



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

William Paca

Public School 115

**319 East Street 117 Street
New York
NY 10035**

Principal: Alejandrin Hendrick

Dates of review: January 23 -24, 2007

Reviewer: Jo Storrs

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

William Paca is an elementary school in East Harlem with 366 students enrolled from pre-kindergarten to grade 5. The school population comprises 85% Hispanic, 14% Black, 0.5% White and 0.5% Asian. Nearly half the students are English language learners with Spanish the predominant first language. About 11% of the school's roll is special education students, none are in self-contained classes. The school is Title 1 eligible with 98% of students qualifying. This is above the average for similar and City schools. Attendance is 94.6% which is higher than the averages for similar and City schools.

The principal joined the school in 1998 and nearly all of the teachers have taught in the school for more than two years. Most students and their parents are new immigrants from Mexico with little formal education. The school has a dual language program in place for English and non-English speakers so students can become proficient in two languages. It also provides English as a second language instruction for students and parents.

The school has formed fruitful partnerships with community-based organizations such as 'Learning Expansions through the Arts' and 'Education through Music' and the Arts Programs to enlarge students learning experiences and the Borinken Health Center is invaluable for family health care. Special programs are in place in school and during the extended day to raise students' performance in language, literacy and mathematics.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal provides outstanding leadership and sets high expectations for the school and each student.
- The principal and assistant principal form a highly effective team dedicated to creating a vibrant learning environment for every student.
- The impressive use of data at all levels drives the decision making and improvements.
- The inter-linking and thematic curriculum is enhanced by specialists, trips and visits to widen student's academic knowledge and understanding.
- The provision of high quality instruction and bilingual activities actively engage students' critical thinking and problem solving skills.
- Partnerships with community based organizations enrich students' experiences.
- The creative use of the extended day provides additional support in language, literacy and mathematics for students at risk and enhances learning for those at higher levels.
- The excellent professional development of teachers ensures the needs of every student are met in lessons.
- The very good support provided by the school based intervention teams for all students requiring extra help.
- The rigorous assessment and monitoring systems ensure goals and instruction are continuously adjusted to each student's needs.

What the school needs to improve

- Further develop teachers' conferencing and questioning skills to identify more deeply students' strengths and next steps in learning.
- Continue to encourage parental participation in their children's education.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well developed school.

The principal provides outstanding leadership and sets high expectations for the school and each student. She has established a high quality education and a professional collegiality that embeds evaluation and improvement in instruction. She is a talented educator and the professional development of teachers and staff are directly attributable to the school's improvements and successes. She works in close harmony with the assistant principal. They have created a vibrant learning environment where students are valued as individuals and helped to excel. The excellent use of data at all levels drives curriculum development and instruction, decision making and improvements. Coaches and other professional staff develop instruction to meet the needs of every student in lessons. The vibrant curriculum is enhanced by trips and visits to enrich students' experiences. High quality instruction actively engages students to think and solve problems and rigorous assessment and monitoring systems check students' progress. There is an impressive coherence to all the school's work. Students at risk receive very good support and the extended day is used creatively to provide extra help and enrichment activities. Students are respected and valued and relationships across the school are excellent. Students enjoy coming to school and attendance is high. Parents are delighted with the school and their children's progress. Many do not speak English well and are very effectively supported by the school and the parent coordinator.

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.

Administration collects and analyzes data meticulously to understand the performance and needs of each student and employs rigorous comparative evaluations for all groups of students. Test results are analyzed in detail and compared with similar and City schools. The results of individuals, groups, classes and grades are checked against expectations and prior performance. The emphasis on generating valid data from coherent assessment systems and diagnostic procedures ensures that student's progress is consistently tracked across the school. Teachers gather a comprehensive range of relevant information from interim tests and standardized assessments, compare results with the goals and academic profile of each student and investigate any inconsistencies. Administration reviews class and grade information regularly to check that students are progressing equally well. Strategic professional discussions about individual students use all relevant information. Administration, faculty and staff identify patterns that need swift, but suitable intervention to stop larger problems developing. Many students' have significant academic and personal problems. The school uses all pertinent data to identify these student's needs and to establish clear goals and effective intervention programs. Data about the progress and performance of the high percentage of English language learners is gathered and analyzed at grade, class and individual student level by faculty and staff and checked regularly by the principal. The assistant principal maintains an oversight of students

receiving integrated intervention programs and works collaboratively with the school-based support staff to systematically review this information. Literacy and mathematics coaches use the most recent data to adjust goals and to provide closely targeted professional development and support. The school knows its community well and continually improves strategies to meet the diverse demands of its community. As a result of this tightly targeted use of data, the progress and performance of students in State and City tests has significantly improved over the past three years.

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 drives goal setting and planning for the whole school. Outcomes of methodical data analysis are discussed systematically at collaborative faculty and staff meetings. Summaries are shared regularly with administration and school leadership team and steer goals in the Comprehensive Education Plan. Goals are based on high expectations and undepinned by action research undertaken by the school. They are supported by clear plans, success indicators, timeframes and accountabilities. The principal’s knowledge of effective learning and assessment are shared and implemented in all the school’s planning. Academic rigor is increased by the full involvement of administration, teachers, coaches and staff in setting goals for classes, grades and individual students to persistently raise achievement. At weekly grade conferences, data is analyzed and disaggregated to establish goals and plans for instruction. The progress and performance of groups and individual students is reviewed and adjusted when necessary. The full collegiate involvement of faculty and staff at each planning stage has raised instructional quality and accelerated each student’s learning. Leaders, faculty, and staff are dedicated to improving student performance. Excellent strategies recognize students with problems or at risk of falling behind, so early intervention to address their needs is provided. The school-based intervention teams provide very good and carefully coordinated support for every student in need of improvement and help. They work with teachers to build students’ targets into lesson plans and to check that instruction meets students’ needs. With parental approval and support, students at risk receive additional focused instruction at the beginning of the school day. Parents, carers and guardians receive valuable information from the school and regular progress reports. They endorse the school’s high expectations and are pleased with the care and progress of their children. Those not speaking English or with little formal education are well supported by the school and parent coordinator. They appreciate help with immigration, legal issues and healthcare and some are volunteers in the school. Despite the school’s significant efforts, many parents are not involved enough with their children’s learning.

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 principal builds for success and achieves a high quality education and a vibrant learning environment for every student; she forms a highly effective team with the assistant principal. From interrogating data, the inter-linking curriculum was designed to meet

mandatory requirements and to provide breadth and depth. Her curricular understanding ensures meticulous care is taken to plan lessons and instruction that motivates and interests all students and meets their diverse needs. Partnerships in the arts and visits to museums and galleries linked to class topics enrich and widen student's knowledge. Specialists effectively help teachers to integrate literacy and math into art, science, music and social studies. Teachers differentiate lessons skillfully to meet the needs of groups and individuals. Together with high quality instruction and bilingual activities, students are actively engaged and work hard. Students develop the ability to think critically and to solve problems. Budgetary, staffing, scheduling and resourcing decisions are driven by the needs of students and school priorities revealed by data. Creative use of the extended day provides additional support for students at risk and enhances learning for higher achievers. High quality resources support all areas of the curriculum and the attractive library and librarian help to widen student's reading skills. The principal reviews students' work weekly and agrees groupings and plans for individualized instruction. Assessments and test results are disaggregated to identify students' strengths and weaknesses. All these factors enable students to excel.

Students at risk and special education students are very well supported by the school-based intervention teams. English language learners receive effective individual or group assistance in bilingual classes. These students sometimes work in general education classes with suitable support. Teachers and staff are very aware of and responsive to students' personal and emotional needs. Students are respected and valued as individuals. They are thoughtful towards each other, behavior is generally good and every student has a number of teachers and staff they trust. The school has excellent systems to monitor attendance and punctuality.

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 provides outstanding leadership to the school. She ensures high quality teachers and staff are selected who share the schools' high expectations and demonstrate a high level of commitment. This has led to the school's success in raising student's performance. All teachers and professional staff are very well trained to use data effectively. The principal works unstintingly to establish professional collegiality where evaluation and improvement are embedded in instruction. She encourages faculty and staff to be reflective about their own work through self-assessments. Professional development is excellent and is driven by the students' needs. Faculty and staff feel well supported by administration and coaches to achieve their goals and to strive for excellence. Careful checks are kept on students' academic progress and personal development. Administration frequently observe classroom teaching formally and informally through walkthroughs and regular classroom environmental reviews. Every visit has a known focus and effective feedback is provided to ensure instruction is closely aligned to students' needs and staff feel valued. From monitoring, discussions and students' work, administration identify teachers' needs and provide differentiated training. Inter-visitations are encouraged to spread best practice. Coaches work well with individuals or groups of teachers to improve instruction by modeling, collaborative teaching and discussions. A range of collaborative teams consisting of administration, teachers and support staff evaluate goals, results and personal performance frankly and honestly and outcomes steer revisions to plans and goals. All these strategies are improving performance.

The principal is highly regarded by the whole school community. Her commitment to the school and each student, teacher and staff member and her willingness to experiment and join in are valued. She drives change and improvements but empowers others too. Faculty, staff and students relate well to her and students feel she is approachable. Administration, faculty and staff are welcoming to students, parents and visitors. They have high expectations of themselves. Their care and commitment to students and their families is impressive. There are comprehensive systems and procedures in place that are carefully followed by everyone so the school runs smoothly and the atmosphere is calm and focused. The school places the healthy development of students as a high priority such as the 'Cook Shop' and other programs with outside agencies help students to keep healthy and become responsible, caring citizens.

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.

All decisions are reached collaboratively and focus on improving learning. The leadership team monitors the effectiveness of goals in the Comprehensive Education Plan to identify successes and to realign practices and resources to improve student academic outcomes. The rigorous assessment and monitoring systems ensure that goals and instruction are continuously checked and adjusted to meet each student's needs. In September, teachers and professional staff assess students to plan instruction, group students to meet their academic needs and to schedule services for students at risk around the literacy and math blocks. Students at risk are grouped to receive reading or math support. Differentiated instruction in reading, writing and mathematics and the continuous collaborative evaluation of the progress of all students by class teachers and support providers ensures continuous improvements. In addition, students receive the academic standards for their grade, which enables them to assess their own progress and set new targets during conferences with teachers. Most teachers use effective conferencing and questioning skills to identify students' strengths and next steps in learning but these are not yet consistent.

Teachers review students' progress at weekly collaborative meetings and disparities between progress and expectations are identified with goals and instruction adjusted if required. Administration monitors students' performance monthly through reports, observations, conferencing notes, discussions and samples of students' work. This process enables administration to compare students' progress in each class and to identify any weaknesses in instruction. Immediate corrective action is taken to secure improvements when necessary. For students at risk, providers submit six-weekly student progress reports to the academic intervention team, which are rigorously monitored and adjustments to flexibly adjust goals, groups and instruction, if necessary. The regular evaluation of performance helps students to learn effectively. Teachers and staff enjoy working at the school and the whole community functions successfully to provide every opportunity for students to perform well.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: William Paca (PS 115)	∅	✓	+
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.	Ø	✓	+
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.	Ø	✓	+
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.	Ø	✓	+
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