



**NYCDOE**

**Quality Review: Final Report**

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



# **Quality Review Report**

**The Bayard Taylor School**

**Public School 158**

**1458 York Avenue  
New York  
NY 10021**

**Principal: Darryl Alhadeff**

**Dates of review: January 18 - 19, 2007**

**Reviewer: Roy 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

The Bayard Taylor School, Public School 158, is situated in East Manhattan. It shares the 104 year old building with East Side Middle school which occupies the top two floors.

There are 723 students enrolled from pre-kindergarten to grade 5. The student population comprises 63% White, 18% Hispanic, 11% Asian and 6% Black. Approximately 10% of students, mostly from Japan, have arrived in the country during the past three years. Forty six different ethnicities are represented in the school. The proportion of special education students is 15% and five percent of students are English language learners, proportionately lower than the averages for City schools. The school is not eligible for Title 1 funding. At 93.7%, attendance matches that of similar schools and is slightly higher than in City schools as a whole.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- This is a 'thinking and learning' school with a clear sense of purpose.
- The principal and assistant principal provide outstanding leadership.
- The administration's very high expectations are supported by the highly professional, dedicated and collaborative faculty.
- Excellent use of data, which is meticulously maintained, underpins the work of the school.
- Rigorous, on-going assessment ensures teachers have a thorough knowledge of their students and drives instruction.
- Thorough analysis of the data results in well planned and effectively managed intervention programs.
- Exemplary differentiated teaching in most classes is effective in meeting students' individual needs.
- Extensive professional development is designed to achieve the school's and teachers' personal goals.
- A wide range of activities taught by specialist teachers enhances the students' education considerably.
- The impressive parents' association plays significant leadership and supportive roles in the school.

### What the school needs to improve

- Continue to use the many examples of exceptional teaching to ensure differentiation is in place in every class.
- Provide more opportunities for teachers to gain from observing one another.
- Make students more aware of the goals that teachers set for them.
- Continue the drive to involve parents/caregivers more closely in their children's education.

## Part 3: Main findings

### Overall Evaluation

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

Under the administration's outstanding leadership, all members of the school community are thinkers and learners who have a shared sense of purpose. As the leading professional, the principal has established a culture in which excellence is the expectation for all who work in the school. She balances this expectation with genuine care and concern for the welfare of students, staff and parents alike. She and her assistant principal constantly apply their considerable knowledge of learning principles, curriculum and assessment. Rigorous, on-going assessment across the school is accompanied by regular discussion and evaluation in grade team and cabinet meetings. As a result, instruction is increasingly effective and, in most classes, well differentiated to meet the learning needs of each student.

The school rightly puts considerable emphasis on raising achievement in literacy and mathematics. Numerous intervention strategies ensure that low-attaining, special education students and English language learners make good progress. The curriculum is enriched significantly by lessons in science, physical education and the visual and performing arts taught by specialist teachers. A strong professional development program provided both in school and by external agencies is having momentous impact on teachers' understanding, the quality of instruction and upon students' learning. A key to the school's success is its constant evaluation of its performance, adjusting its plans and practices accordingly.

### 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.**

Systematic collection and analysis of data, including results from State and school-administered tests, drives the work of the school. The school's own data is especially useful as it indicates each student's achievement in fine detail. The principal is meticulous in the way she documents this wealth of data enabling her and the assistant principal to keep a regular track of students' progress and the impact of intervention programs. The teachers have this data on file which they consolidate via their astute observations and one-to-one conferences with their students, information from which they record diligently. In this way, the school systematically builds its knowledge of the performance and progress of each student, class and grade in the different subjects.

The data is analyzed further to follow the progress of specific groups such as special education students and the small percentage of English language learners. Thus, the school provides immediate and appropriate remedial programs taught by teachers with specialist skills in these areas. The school also identifies any differences in the attainment of students from the various ethnic groups or any disparity between boys' and girls'

performance. This enables it to take action if necessary. Similarly, the data helps identify students who perform at a high level in particular subjects. This has resulted in talented mathematicians being taught at a more challenging level in separate classes twice a week.

The school is constantly comparing the students' performance with those in similar schools. The principal and assistant principal are, however, mainly concerned at reviewing the school's own performance over time. They scrutinize the data in detail year on year to follow the progress of each cohort and to identify any significant trends.

**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 commitment of the administration and faculty to maintaining high standards is the rationale for regular and effective use of data to set goals which they can measure. Goal setting is a transparent process involving every member of the instructional team and faculty. Leadership and grade teams work collaboratively to define clear goals to which they all aspire. Rigorous, on-going assessments give teachers thorough knowledge of their students' performance. Profitable links with the Teachers' College and City Math project have strengthened further teachers' evaluation of students' attainment in reading, writing and every day math and have helped in planning for these areas of particular focus. Using this information, grade teams meet weekly with the talented professional developer and monthly with the principal. Through these meetings each grade team sets short- and long-term goals for individual students and groups. The school has well established and careful provision for those students in greatest need. Using the available data, goals are set and students are allocated to one of the effective intervention strategies. These include extended mornings, Saturday school, special education, collaborative team teaching classes and the support of two skilled intervention teachers.

Students and parents are fully aware of the school's high expectations. While students generally enjoy lessons they are not all aware of the goals their teachers have set for them. The impressive parents' association plays a significant role through membership of the school leadership team and in funding important aspects of the school's work. Those parents who have close links with the school value the information they receive, especially regarding their children's progress.

The goals generated by the various grade and faculty teams are effectively combined with those set by the administration and summarized in the Comprehensive Education Plan, which underpins the work of the whole school.

**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 maintains high achievement while providing a well-balanced curriculum. The school rightly concentrates on improving student achievement in reading, writing and

mathematics. Its rigorous approaches to instruction in these subjects are enabled by the school's constant use of data. This important focus is having the desired effect. The students' education is enhanced considerably by a rich variety of experiences in science, technology, physical education and visual and performing arts, taught by specialist teachers.

Teachers understand their accountability and take their roles very seriously, so nothing is left to chance. They work together to devise year-long curriculum maps in all subjects well before the start of the school year. Subsequently, grade teams hold well focused weekly meetings to decide details of content and instructional style. The outcome is excellent teaching with exemplary differentiation in the majority of classes. This increasing use of differentiated instruction is effective in meeting students' individual needs. Schedules for English language learners and special education students, many of whom are taught in highly effective collaborative team teaching classes, are planned with equal thoroughness. Budgeting, staffing and scheduling decisions are interlinked and based upon the students' needs, determined by thorough data analysis. As a consequence, the school is able to provide well planned and effectively managed intervention programs.

Students love the interactive approach to instruction in the enrichment program and in aspects of literacy and mathematics lessons and they say 'it makes learning fun'. Consequently, they are attentive, eager to contribute and actively engaged in their learning. A positive culture pervades the school in which teachers and students respect each other. Students recognize that teachers expect a great deal of them, but that they are sympathetic and offer support and guidance if they experience difficulty in their studies. Similarly, they feel able to approach their teachers or other adults if they have concerns. Attendance is a priority and the parent coordinator takes appropriate steps should a child be absent and there has been no contact from the family.

**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 is respected for not tolerating second best. During her four years in post she has gained the trust of the school community and has made significant improvements. Clear procedures ensure that the school runs smoothly, but the main thrust of change is on improving teaching and learning. The school is now in a very strong position, having recruited a dedicated and collaborative faculty whose high expectations and effective use of data benefit all students. The extensive professional development program is directed towards achieving whole school and individual goals. Teachers who attend training outside school share their new-found knowledge with colleagues. The most beneficial professional development takes place within school. The administration takes a part in this but the key player is the professional developer. She focuses on co-planning, co-teaching and modeling lessons to nurture professional growth. As she is knowledgeable, personable and highly respected by the staff, her work has considerable impact.

The principal and assistant principal undertake formal observations of teachers followed by constructive feedback which the teachers find helpful. In addition, they and the staff developer make regular informal visits to classrooms and discuss what they see with the teachers. All involved find this a productive strategy in sharpening the teaching. While some teachers have observed their peers, this is not a regular feature. Planning and

evaluation are undertaken effectively in regular team meetings, supplemented on a daily basis by informal discussions. As a consequence, plans are fine tuned regularly. Teachers see school as a wonderful place because everyone is valued and the work is stimulating and challenging.

The school has long-standing, beneficial links with numerous outside organizations. A particular success is the integration of students with terminal cancer from Ronald MacDonald House and the support and counseling the school provides for their siblings and parents. At a professional level links with several universities and Teachers' College underpin the school's belief of itself as a 'thinking and learning' school.

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

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

One of the school's major strengths is its attention to monitoring progress in its pursuit of excellence in every aspect of its operation. Purposeful team meetings at all levels from grade to cabinet and administration have clear functions which they discharge diligently. They determine goals which they evaluate constantly, making adjustments as necessary. Other teams focused on students with particular needs are equally effective. Goals generated by these teams are summarized in the Comprehensive Education Plan with valuable contributions from the school leadership team, including parents. This plan is seen as a living document as it is constantly under review.

At a practical day-to-day level, in each class and grade teachers collect and make good use of test data to set their goals and to determine the best way forward. As the term progresses they track individuals and groups regularly through tests, observations and one-to-one conferencing. These thorough procedures keep teachers constantly alert to their students' achievements and the progress they are making. The process is paralleled by the principal and assistant principal whose rigorous appraisal keeps everyone on track. By studying the data and comparing attainment at each grade they are able to make their own judgments about the progress being made by individual students, classes and grades and across the school as a whole. In addition, they and the professional developer, with whom they work very closely, are constantly touring the school. Their observations and discussions with students and teachers provide further invaluable evidence of the school's effectiveness. All information gained from data and observations is put into the computer and analyzed further to ensure that each student is receiving the precise support needed. Through these precise means, the administration is demonstrating its determination to strive for the school's continued success.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: Bayard Taylor School (PS 158)</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