



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Ballet Tech/NYC Public School for Dance

PS/MS/HS 442

**890 Broadway
New York
NY 10003**

Principal: John Treadwell

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Ballet Tech, the New York City public school for dance is a small specialist elementary, middle and high school, which is a collaboration between the New York City Department of Education and the Ballet Tech foundation. It is a performing arts school for students from grades 4 to 12.

Admission is by audition and the 158 students on roll are taken from all over Manhattan. Currently, 53.2% are Black, 26% are Hispanic, 12% are White and the small remaining group is Asian. There are no special education students and only seven who are English language learners. A small proportion of the students have a previous record of low academic achievement. Attendance levels have risen year-on-year, and at 95.2%, are above similar schools and well above City schools.

What the school does well

- The principal has a high profile throughout the school and is respected highly by parents, staff and students.
- Teaching and learning are very good.
- Students achieve well.
- Performance in English language arts, mathematics and science are higher than in similar schools and much higher than in City schools.
- There is a good team ethos, staff work hard and are eager to develop their professional skills further.
- The school has good assessment procedures, which are implemented promptly.
- Data is used well to inform teaching and planning.
- There are excellent enrichment activities in ballet, art and music.
- The students' behavior is very good and all are known well by a caring staff.
- The family atmosphere of the school is praised by the parents.

Areas for improvement

- Continue to develop staff skills in using data on students' achievements to improve further their planning and teaching.
- Teachers could more frequently observe and support their colleagues' classroom teaching.
- Strategic planning needs clear timeframes for achievement of its goals and regular review to check progress and make adjustments where necessary.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

The school is proficient with well-developed features

Ballet Tech gives its students an excellent start to their education. It is a friendly, happy school. All students are encouraged to do their best and to develop their potential to the fullest extent. Standards in English language arts, mathematics and science are higher than in most other schools in the City. There are excellent enrichment activities in ballet, art and music.

Information from students' assessments is used well to plan and improve teaching and learning. There are good immediate assessment procedures for students where progress or personal development is causing concern. The teachers do not observe each other's teaching often enough.

The principal has a high profile throughout the school and is well respected by the whole school community. All children are personally known to the staff and are cared for and supported well. Parents see the family atmosphere of the school as a key strength. The improving attendance figures indicate the strong support parents give to the school. Given the evident commitment of the principal, staff and students, the school has the capacity to maintain and build upon its current achievements.

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 proficient.

The baseline data collected for all groups of students is comprehensive. Each member of staff has details of the achievements and progress of each student in their class. The administration regularly disseminates new information gained from assessments to provide teachers with an up to date picture of the performance and progress of their students. Staff experience in using this new information to revise goals and plans is improving, although the school knows it could use data still more effectively.

To harness the air of competition that is prevalent in the school, the principal has instigated a rewards ceremony that is held at the end of each six-week marking period. The names of successful students and their parents are subsequently posted on an honor roll and displayed in the main hall.

The school makes good use of its data to compare the progress of students in each class and grade and to ensure that instruction is equally effective for all students. The principal also compares students' progress year on year and by different identified groups. Test data show that the percentage of higher achieving students has increased over the last three years and is well above the average for City schools. There has been a corresponding decrease in students achieving at levels 1 and 2. The school analyzes its results by academic subject area, to enable staff to identify areas for improvement.

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 uses a range of assessment information to set whole school goals and ensure that students make good progress, particularly in English language arts and mathematics. Demanding, measurable targets are set collaboratively to ensure consistency. Goals and plans focus on the school as a whole and on each student and class.

Teachers are very accurate in grading students’ work. They keep running records, reading logs and portfolios to illustrate the students’ progress. All students have individual profiles showing what they know, understand and can do at both subject and grade level. The staff meet regularly to review the data, consider their instruction and refine their plans accordingly. This ensures that teachers’ planning is well matched to the needs of the students. Ballet teachers meet with their academic partners to share information about the development of every student.

There is a good support structure for students and a good team ethos among staff, which enables teachers to get help, should they need it. This is achieved effectively through coaches presenting model lessons or helping teachers with their planning. The school also makes effective use of licensed reading-teachers, as its budget is too small to afford other services. The principal meets the parent teachers’ association once a month, to involve them in the process of evaluation and review.

Teachers are committed to improving their teaching so that every student, particularly those in greatest need, can make progress. Because this is a small school and monitoring systems are robust, students in need of help are very quickly identified. Staff share ideas and discuss each student’s progress within their class, grade and in different subjects. This has a positive impact on teachers’ instructional programs, as they are precisely aware of overall progress and developments.

Parents are well informed of their children’s programs, are actively involved in discussions about their progress and are very appreciative of the way their children are learning. The parent teacher association is very active and parents strongly support the school. They raise money for various school activities and support individual students and groups of students in their many projects and performances. The staff work very closely with parents who show their support through their involvement with the curriculum workshops which the school runs.

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 mandated curriculum is firmly based on high expectations of students and constant review of their progress using data. Excellent enrichment activities such as ballet, music, art and dance further enhance the curriculum. As a result, the students develop into confident, highly motivated individuals, well prepared for adult life. Parents particularly appreciate the way in which the school encourages their children's achievements. The students enjoy their lessons and have an upbeat and positive approach to their learning. They all keenly want to be at the school and succeed, firstly as dancers, and then in as many other areas as possible. They thoroughly enjoy the excellent productions, which the school stages.

The staff know and respect students and respond well to their personal and academic needs. This translates effectively into good achievement. Similarly, each student knows that there is an adult on the staff who is concerned about them and to whom they can turn for help. This enhances the family atmosphere and friendliness of the school that is so highly praised by the students. Attendance is above average, because the overwhelming majority of the students really enjoy coming to school and do not want to be away from it.

The school budget is used carefully to support the curriculum and planned improvements. Data is used effectively to decide on priorities. The analysis of data and the needs of the curriculum plan drive staffing decisions. The staff are hard working and committed to the development of the school. Information about students' progress is used well to ensure that high expectations are reflected in, for example, the degree to which resources are used to differentiate instruction in reading and writing.

Teachers collaborate well as for example, in determining how they will plan and teach the mandated curriculum. They know that their accountability for students' learning has to meet the needs of different ability groups through differentiated instruction. Currently, there is an insufficient emphasis on team teaching to share good practice and develop expertise.

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 proficient.

The school bases the selection of staff on high expectations for students' achievements and abilities to use data to monitor outcomes for students. Staff must care about the students and want them to succeed. The current staff are hard working and committed to the development of the school. They are eager to improve their skills, particularly those needed for deeper analysis of data on students' achievements. They readily involve themselves in professional development. This is planned from the results of data analysis and focuses on the goals in the school plan. Development activities are effectively raising the overall level of quality of teaching in the school.

The school regularly uses consultants to work with individual teachers and in small groups to model instruction in English language arts and mathematics. The in-house support comes from literacy and mathematics coaches who help and advise staff on the delivery of their teaching programs. Staff visit their colleagues' lessons to observe each other teaching. However, such observations are not sufficiently frequent to make significant improvements in teaching or to consolidate good practice across the school.

The principal sets high expectations and successfully communicates and shares these with the staff. He visits every classroom, every day to review and monitor teaching and establish a clear, consistent understanding of the quality he wants. There is no sense of complacency from a staff that have high levels of commitment to further improvement.

The principal is well regarded by staff, parents and students. Parents attribute the success of the school to his clear focus and commitment to the interests of the students. He is supported well by his administrative team enabling the school to run smoothly on a day-to-day basis.

The partnership with external agencies works well to support students who need some form of intervention strategy. At present, there are no special need students at the 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 proficient.

The school's monitoring and review processes are still being improved. The systematic analysis of data to benchmark progress provides a good foundation for this work. The teachers are self-evaluative and willing to take advice. The review process for individual classes helps in this respect. There is systematic monitoring and revision of planning to meet the needs of all students.

The staff are closely involved in decision-making. School planning is determined by the results of data analysis and the teachers' own secure understanding of each student's progress. As a result, the staff regularly plan, evaluate and revise interventions and initiatives according to the needs of the students.

The Comprehensive Education Plan is not seen as a working document and is not reviewed as a whole or at interim stages during the school year. The plan is reactive rather than proactive. Although it has precise goals, these do not have clear timeframes nor are they revised when new information becomes available.

The assessment binder compiled by each teacher, is an effective tool for making interim evaluations of the students' progress. It is also used effectively as an indicator for possible intervention strategies. Staff also use the data to make comparisons within and across classes.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Ballet Tech/NYC Public School for Dance {PS,MS,HS442}	∅	✓	+
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	