategies are then developed to address their needs and are reviewed with the teacher and other service providers. This initial step takes place before the student moves on to tier two levels of services by the team. Each student’s progress is reviewed every 20 days. Services are provided using push-in and pull-out modes of instruction and during the early morning academic extended-day program. As a result, these students perform well, and their achievement in external tests is higher than average for similar schools.

Students meet with their teachers during group and individual conferencing sessions. Feedback is given during informal conversations, comments on assignments, and on returned projects and tests. Most of the youngsters know what level they are on and what they have to do to move onto the next level. However, several students stated that they would like to have the tools to monitor their own progress.

In addition to the report cards, parents receive regular communications from the school and progress notes from their child’s teacher and other school personnel. The parent coordinator has begun an outreach program to train parents to help their children with schoolwork. There is an after-school program in language development activities for parents and their children. Some parents remain harder to reach, despite the school’s efforts.

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 is exempt from the City’s mandated uniform curriculum in English language arts and mathematics. These are now based on the Teachers’ College literacy program in the upper grades and the Orton-Gillingham literacy program in the early childhood grades. The mathematics curriculum is founded on Everyday Mathematics. Data generated from interim assessments both formal and informal are used by grade teams to plan common activities and lesson plans aligned to the curriculum in literacy and mathematics.

Teachers are held accountable for improving instruction and student outcomes, setting goals by reviewing work and through individual conferences, having positive communication with parents, and supporting students to ensure success. Weekly grade conferences led by a team leader, address current data, evaluate student work, and recommend remedial strategies.

Budgetary practices indicate that the principal is an effective manager. Approximately 75% of the school’s budget is devoted to classroom instruction and instructional support services. The technology program which is closely linked to the instructional program is supported in the budget. There are ample supplies of textbooks and library material in every classroom.

Students are engaged in constructive activities. The classroom bulletin boards and clotheslines strung across the rooms have many examples of current student work. Several students commented, “We really enjoy our school” and “our teachers are always available to help us”. There is a culture of mutual respect that permeates the school.

Attendance rates are much higher than similar schools in the City. Procedures are in place to contact parents of absent children on the first day of absence. All attendance policies are communicated to the staff, students, and parents.

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.

Staff are selected by the school-based option committee. Candidates are selected for their content knowledge, understanding how data is used to drive instruction, sharing the school’s vision, communication skills, and teaching ability. The assistant principal was selected for his expertise in English as a second language instruction and skill in analyzing and using data to improve instruction.

Professional development activities are planned with staff input and based on data that identifies the needs of the school. Training is conducted by the principal, assistant principal, literacy coaches, the mathematics consultant and staff members. Teachers are offered opportunities to attend regional and City training sessions. Information from these sessions is shared at faculty conferences and discussed at grade team meetings. The principal conducts walkthroughs with staff members, and gives supportive feedback to promote and share good practices. The focus of professional development activities this

past year has been on differentiation of instruction in the mixed ability classroom, and this is having a positive impact on teachers' classroom strategies.

The principal and assistant principal are highly visible around the school. They visit classes several times a week and provide feedback through formal and informal evaluations. They regularly review student work to assess progress, although all staff would like to devote more time to this. Both administrators are highly respected by the school community.

The school has developed partnerships with many community organizations. Bank Street College graduate school provides interns who support teachers in working with students in mathematics and other content areas. The Henry Street Settlement provides assistance in the implementation of the after-school program which is rich with academic support, English as a second language classes, and a recreation program. There are additional partnerships with CBS, Estee Lauder Company, and Rosie's Kids, which brings dance and theater instruction to the school.

Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has built-in structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year, recognizing weaknesses in its improvement plans and teaching practices, and flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerated learning.

This area of the school's work is well developed.

The Comprehensive Educational Plan clearly outlines practices and policies for evaluating student progress throughout the year. Individual and class progress is addressed through weekly grade meetings, faculty meetings, conferences with the literacy coaches and the mathematics consultant, and the academic intervention services team. At these meetings student work is evaluated and planning takes place to develop and refine lesson strategies. The progress of at-risk students is reviewed every two weeks. All other students are reviewed for meeting established benchmarks each 20 days.

The school regularly reviews and analyzes current data to compare progress being made in each grade and in the school. There is a well developed practice using data to make comparisons with similar schools in the City. The principal recognizes the need to refine the school's analysis of the progress of groups of students within the school.

Data generated by the school and by other reporting agencies is used effectively to revise plans and modify long-range and short-range goals.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Anna Silver School (PS 20)	∅	✓	+
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