



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



# **Quality Review Report**

**State Street School**

**Public School 032**

**171 - 11 35th Avenue  
Queens  
NY 11358**

**Principal: Betsey Malesardi**

**Dates of review: November 15 - 17, 2006**

**Reviewer: Mary Ayala**

# 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

Public School 32 is in Flushing, Queens. The school's current enrollment of 685 students in grades pre-kindergarten through 6 represents a decline of 200 students since 2002-2003, a decline generally attributed to the rising cost of living in the area. For school year 2007-2008, grade 5 will become the exit point for the school with the placement of grade 6 at the local middle school.

Although the school is ethnically diverse, its percentage of Asian students (53.7%) is significantly higher than similar schools while its proportion of Black students (2%) is significantly lower than similar schools. Hispanic and White students are equally represented at 21%. The school is not Title 1 eligible. Of the total population, 11% are classified as special education students while 20% are identified as English language learners. With an annual student attendance rate of 96%, the school exceeds the average for similar and City-wide schools.

The school has been recognized with a New York State High Performing/Gap Closing School Award, has been designated a Collaborative Community of Practice School, and was recently cited in *School Matters* for significantly narrowing the achievement gap between economically disadvantaged and non-economically disadvantaged students.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal sets and models high expectations for herself, her staff and students with regard to academic achievement, inter-personal relationships and respect for the building.
- The principal has nurtured a culture of trust and collaboration that promotes continuous conversations about improving student performance.
- Staff use a variety of data sources to assess student progress, discuss the data in a variety of forums and use the information to modify classroom practice.
- Staff view their colleagues as resident experts and continuously share best practices and ask for assistance.
- A very active parent teacher association enables parents to participate actively in supporting the work of the school.
- Student progress is monitored very effectively using a range of assessments.
- The needs of all students, no matter their level of achievement, are identified, discussed, and addressed with a wide variety of interventions.
- Selection of staff, budgetary decisions, operational procedures, and community partnerships are aligned to sustain a culture of high performance.
- Professional development is well aligned with identified needs.
- Students are encouraged to contribute to the community at large through a variety of service-oriented activities.

### What the school needs to improve

- Revise the Comprehensive Education Plan through formalized monitoring, evaluation and the realignment of school goals based on the most recent data available.
- Refine the use of standardized test data at grade 4 to address the gender gap.
- Develop some visual representations of test data that highlight areas for further consideration.
- Expand the number of internally designed assessments to complement prescribed periodic assessments.

## Part 3: Main findings

### Overall Evaluation

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

Students who attend Public School 32 are assured of a quality start to their education and excellent foundations for their middle and high school experiences. The school maintains an efficient and effective cycle of data review that integrates the use of standardized testing, periodic formal assessments, unit tests, and teacher conference notes in literacy and mathematics. Information from standardized tests and periodic assessments is reviewed at grade level meetings, at meetings of the school leadership team, at faculty conferences, and at parent teacher meetings. Students are involved in monitoring their progress through subject-based work folders that are maintained in individual classrooms as well as through portfolios that contain selected work products identified for inclusion at each grade level. They have access to a wide range of interventions that address issues of language acquisition, literacy and mathematics skills development, and social and emotional concerns.

Students, staff, and parents, speak positively of the school's respectful culture and high academic performance and credit the principal's leadership in setting high expectations for all. The school provides for the whole child by addressing social and emotional needs with a variety of character-building programs and by encouraging community service initiatives.

### 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.**

School staff are provided with multiple sources of data in order to benchmark the performance of individual students, subgroups, and the school as a whole. State assessments and formal, periodic assessments are used to refine and deepen teachers' understanding of student progress at the individual level, in class-by-class comparisons, and with attention to English language learners and special education students. Informal assessments such as logs, running records, conference notes and portfolio collections provide teachers with measurements over time of student progress. Students maintain subject area folders, a writing folder, and a comprehensive portfolio that contains specified items for collection at each grade level. In addition, a prescribed portfolio is maintained for students in grades 3 and 5 who have scored at Level 1 on standardized tests and may be targeted for retention. The school also uses a reading assessment chart on which information is collected four times a year by the principal, assistant principal and academic coaches and then shared with teachers. Articulation cards are passed on as students move from grade to grade and provide yet another picture of progress over time. Although the internally designed assessments are well used to identify the gaps in student learning, these are not always frequent enough to guide instruction in detail.

Student progress is reviewed in a variety of forums that include grade level conferences, instructional cabinet meetings, and school leadership team meetings and is presented in

ways that allow for the monitoring of individual students, classrooms, and ethnic groups with special attention given to English language learners. However, these assessments and analyses are not always used to address the differing achievement of particular groups, for example girls and boys. More visual ways of displaying data would enable teachers to see more easily the areas for further consideration.

**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 school works well to address the learning needs of all students. English language learners are provided with classroom buddies, instruction designed specifically for English language learners, paraprofessional support, and opportunity to be part of the English club. The school’s Korean dual language program specifically addresses the needs of the school’s largest immigrant population without compromising its cultural roots. Special education students receive a variety of services across a broad spectrum that includes full inclusion in regular classrooms, resource room, or one-on-one paraprofessional assistance in a small, self-contained classroom. Small groups of struggling students receive additional help with the intervention specialist while students in danger of falling behind are placed in smaller classes at grades 3 and 5. The academic intervention services team also discusses students who are struggling and may recommend support at the classroom level or additional supports. Members of the academic intervention services team are liaisons to specific grades, thereby streamlining access to both data and support. Students who are functioning at a high level are placed in the intellectually gifted class in grades 4 through 6.

The principal and assistant principal, with the professional development team, continuously review available data and adjust teaching and learning strategies. Staff appreciate the principal’s background in special education as a source of her expertise as a diagnostician and coach who promotes differentiating instruction on behalf of all learners. Each classroom teacher maintains a folder of student information that tracks progress from a variety of sources including standardized tests, formal and informal assessments, and conference notes. These folders provide a baseline for setting whole-class and individual student goals and to ensure that those students most at risk get all the help they need.

The school makes considerable effort to communicate its high expectations and achievement information to parents and to engage them in supporting their children’s progress. The executive council of the parent teacher association meets on a monthly basis with the principal and then decides how to best present informational updates and curriculum overviews at open parent meetings. Letters to parents provide information from standardized testing and periodic assessments as well as tips on how parents can support learning at home. In addition to the principal’s open door policy, parents also appreciate ‘Open School Week’ - a time when report cards are distributed, parent conferences are held and classroom observations are encouraged. As one parent commented, ‘This is a team effort on behalf of every child.’

**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 curriculum is closely aligned to the mandated curriculum. Units of study are developed by staff, and adjusted annually. The core instructional program for all students is enhanced with a computer lab, science lab, writing across the curriculum, and social studies projects.

Of special note is the way the principal and assistant principal have developed a culture of trust, collaboration, and risk taking that promotes continuous conversations about meeting student needs. This school is notable for its clear alignment of key resources of staff, budget, and time to support student achievement. A seamless operational transition has been put in place at the end of the school day to ensure the maximum amount of time for the extended school day program. The principal has designed the schedule so that grade level teachers have a common planning time. At grade level meetings, time is used either to discuss student progress or instructional best practices or to deliver mini-workshops on any number of professional development initiatives.

Teachers seek out the assistance of literacy and mathematics coaches, the computer lab teacher, the academic intervention support specialist and other colleagues, frequently on their own time, in order to gather additional data and discuss possible responses to pedagogical challenges. With this information, intentional adjustments are made to teaching and learning practices, and work is matched to meet students' needs.

A strong support system is in place to support students academically and in their personal development. Students trust staff, and are confident that adults will support them if there is a problem. The school has a well-developed system for monitoring daily student attendance. Teachers also look at patterns of sporadic absences to determine possible causes. As a result of this system, the school's attendance far exceeds the Department of Education's goal of 92% annual student attendance.

**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 prioritizes the hiring of staff who deliver the Balanced Literacy and Everyday Math/Impact Math curriculum effectively, work well with English language learners and fit in with the collaborative culture of the school. The principal has also secured the return to work of a number of retirees who had previously demonstrated their expertise in accelerating learning for students.

Professional development is multi-layered and includes coaching, modeling, and workshops, all of which contribute to staff effectiveness in accelerating student learning. All coaches attend either study groups or regional professional development workshops. Dedicated time at grade-level and faculty meetings is used for mini-workshops that address professional development needs identified by staff surveys. Teachers are active participants on the instructional cabinet/professional development team and the school leadership team where their input drives adjustments to the curriculum and modifications to the units of study. A majority of staff self-initiate peer classrooms visits and coach each other in effective practices. Working with coaches or peers is a popular choice as an alternative to the observation process.

Of particular note is the school's collaboration with Teachers College of Columbia University in its Reading and Writing Project, its key source of literacy professional development. As a result of their multiyear participation, staff have continuously refined their delivery of reading and writing workshops, developed units of study with aligned internal assessments, and enhanced their capacity to differentiate instruction.

The principal visits classrooms on a daily basis. Based on these observations, decisions are made about possible professional development needs, increased monitoring, or the pursuit of additional supports. Staff and students state that she is a good listener and responds to identified needs, no matter how large or small. Staff also note that she excels at developing the individual skills and talents of staff members. Staff speak very positively about a shared vision and collaborative culture as key elements of the school's success in meeting the needs of all students.

**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.**

This school uses a variety of informal assessments that complement less frequent periodic assessments and standardized tests. All units of study have built-in assessments and commercial curricula such as Everyday Math include unit tests. All writing related to the units of study contains rubrics that provide exemplars as well as suggestions on how to achieve proficiency. On-going discussions about individual, classroom, sub-groups, and school performance frequently result in adjustments to the curriculum and the Comprehensive Education Plan. Although school leaders are very aware of the school's priorities for development, the Comprehensive Education Plan does not clearly set out ways in which it will formally be monitored, evaluated and goals realigned based on the most recent data.

Weekly meetings of the academic intervention services team and bi-weekly meetings of the pupil personnel team are used to evaluate student progress and ensure appropriate supports and interventions. Specialist teachers provide classroom teachers with exit information about English language learners so their progress can be closely monitored and teachers rely on additional assessment information that is provided by the intervention specialist.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>Name of School : The State Street School (PS 32Q)</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