



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



# **Quality Review Report**

**The Mickey Mantle School**

**Public School 811**

**466 West End Avenue  
New York  
NY 10024**

**Principal: Barry Daub**

**Dates of review: February 5 - 6, 2007**

**Reviewer: Helen Donnellan**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

The Mickey Mantle School, Public School 811, is a special education school serving 362 severely disabled students from pre-kindergarten through grade 8. In addition to the main site, the school participates in inclusion programs at two community schools, PS 75 and PS 163, and from September 2006 opened a new off-site school at PS 149. PS 811 students are categorized as having multiple disabilities, autism, severe emotional and behavioral needs and language/communication disorders. All students have an individual education plan with personalized goals and mandated provision requirements. Standardized assessments are used to assess 60% of the students, alternate assessments are used with 40%.

Most students live within the Harlem empowerment zone and many travel to school using City provided transport. Ninety percent of students are eligible for academic intervention services to support them in their learning. Fifty percent of students are Hispanic; 42% Afro-American; 7% Caucasian; 2% American Indian and 1% American Pacific. Seventy-five percent of students are male. The home backgrounds of the students include living at home with parents, hospital residency, foster care and housing shelters.

Project empowerment is a school-wide program to reinforce positive behavior and is used at all the school sites.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal is highly regarded by staff, students and parents and leads the school with a clear focus on developing and supporting students at all levels.
- He is not complacent about performance, has high expectations of staff and students, challenges under-performance and puts interventions into place without delay.
- Data is gathered to give a holistic view of student performance, using a diverse range of assessments that reflect the needs of the students.
- The curriculum is varied and includes creative approaches to learning, for example the 'diner project' which links academic, social and careers education.
- Students are well supported in overcoming behavior and anti-social issues by both teaching and support staff.
- The school has close links with other agencies to provide a school-wide service for students and their families.
- The school provides a safe, nurturing environment for students.

### What the school needs to improve

- Consider how to use the time in the school day effectively so instruction opportunities are not missed and incidents of disruptive behavior are limited.
- Use student data consistently to inform planning and delivery of instruction.
- Increase teachers' knowledge and skills in how to apply data in their planning.
- Increase opportunities for students to follow a full physical education program.

## Part 3: Main findings

### Overall Evaluation

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

The Mickey Mantle school is a school with high expectations for all its' students, reflecting the model of Mickey Mantle to "aim higher." It is led by a principal who has shown that he can make effective changes, which can be seen at the PS 149 site where a new school was opened in September 2006, to replace an under-performing school. Parents describe the change as, "Awesome for how this school has changed for kids."

The school gathers a range of data on students' academic, social, physical and emotional development. Data is relevant to each student. Teachers do not fully utilize the range of data available to them. The curriculum and assessment of the multiply-disabled students reflects their needs and small steps in development.

Promoting positive behavior is a priority for the school and incidents are dealt with promptly without disrupting school life for others. The curriculum is varied, from feeding skills through to students participating in a culinary arts program serving the needs of real-life customers. Students are given support and where appropriate opportunities to take responsibility. The curriculum is limited by restricted access to full physical education facilities and technical education workshops.

The school is active in contacting parents and has introduced imaginative programs to sustain contact with them. The school works closely with external agencies to provide holistic support to students and their families.

### **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.**

Gathering of data on student performance is a high priority at the Mickey Mantle School and one of its strengths. Assessment data from standardized tests is collated into spreadsheets to provide up to date information on the progress of each class and the students within it. Teachers have information on the scores achieved by each student and whether they are achieving above or below their targets. Data on behavior is analyzed using student information software, giving staff up-to-date information on referrals for poor behavior, location, time and nature of incidents. The progress of English language learners is measured and tracked to show their progress and, ultimately progress from that program into the English language arts classes. The progress of every student is tracked in great detail, with the point scores gained on alternate performance indicator assessments measured to provide an indication of the value added to the learning of each student. This is the most meaningful comparison of data, as the student population changes so frequently.

**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 use of data for planning and setting goals is variable, with some good practice in place. At the start of each year administration and teaching staff collaborate to plan the content of the coming year’s curriculum, in relation to the goals within each student’s individual education plane. At PS 149 education and support staff collaborate to plan how they will deliver lessons as teams, thus providing effective multi-professional input for students. While the school is data-rich and this data is analyzed in great detail, not all teachers apply this in their planning, so the links between data, students’ goals and instruction are not always evident.

Supporting students in overcoming aggressive and disruptive behavior is a priority at the school. Functional behavior assessments are completed following behavior crises; these give the background of the situation, the event itself and intervention to address the crisis. Information from the detailed school wide information system analysis is not linked to the functional behavior assessment process, which means that available data is under-used to identify triggers for crises.

The principal verifies that students understand what they are learning through informal conversations and, explicitly checking that they are clear about the reason for their learning during his lesson observations. Most teachers make clear to students what they will learn during the lesson, allow students to work independently on their task and then check learning at the end of the lesson. Parents are regularly contacted to share information about their children and the school is imaginative in the ways that it seeks to engage and involve parents. When the site at PS 149 was opened, parents were routinely contacted to establish a shared relationship between the school and students’ families. Home-school books are used to share information between home and school. When students have limited communication, these books are most effective and one parent commented, “We’re informed not guessing.” Attendance by parents has increased by 50% through parent breakfasts and workshops where external agencies present workshops on subjects relevant to families of disabled students.

Staff collaborate effectively with colleagues from other agencies in addressing ways to work with individual students on social, therapy and academic issues. Expectations are made clear to families and students, using written, spoken and symbolic communication as appropriate.

**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 proficient.**

The school places great importance on providing a curriculum that meets the needs of students academically and reflects their ages and interests. Teaching and reading resources have been reviewed and changed and now offer content that interests male students, addressing the previous range of literature focusing on female interests. The ‘diner project’ is a multi-disciplinary program incorporating culinary arts with science, social science, mathematics, literacy and art within a realistic catering facility at the school. The

curriculum is delivered at the same time as showing students the relevance of what they learn and need to learn, to the world of work. Where students are located in general education classes, they follow the same curriculum as the general education students. The lack of specialist teaching areas for practical subjects limits the curriculum, as do the limited facilities for physical education.

Through reviewing individual education plan goals against previous assessment data, the principal ensures that goals are suitable and realistic. He ensures that teachers are directing instruction to those goals, through progress reports and checking lesson plans to ensure that content of instruction does provide students with opportunities to achieve their goals. Content across programs and lessons ensures that instruction is differentiated.

Budget decisions are driven by the mandated requirements for each student. The principal audits what is provided against the individual education plan requirements to ensure that spending aligns with what students need. Staff at off-sites collaborate with their general education colleagues on sharing of resources, agreeing common approaches to behavior management and use of facilities. The mandated time in the school day is not used to maximize opportunities for learning. For example, many of the students waiting for their transport to arrive at the end of the school day become bored and frustrated as teachers and para-professionals do not use the time to promote learning or social interaction. This results in avoidable incidents of poor behavior.

Positive behavior at all five sites is promoted through the project empowerment support system, so consistent expectations for behavior are clear. The increased data on unacceptable behavior is used well by some teachers to highlight effective teaching times and plan intervention to support predictable crises. This way of managing behavior effectively limits disruption. School wide information system data is also used to monitor the time that students spend in crisis.

Students are confident to approach staff with their concerns or problems and consider the staff to be caring towards them, which includes supporting them during crises. Communication modes are used which reflect the needs of each student. Parents are contacted on the first day of a student's absence from school, and longer absence is followed up by the attendance teacher and family worker. In situations of potential neglect, the school works closely with other agencies to support the student's needs and to continue their education.

**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 copes well with a high turnover of staff, overcoming reluctance of some staff to work in special education settings. A high proportion of staff is first year teachers and many paraprofessionals are new to the role. A number of recently hired staff are New York City Teaching Fellows, who bring maturity and other experience to enhance the curriculum, as is illustrated by the culinary arts program led by a former chef.

Professional development takes the needs of new and established staff into account, with information and training on changes to the curriculum and behavior management approaches. The staff has not yet received training in applying data to inform their planning and delivery of instruction. Professional knowledge is shared with colleagues from other schools, for example, through work on the Read 180 program. This raised the

staff's awareness of how to better develop this program in working with challenging students.

Lesson observations are carried out by the principal and assistant principals. They also carry out paired walk-throughs of classes, following which they discuss what has been seen and how to address any concerns, to ensure consistency in their monitoring. Prior to his formal lesson observations the principal discusses the teacher's personal goals and considers these alongside lesson plans and students' individual education plan goals. He challenges under-performance when this is seen and puts intervention in place without delay, to move instruction and students forward.

Information on students is shared by teachers at grade team meetings and during common preparation time, during which they also share the outcomes of professional development they have attended.

The principal is recognized as leading an orderly school where positive behavior is the underpinning factor, as without this instruction cannot be effective. He is seen as an approachable leader by both students and staff. Parents feel they can approach him with concerns and that he delivers what he says he will.

The school works with many agencies to deliver school-wide services to students and their families at all the sites. There are established systems for working with caring and foster agencies and the parent coordinator is an effective link between education, guidance and other service providers.

**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 administrative team monitors student progress and the progress made towards school-wide plans throughout the year and, where necessary changes are made to ensure that goals are achieved. This applies for outcomes and actions at all sites. Every two weeks alternate performance indicators and behavior reduction plans are reviewed to ensure that progress is being made in relation to longer term plans. The latest academic test results are also taken into account to monitor progress against individual education plan goals and whole school goals.

Meaningful comparisons are difficult to make between students and groups of students, owing to their diverse needs, but the school does compare the progress made by students over different time, to monitor rates of learning. Changes in rates of learning, progress shown in Briganze, other formal assessments and informal observations lead to conferences where intervention is reviewed and changes made to promote further progress.

Adaptation and change are part of how the school works to accommodate the needs of the ever-changing student population. As well as reviewing assessment data, the school reviews the methods used to assess students each year, considering how both standardized and alternate assessment tools match each students' needs. Flexibility is shown in the way that it aligns resources to meet the needs of the students taking into account information from baseline and ongoing assessments.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <b>SCHOOL NAME: The Mickey Mantle School (PS 811)</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.

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|--|---|---|---|
| <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 |   |