



# **The New York City Department of Education**



# **Quality Review Report**

**Augustus Saint-Gaudens School**

**Public School 40**

**319 East 19 Street  
New York  
NY 10003**

**Principal: Susan Felder**

**Dates of review: January 18 - 22, 2007**

**Reviewer: Stephen M. Drakes**

# Content of the report

## **Part 1: The School Context**

Information about the school

## **Part 2: Overview**

What the school does well  
What the school needs to improve

## **Part 3: Main Findings**

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

## **Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

This elementary school has 548 enrolled students in grades pre-kindergarten through 5. The school's population is made up of 62% White, 7% Black, 15% Hispanic and 15% students from Asian and other backgrounds. The school is not eligible for Title 1 funding. The proportion of special education students is 7% and of English language learners is 3%. Both proportions are smaller than in similar and City schools. The school's student attendance at 94% is about the same as similar schools and better than in City schools.

This school is a recipient of New York State reduced class size funding in grades kindergarten through three. This school added its first assistant principal to its organization in September 2006.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal is a superior educator who leads a well-organized and safe school community where all members are valued and supported.
- School goals are focused and clearly articulated to the school community.
- The school makes good use of data to inform instruction and prescribe academic intervention strategies.
- Teachers are committed to high-level instruction and take advantage of many professional development opportunities to hone their craft.
- The school's instructional program is strong, and students are engaged and excited about their learning.
- The school works hard to develop an assortment of assessment tools and uses them effectively to monitor student progress.
- Communication at the school is well developed, allowing for productive exchanges amongst the stakeholders and resulting in a well-informed school community.
- The extended day program is expansive and aligns well with the school's day program providing both academic intervention services and enrichment.
- The school is very clean and beautifully decorated with student work.
- Members of the school community are proud of their school and its achievements and are happy to be part of the family.

### What the school needs to improve

- Further develop the school's use of data so that it becomes fully established in practice.
- Continue to close the academic performance gap between student groups.

## Part 3: Main findings

### Overall Evaluation

#### **This is a well-developed school.**

The school has been transformed over the last several years into a cohesive family community. This concept of community is a key focus for the entire school. It is found in the curriculum and throughout the school culture, and supports the instructional program in a very human way. The communication between all of the school's stakeholders, the support extended by the administration to teachers and teachers to students and the respect that everyone has for everyone else has built strength in the community. As a result, students feel cared for and cared about.

High expectations, student-centered and engaging instruction and effective academic supports promote high achievement. The administration, the academic intervention team and support staff work closely with teachers to monitor student progress and effectively address their academic and personal needs. The principal knows each student by name and by academic performance.

Parents are welcomed into the school and their involvement adds to the school's success. One exemplary program encourages parents to be reading partners by inviting the parents of kindergarten students into the classroom on a daily basis to read to their children.

### **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.**

The school is diligent about using data in its many forms to establish a baseline for each of its students. Beyond the good use of data from standardized tests, it continues to skillfully develop a clear academic picture of all of its students by administering a range of its own assessments. The principal, the assistant principal, the academic coach and the pupil personnel intervention team all play active roles in this process by helping teachers gather, generate, interpret and compare progress data. This information is used well to collaboratively plan appropriate next steps for groups and individual students.

Teachers collect student progress data throughout the year and compile this information using various systems, including assessment notebooks in each classroom. The teacher uses this information to plan and adapt instruction appropriately. The principal and assistant principal conduct class reviews with each teacher to examine student progress, evaluate instructional plans, and to discuss possible student referrals to the pupil personnel intervention team for additional support.

The school looks closely at how far tests results improve each year and compares its performance with similar and other City schools. School personnel continue to look closely at groups of students whose academic performance lag behind others to isolate causes for this gap, to determine these students' specific needs and to apply the appropriate interventions. The strategies in place at this school have enabled these groups of students to make impressive gains on most standardized tests over time. For example, it has collated a wide range of statistical evidence that enables comparisons to be made

about the performance and progress of different ethnic groups and of boys and girls in English language arts, mathematics and science. The school is rapidly making the use of data more established in practice and continues to close the identified achievement gap between some ethnic and gender groups.

**Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use available data to understand each student’s next learning step. Through collaborative planning and student and parent engagement, they set high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating each student’s learning.**

**This area of the school’s work is well developed.**

The administration communicates clearly the importance of data analysis as it relates to monitoring students’ progress, setting measurable goals and planning effective instructional programs to meet the needs of individuals and groups of students. Supports are in place to provide teachers with assistance as they use data to drive instruction. All members of the staff team play their part in setting short- and long-term goals to improve student achievement. Parents are regularly included in this process that determines the next steps in their children’s academic plan. The school’s goals are shared with all parents and explained at the first parent teacher association meeting held in September. Parents are regularly invited to share information about their children and so help the school set goals for improvement. Students know their target goals because of regular conversations with teachers about their work. This ensures that high expectations for student achievement are foremost on all stakeholders’ agenda and drive everyone’s work.

Group meetings are consistently held throughout the year, enabling valuable collaborative reflection on past and current practice, analysis of student outcome data and planning regularly updated interim goals for student performance. The school leadership team, composed of administrators, teachers and parents, takes the information collected by these groups into consideration as it designs the goals and action plans for the school.

The school is rigorous in its use of data indicators to make the best decisions about how to plan for its students in need. The administration and the pupil personnel intervention team are in touch with both the classroom teacher and parents. They use the data generated from classroom instruction and from interim assessments to have informed discussions with all involved about appropriate academic intervention services, approaches and next steps. Effective teacher monitoring of student progress in the special education kindergarten class has resulted in several students being mainstreamed into general education.

**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.**

This school aligns its curriculum and programs effectively to its standards-based instruction to meet the needs of all students. The curriculum is well organized so it teaches one subject’s skills through another and adds purpose and meaning to learning. A school-wide focus includes developing writing units of study and teaching social studies through an integrated curriculum including writing and the arts. As a result, programs give

considerable opportunity to practice skills and to apply English language arts and mathematic concepts in other subjects.

Teachers are fully accountable for their students' performance and progress and so diligently plan classes that meet their needs. Flexible planning of instruction ensures they make the necessary ongoing adjustments in response to their assessment data and to the suggestions made by the administration or pupil personnel intervention team. Interventions for students who need the most help to learn receive good support in class from teachers and push-in staff, and in pull-out sessions from a member of the intervention team.

All budgeting, scheduling and staffing decisions are informed by the data. For example, the school uses particular staff expertise to make sure students get the support they need in class. Resources are planned carefully when planning curriculum and instruction and so are to hand when they are needed.

Students at this school feel well respected by staff members, and as a result feel comfortable about approaching adults in the school when they have academic or social concerns. Another outcome of the family-like environment created by the school is good student attendance. Its students are thoroughly interested and motivated, and intellectually engaged by its strong instructional program. They are excited about coming to school and want to be there on time.

**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.**

This school does a great deal to ensure that it selects the best staff. It is guided by its high expectations and a varied range of selection strategies including for teachers, an ability to use data to inform instructional planning. An extensive orientation for new teachers entails not only becoming familiar with the school and its procedures, but also includes a neighborhood tour to learn about the school's community.

The school offers many professional development opportunities for its teachers, informed by both student and teacher needs. In-school workshops on relevant professional topics and weekly grade meetings enable teachers to reflect on their instructional methods, analyze test data and share best practices. The high frequency of teacher engagement in year-round professional development opportunities demonstrates a high level of commitment to honing their craft and is reflected in their ability to address their students' needs so well. The school takes advantage of off-site training opportunities offered by the region and Teachers College. These experiences are shared with others on return to the school and new learning successfully integrated into the curriculum and instruction.

The principal and the assistant principal regularly visit classes to trace the 'footprints of the lessons', assuring themselves that teachers effectively align instruction in order to raise achievement. Discussions focus afterwards on the strengths of the lesson and the areas that can be improved. Teachers are encouraged to visit other classes to see exemplary teaching firsthand.

The well-developed collegial atmosphere facilitates staff development as critical friends. Common preparation periods aid collaborative planning, the revision of programs and

sharing of ideas and best practices. The positive climate at the school filters through to the students who know all of the school's adults respect them and care about all aspects of their well-being. As a result, students behave exceptionally well and rise to the high expectations set for their academic and personal development. Alongside clear communication systems and processes, students' excellent behavior and positive attitudes ensure the school runs smoothly.

A well-articulated and comprehensive after-school program includes a strong academic intervention services component as well as an enrichment feature. A varied range of enrichment extra-curricular activities are made possible due to the good collaboration with community partners. These include varied arts programs for art, choral, instrumental and dance activities, theater arts and technology classes. Evidence of these productive partnerships and high level student work are prominently displayed throughout the well-maintained school building.

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

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

The school's strategic plan is constantly reviewed and updated during the comprehensive team structure. Each team has clearly set out responsibilities for overseeing the effectiveness of specific parts of the plan. For example, the academic intervention team takes full responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of interventions for special education students and making any necessary changes in response to data about their progress. Progress towards the school's goals is measured precisely against student progress so the school has an objective measure against which to evaluate the effectiveness of its curriculum and instructional programs. Adjustments are made to programs, goals and benchmarks should student assessment data indicate these are needed.

The monitoring of student academic progress is ongoing at this school. The school has mechanisms built into the instructional program by which teachers are able to effectively track the progress of student groups and individual students. The information is used to adjust interim goals and benchmarks should data indicate this is necessary and to revise any interventions for students with a particular need.

Administrators and a small group of teachers meet during the summer to continue to discuss the school's goals detailed in the Comprehensive Education Plan. They put together materials for teachers before the start of the academic year so they can relate their class goals to the school's expectations.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: Augustus Saint-Gaudens School (PS 40)</b>	∅	✓	+
<b>Quality Score</b>			<b>X</b>

<b>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.</b>	∅	✓	+
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"> <li>each student, classroom, grade level,</li> </ul>			<b>X</b>
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"> <li>ethnic groups, English language learners, special education students*</li> </ul>			<b>X</b>
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"> <li>all other categories of interest to the school*</li> </ul>			<b>X</b>
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.			<b>X</b>
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>			<b>X</b>

\* 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.

<b>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.</b>	∅	✓	+
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.			<b>X</b>
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.			<b>X</b>
2.3 Particular attention is given to improving the performance and progress of students in greatest need of improvement.			<b>X</b>
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.			<b>X</b>
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.			<b>X</b>
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>			<b>X</b>

<b>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.</b>	∅	✓	+
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
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>			X
<b>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.</b>	∅	✓	+
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
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>			X
<b>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.</b>	∅	✓	+
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
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>			X