



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

John Bowne Public School

Public School 020

**142 - 30
Queens
NY 11355**

Principal: Frank Welfer

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Reviewer: Cheryl Baker

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The John Bowne School (Public School 20) is a pre-kindergarten through grade 6 school with 1374 students. The school population comprises 55% Asian, 34% Hispanic, 5.6% Black and 5.4% White students. Five percent of the school population are special education students and 32% are English language learners. Over 15% of the schools' annual population are recent immigrants. Approximately 90% of the children come from non-English speaking homes where over 50 different languages are spoken. The school is Title I eligible. There are high levels of students leaving and entering the school other than the normal points of entry and exit.

The principal is in his ninth year of service at the school. During that time the students have shown continuous improvement in English language arts and mathematics as measured by State and City tests, outscoring similar schools and schools across the city. Attendance was above 94.6% in 2005 and these levels have been maintained for the first months of 2006-2007. These rates are above the average for both similar and City-wide schools.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Structures the environment to support teachers in their efforts to foster high academic achievement for all students.
- Provides strong focused leadership for high quality teaching and learning.
- Provides a friendly and supportive school culture in which students, teachers and parents feel respected and valued as individuals.
- Provides specialized programs and interventions to address the broad spectrum of students' learning needs, especially English language learners.
- Supports the youngest learners with a comprehensive pre-kindergarten experience.
- Engenders collaborative problem solving and empowers teachers to share in the leadership and decision making in the school.
- Demonstrates annual increases in student performance as measured by State and City tests.
- Capitalizes on the strength of youth services programs to support the academic achievement of participating students.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue to provide professional development and coaching to support the implementation of standards based instruction in all content areas and facilitate inter-visitations.
- Increase the use of assessment data in measuring students' incremental progress and in creating plans that address individual students' needs.
- Continue to explore avenues of communication with the parent community in order to increase their understanding of, and participation in, the life of the school.
- .Establish interim goals for all components in the Comprehensive Education Plan to enable regular monitoring of progress and the reallocation of resources where necessary.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well developed school.

The school is led by a strong collaborative administrative team that communicates high expectations for academic achievement and supports it through supervision and professional development. Teachers, students and parents describe the school as warm and caring while demanding hard work. They are proud of the school and the progress it has made under the current principal. The school's commitment to serving its non-English speaking and English language learner population through early childhood education and specialized instruction is noteworthy and its success is evident in the progress students have made over the years.

How well the school meets New York City's evaluation criteria

Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor student progress over time.

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

The school's leaders and its teachers routinely collect data to inform their daily understanding of the progress of their students. In grades kindergarten through 3 the school administers the ECLAS II as required. Additionally, teachers assess student achievement in oral language and print concepts, and administer benchmark tests to determine accuracy and comprehension. In the upper grades the school analyses data retrieved from State tests and the Princeton Review, as well as information gleaned from running records, conferencing and through the review of student portfolios.

Teachers create common entrance assessments to determine students' baseline knowledge in the core subjects at the beginning of the school year. This data, as well as information regarding student performance in the previous grade, is used for initial grouping for instruction. The school's population changes by approximately one third each school year and intake assessments are administered upon entrance.

The school gathers information about its English language learners through home language surveys, tests students to assess their language proficiency and crafts individual programs to meet their needs. Special education students are assessed according to their identified needs and receive individualized instructional programs. The 2004-2005 Annual School Report indicates that the percentage of English language learners and special education students scoring at levels 3 and 4 exceeds that of similar school and schools across the city. The school does not emphasize the analysis of data by race or ethnicity respective to academic performance although it does record detailed information on students' countries of origin and home languages and uses it to understand the learning needs of each student.

The school is aware of its progress as compared to similar nearby schools as well as elementary schools in the region. Its focus, however, is on the progress of its own students, classes and grade levels.

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 leadership team annually reviews data from State tests, surveys and classroom assessments to formulate the Comprehensive Education Plan which sets out long term improvement targets. The principal’s annual goals include improvement goals that support the goals of the Comprehensive Education Plan as well as describing actions related to the school’s planned transition to a pre-k through grade 5 school. These plans address the school as a whole, and contain specificity with respect to academic subject areas, English language learners and early childhood education. Less evident are plans specific to particular groups within the school or individual grades.

The school’s pupil personnel committee meets monthly to determine interventions for students who have been identified as needing assistance. A network of support personnel addresses an extensive array of student needs. Increasingly, the school is incorporating technology into its remedial services, such as the recent purchase of instructional software that provides non-English speakers with English tutorials specific to their level of comprehension. Students in the extended day program receive targeted instruction in either mathematics or English language arts based on their individual needs. Saturday school provides extra support in the core tested areas to students in grades 3 and 4.

Teachers communicate expectations for students’ academic performance through rubrics that express the components of high quality work. Students are able to describe the expectations for their work. Students chose their best work for inclusion in their portfolios and these records of their academic growth follow them through the grades. Parents receive report cards three times per year which describe their child’s progress in the strands represented in the core academic subjects.

The school uses a variety of methods to provide parents with information about what their children are learning and to alert them to key dates in the school’s calendar. Translation into all of the languages spoken by parent community is a challenge for the school and parents’ lack of facility with English sometimes limits their ability to participate fully in supporting their child’s academic performance.

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 English language arts curriculum incorporates the components of balanced literacy. Everyday Math provides the basis for instruction in mathematics. Literacy and mathematics coaches support teachers in the delivery of instruction in their respective disciplines. Curriculum maps guide the topical instruction all subjects although the school

is not rigorous in monitoring for adherence to the maps, nor in checking for the use of common assessments across grade levels. A current focus of the school is increasing teachers' regular and deliberate incorporation of State standards into their instruction. The workshop model of instructional delivery is embedded in the practice of teachers throughout the school, thus ensuring a variety of different activities and allowing for large and small groupings. Differentiation does not take sufficient account of regular assessments to match activities to individual need.

The goals in the Comprehensive Education Plan as well as the school's deep understanding of the needs of its unique population drive all decisions in the school, including those concerned with the budget, staffing and the schedule. When data revealed that the majority of students in the upper grades had moved into levels 3 and 4 in English language arts, paraprofessionals assigned to these classes were moved to pre-kindergarten to grade 2 classrooms. The school hires retired teachers to support students who need one-on-one tutoring. In order to minimize the time students are pulled out of the regular classroom to receive special education services, the school created before school program for these students.

Students behave well and report that they feel motivated and challenged in class. They delighted in explaining what they were learning. They express pride in their school, affection for their teachers and the principal and felt known, respected and cared for by the adults in the building. Administrators and teachers are vigilant with respect to student attendance and prompt arrival.

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 recognized and respected as the instructional leader of the school and, in collaboration with his administrative team and teachers, has continued to move the school forward. He also has the respect and admiration of students and parents. The school is well organized and runs smoothly. Halls and classrooms are bright and welcoming and bulletin boards offer colorful displays of student work.

The principal holds high expectations for his staff and engages in a rigorous hiring process. Selection is based on content knowledge, teaching skills, a strong desire to work with the school's population and a willingness to participate fully in the life of the school. The principal and assistant principals routinely visit classrooms for formal and informal observations. Teachers report that administrators offer helpful feedback, most often in the form of follow-up conversations.

Professional development is effectively embedded in the regular school day. Teachers receive valuable support from the mathematics and literacy coaches as well as the instructional technology coordinator and training in the use of data. The identification of immediate needs rather than the priorities in the Comprehensive Education Plan sometimes drive professional development decisions made by the cabinet.

Weekly grade meetings provide the opportunity to address progress on the curriculum maps and to discuss grade level outcomes. Teachers at a grade level regularly support one another by sharing techniques on an informal basis. Grade teams help to integrate

newly hired teachers into the life of the school. However, teachers do not visit each other's classrooms with frequency.

The school has formalized alliances with four youth development and support service organizations. They provide programs relating to Chinese culture and language, provide homework help, and one long-standing, award winning program that provides creative and challenging academic activities for students after school, on holidays and during the summer.

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 Comprehensive Education Plan, with the exception of component addressing English language learners, sets long range rather than frequent interim goals and assessments to enable regular monitoring of progress throughout the year. Revisions are made annually. Similarly, the principal's goals are annual rather than incremental.

The school's operational structures support the regular review of student progress throughout the year and the sharing of anecdotal data regarding student progress is a common feature of the discourse among staff. This often leads to the provision of interventions for individual students or the identification of needs for supplemental materials at a grade level. Formal comparisons of student progress within and across classrooms is a less frequent practice in the school.

Data revealed by periodic assessments such as the Princeton review are a growing source of information for teachers in guiding the decisions they make regarding the instruction of individual students at the tested grades. For students in the early grades, routine diagnostic assessments embedded in the balanced literacy program give teachers daily information upon which they base their instructional planning. Assessment components of Everyday Math as well as teacher made tests guide decisions about grouping and lesson focus. These periodic and diagnostic assessments are used most often to inform instruction at the classroom level.

For students at risk, interventions and their effectiveness are addressed monthly and adjusted as necessary based on interviews, observational records and diagnostic measures. The progress of English language learners is measured by State diagnostic and exit examinations, teacher observation and conferencing, and the monitoring of student progress in the regular classroom. Instructional settings and methods are adjusted as necessary. Similar practices of monitoring, assessing and adjusting services are followed for special education students, with the goal of moving as many as possible into the regular education classroom setting.

The administration and teachers demonstrate a high level of knowledge about each student. The governance of the school supports the flexible realignment of practices and resources to improve student academic outcomes.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: John Bowne School (P.S. 20)	∅	✓	+
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	