



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



# **Quality Review Report**

**The Lillian Weber School**

**Public School 084**

**32 West 92 Street  
Manhattan  
NY 10025**

**Principal: Robin Sundick**

**Dates of review: December 6 – 7, 2006**

**Reviewer: Graham A Jones**

# 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

Public School 84 is a pre-kindergarten to grade 5 school with almost 600 students. The majority of the students, nearly two thirds, are Hispanic and a third of the students are Black. A smaller number of White and Asian students are almost equally represented. There is a higher than average proportion of special education students and this is a Title I School. The proportion of English language learners is also above that in other schools across the City. There are dual classes in English and Spanish as well as classes that support English language learners and special education students. Attendance rates for the school, at just under 91% in 2005, are lower than similar schools or City Schools.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal has a clear vision for the school and believes in empowering her teachers.
- The school has high levels of staff collaboration which is a feature of the leadership, especially relationships between the cabinet and the principal.
- A wide range of data is collected in the school to help guide the academic and personal progress of students of all abilities.
- The specialized language teaching in the school, through dual language classes and English classes, is a strong feature of the school.
- The support and care of the most vulnerable students is undertaken with efficiency and compassion.
- The school has formed strong links with a teaching college, builds on the curriculum and works hard to provide different subjects, as well as a wide range of interesting trips.
- The school emphasizes professional development of staff and supports a broad and focused range of courses and programs
- There is an emphasis on achievement and the continuing improvement in examination results demonstrates this.
- The school is efficiently run within a safe, secure, and caring culture.

### What the school needs to improve

- Continue to develop demanding, measurable goals for short term as well as long range school improvement in order to accelerate students' learning.
- Continue to work with parents and strengthen the parents' involvement in the school.
- Continue to extend the use of information technology as a teaching tool throughout the school.

## Part 3: Main findings

### Overall Evaluation

#### **This is a proficient school with well-developed features.**

During her three years at the school, the principal has established a school in which teachers feel empowered to work as professionals. This has been achieved by the careful selection of staff and the focused direction of professional development. The work of specialist teams and especially the assistant principals in the cabinet exemplify the principal's approach. The principal has worked hard to manage these changes and now sees the school in a position to make very rapid progress. The school has the capacity to continue to improve. While the school has many well-developed features the principal believes that the systems that have brought improvements need a little more time to embed and to ensure overall standards are significantly affected.

A culture has been created in which all students feel cared for and where achievement is valued. The rich curriculum provides opportunities for students to experience specialized language teaching, and a wide range of arts and science activities. The school is a Teachers' College School and this provides extra support for the students. The school collects a wide range of data to help guide staffing and budget decisions, and to set teaching goals to support the students.

Areas for improvement identified in this report are mainly issues of refining the established procedures. These include building on the use of data for whole school goals to accelerate students' learning, to continue to work with parents so that they play more of a part in the life of the school and to extend the use of information technology throughout the school.

### **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 has well established systems for collecting data about the students' achievement. These include the use of City and State test data, the results of school administered examinations, and grade level and subject generated data. The needs of students are identified at grade, classroom and individual levels. Data is analyzed and decisions are made as to what has to be done to get groups of students to higher levels of achievement. Data is used to track the progress of groups of students including those belonging to different ethnic groups and students with social and emotional problems.

The principal, administrators, senior teachers and teachers use this data to compare the students' progress and achievement. Analysis of the progress made by different groups in the school is a priority. The progress of students undertaking different language programs is carefully scrutinized. Dual language classes have been set up to accommodate the needs of some students and this decision was based on the analysis of data. The

principal further refines this data by comparing the school's performance with similar schools. Targets are set to ensure the school makes year-on-year progress. The school is further refining this extensive collection of data to identify the unique needs of the students who attend the school.

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

**This area of the school's work is proficient.**

The school has developed a range of administrative procedures enabling data to be disseminated throughout the school. Staff constantly discuss the students' progress and share ideas to maximize achievement. There are meetings at cabinet level and informal meetings between teachers. The principal's emphasis on empowering teachers to question and analyze, along with the good relations between teachers, aids this process. The results of such meetings are shared with students through report systems that enable students to keep track of their own progress such as the portfolio of work. Students help make these portfolios and they are monitored by teachers and the administrative team. There are good administrative systems that use timetables and calendars to pace the progress of students in mathematics, English language arts and science. Particular attention is provided to the students with the greatest need for improvement. These timetables are drawn from teacher discussions and assessments. They are used to review targets and goals especially by senior teachers, coaches and the principal and her cabinet.

Timetables are especially useful for teachers and administrators to track the progress of individual students and compare the progress that students of different ages and abilities make in subjects and grades. Whole school targets are used to compare the school against other similar or City schools. The timetables for setting and reviewing whole school targets are not as focused as the calendars that monitor the pace of individual students' learning. The matching of targets for the whole school, when compared to other schools, is a focus of the principal and her cabinet. It is also intended that this information will be made available for parents and caregivers to judge assessments so that they may see the students' and the school's progress for themselves.

**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 resources that Title 1 funding brings are used to provide a curriculum that builds on the skills of English language arts, mathematics and science. Further resources are targeted on broadening the curriculum, supporting staff, ensuring the required resources and materials are available and providing professional development for staff and coaches. Cross-curricular themes are used to enable students to apply their skills. The school is linked to a teachers' college, which provides additional support for reading, writing and Everyday Mathematics. There is an extensive, extended day program that links directly to the specific identified needs of students. This curriculum is further enriched by regular trips to theaters and by the efforts of class teachers who ensure students are motivated and stimulated.

The wide range of data collected by the school is used by teachers to refine the experiences students have in classrooms. Teachers plan lessons to meet the needs of individuals. This data is derived from teachers' assessments. The school is looking to develop the use of whole school targets to influence the pace of teaching. Data is used to direct a very wide range of professional development. This is targeted to the schools needs. The requirements of individual teachers are supported by coaches who are active in their subjects, as are administrators. The curriculum is structured around staff strengths, for example, the dual language classes. Attendance procedures are known by the staff, students and parents and the school is actively targeting this area.

**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**

There is a low turn over of staff at the school. New teachers are very carefully selected and considerable restructuring has taken place supported by a wide professional development program. The use of data is central to this process and teachers collect assessments, administer tests and keep records of students' progress. The principal's priority of empowering teachers to take responsibility for goal setting ensures good relationships between teachers. This enables groups of teachers to meet, compare and discuss progress of students in different subjects, classes and grades. They plan lessons to fit revised targets and goals.

Professional development is a strong feature of the school. The analysis of examination results and students' work is used to identify the professional needs of staff. Teachers have opportunities to attend courses outside the school and report back to colleagues. The very good links with Columbia University's teaching department strengthens this.

The principal regularly monitors teaching, as do assistant principals, coaches and senior teachers. Monitoring is formal and informal and includes walkthroughs in which teaching is observed and aspects discussed. Formal observations are recorded and the findings shared with teachers or used to identify professional development areas of growth.

The school is particularly strong in its development of teams of teachers. The principal has developed a strong team of senior teachers and the work of the assistant principals provides a significant contribution to the smooth running of the school. They work within established procedures and in turn develop teams of teachers who are able to observe each other and report back strengths and weakness. In this way the quality and consistency of teaching is maintained throughout the school.

Other services within the school are well established and are exemplified in the support of the students with educational needs. The development of students who are bilingual or require support in English is exemplary. The professionalism, understanding, and care of all involved is a credit to the school and is one of its strengths.

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

**This area of the school's work is proficient**

The school has a large number of initiatives taking place to raise students' achievement. The administrative procedures developed by the school effectively keep track of these initiatives. Priority areas are identified in the Comprehensive Education Plan. All initiatives are carefully monitored. Teachers record what they do in meetings. Teaching that is formally monitored is analyzed. Many of the forms and written feedback provide data that is further analyzed and used by the principal and senior teachers to review students' progress. Regular meetings take place to review the progress of students. Timetables and calendars are used to track the progress of different groups of students. Class teachers, and the cabinet discuss the progress of pupils in different classes, grades and subjects. Interim goals and end goals are established. These are reviewed regularly.

The principal recognizes that most of this monitoring occurs at the end of assessment cycles. She is developing interim targets that build on teachers' assessments but are also linked to the schools' targets, particularly when judged against the achievement in other schools. In this way she intends to ensure that targets and goals are used to guide teaching and to influence the speed that students take to achieve goals.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: The Lillian Webber School (PS 084)</b>	∅	✓	+
<b>Quality Score</b>		X	

<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>			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"> <li>• ethnic groups, English language learners, special education students*</li> </ul>		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"> <li>• all other categories of interest to the school*</li> </ul>			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
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>			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.

<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.		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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>		X	

<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	