



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Arthur Tappan School

Public School 046

**2987 Frederick Douglass Blvd
New York
NY 10039**

Principal: George Young

Dates of review: December 7 - 11, 2006

Reviewer: Chris Andrews

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Public School 46 provides education for 829 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 6. The school population comprises 60% Black and 39% Hispanic students, with small numbers of Native American, Asian and White students. Special education students account for 8% of the school population and 10% are English language learners. The school receives Title 1 funding with 94.5% of students eligible, which is above the City average and that of similar schools. Attendance at 90.3% is below the average for similar and City-wide schools, and this figure has remained stable over the past three years

The largest proportion of students live in the neighborhood and the school is committed to the view of itself as a community school. The fact that several teachers have their own children at the school reinforces this sense of community.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The strong and stable staff is well led by the principal who has the respect and support of the school community.
- Teachers have a clear understanding of, and commitment to, the needs of their students.
- The school collects a wide range of relevant data to inform planning.
- Teachers make effective use of performance data and assessment of student work.
- The school leadership team plays a major part in making the Comprehensive Education Plan an active document that has real meaning and is regularly re-visited.
- Teachers are regularly asked to show both what data they intend to use and how they are going to use it, thus setting goals for both students and teachers.
- There are examples of creative and engaging instruction in all grades, and students indicate that they enjoy their learning.
- Staffing, budgeting and scheduling decisions are very clearly linked to performance data, and thus to student needs.
- Professional development is aligned to school priorities, data and staff needs.
- Attendance has begun to improve steadily as a result of the school's focus on its importance.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure greater consistency in the collection and use of data by all teachers to ensure the effective differentiation of work in all classes.
- Share best practice by allocating more time for teachers to visit and observe their peers at work in the school.
- Further develop work with the lower-achieving students, to decrease the proportion of students reaching only level 1.
- Use data and expand on the good practice in English language arts and mathematics to raise the performance of students in science and social studies.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well-developed school.

Public School 46 provides a high quality of education for all its students in a warm and mutually supportive environment, where students are encouraged to aim high for success. There are very clear systems and structures in place, maintained and monitored by an experienced and effective administration. The principal and his assistant principals lead by example as role models for teachers and students alike, and all are aware of the principal's expectations both in terms of work and behavior.

There is a commitment to continuous development of all members of the school community, and a strong sense of mutual respect. Students appreciate the time and commitment of their teachers and in return they apply themselves to their tasks. Teachers organize their classes with care to ensure maximum inclusion, and students work and play together happily.

Resources are well managed and the principal ensures that they are focused in areas of greatest need. The library is particularly well equipped and maintained, and is an area which positively encourages study. Bulletin boards in the library and throughout the school celebrate students' achievements, and provide strong evidence of a lively and dynamic learning environment.

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 administration and faculty collect a wide range of data, both statistical and from observations and conferences. The reading assessment system, the Princeton Review and the data from the New York tests are standards-based. These are supported by teachers' own unit and mid-term assessments, regular quizzes and the notes from student conferences. The teacher-made units and mid-term tests are especially valuable as they provide a steady data stream and they also encourage teachers' professional development.

The school's own data is especially important for kindergarten through grade 2 as they have no data from external tests. All of this data, with the student's report card, is placed in a portfolio with examples of student work, and this portfolio travels through the school with the student. This provides a continuous record and allows each teacher an overview of their students' progress over time.

At the start of each year the teachers complete the instructional conference questionnaire, which requires them to respond about their intended use of data, and how it will inform their planning and differentiated teaching. The itemized reports are regarded as particularly important in this process and teachers are able to target students' specific weaknesses. Despite this, there is not yet consistency in the collection and use of data by

all teachers because some are less competent in applying the information to planning and instruction.

The principal uses data from similar schools to provide helpful comparisons, and has a comprehensive database from past years which he uses annually with the faculty to place current progress into context. There is less emphasis on the analysis of other groups, such as ethnicity or gender, to ensure that all students are doing as well as they can.

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.

Data is central to goal setting at all levels. It underlies the Comprehensive Education Plan, which is a living document and which the school leadership team reviews regularly at their meetings. This provides the basic direction for each academic year and is the product of discussions within the whole school community. Its monitoring is the responsibility of the administrators and the cabinet, who are held accountable at bi-monthly meetings. At grade and class level, goals are generated by the data moderated by the teachers’ own understanding of the needs of their particular students.

The academic intervention program focuses support on those students who are in the greatest need of support, with the impact of this support being monitored at regular meetings. Much of this support is focused through the academic intervention coordinator, who has a critical role in monitoring progress and ensuring that the appropriate support is available for each student. However, this support is not always as effective as it might be, as the proportion of students reaching only level 1 remains higher than average for similar schools.

All members of the school community are aware of expectations for them in terms of behavior and academic progress. Most students are able to explain not only the levels at which they are working, but also their target levels and what they need to do to achieve those goals. These goals are shared with parents at well-attended conferences. The principal also maintains a well-publicized open door policy and parents and students are welcomed at any time to share any concerns, not just at conferences.

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’s curriculum aligns with the mandated curriculum, and uses the Susan Rattley Brown accelerated literacy program alongside Everyday Mathematics and Impact Mathematics for grade 6 students. With associated reading assessments, these ensure that the teachers have adequate data to track their students’ progress. However, they also generate their own data from tests, quizzes and conferences. This enables them to differentiate their instruction in terms of groupings and tasks, although some teachers are more confident in the use of data to guide this than others. The main focus of the school in recent years has been on literacy and mathematics, and it is notable that the performance

of students in science and social studies is not on par with their performance in English language arts and mathematics at grade 4.

The data drives the provision of resources, and budgetary decisions are regularly monitored by the school leadership team. The decision, for example, to keep class sizes at about 21 for kindergarten through grade 3, was driven by the results of the in-house testing and teacher observations. The impact of fewer resources elsewhere was judged to be acceptable in order to provide the youngest students with more individual attention. Resources overall are good and the library is an excellent facility, well maintained and developed by the librarian.

There are examples of creative and engaging instruction in all grades, and students indicate that they enjoy their learning. They appreciate the good relationships between staff and students, which is based on mutual respect. Students know who to talk should they have any concerns and feel comfortable in doing so.

Attendance is improving steadily, due to the impact of the family assistant and also of a sustained school focus on the importance of attendance with students and their parents. However, it remains below that of similar schools.

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 principal has very clear criteria for selecting faculty members. He recognizes the need for effective teamwork, but also considers the importance of strong professional role models for the school community. He himself sets the tone and is well respected by students, staff and parents. Well-established systems ensure that the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis.

Professional development is a strong feature, aligned to the needs of students and teachers, and based clearly on data analysis. The administrators monitor instruction formally as per contract, but also informally on a daily basis. They always provide developmental feedback, which may be verbal or written. There are opportunities for inter-visitations outside the school, but not enough time is allocated to enable teachers to visit and observe their peers at work within the school. The impact of professional development is monitored through school walkthroughs and by analysis of the test scores. The student level charts provide the evidence of progress and can be used both for evaluation and also for predicting future progress.

Various teams meet regularly to monitor progress and develop planning. This is usually in grade teams where agendas always include an item on instruction, led by different members of the team, as well as on planning, data usage or teacher concerns.

The school includes among its broader goals the widening of the experiences and horizons of its students. The principal considers collaboration for long-term programs and all outside partners are seen as integral to the work of the school. Links with the Harlem School for the Arts, the Carnegie Hall Orchestral Program, and City Center Dancers contribute to the development of the whole student in a very real sense.

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 administrators and the school leadership team keep the school under constant review. The Comprehensive Education Plan serves as an over-arching document which is re-visited at bi-monthly meetings, and progress towards the school's goals is evaluated against established milestones. There are clear success criteria for each goal.

Data is reviewed by grade and departmental teams at their meetings. Portfolio work is also reviewed at these meetings to ensure common standards are being applied across the different classes in any one grade and that these standards are aligned to those of the State. This is carried out in common preparation time achieved by the principal providing cover by cluster teachers. At these meetings modifications to the curriculum and to instruction are discussed. As a model school for the District in balanced literacy, it has been important that the curriculum is followed closely. However, when it is clear, as a result of discussions, that progress in a particular item or skill is not being made, a program is devised to rectify identified problems.

The whole faculty is involved in monitoring and evaluating different plans in relation to individuals, classes and grades. Grants to support the teaching of phonics in grade 1 and the adoption of rubrics for every grade are examples of 'bottom-up' initiatives to meet needs identified by the process. The cluster teachers also have their own developmental plans and these are monitored by the principal or one of his assistants.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Arthur Tappan School (PS 046)	∅	✓	+
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