



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



# **Quality Review Report**

**The Woodhaven School**

**Public School 060**

**9102 88th Avenue**

**Queens**

**N Y 11421**

**Principal: Frank DeSario**

**Dates of review: May 23 – 25, 2007**

**Reviewer: Stephanie Krusa**

# 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 60 has a student population of almost 1200 students in pre-kindergarten to grade 5. Almost two thirds of the students are Hispanic, a significantly higher proportion than found in similar or City schools. Black and White students each represent 6% of the enrollment, a far lower proportion than found throughout most of the City. Asians students make up the remaining 22%, on a par with similar schools but lower than that of City schools.

Just over 18% of the students are English language learners with new students recently arriving from the Dominican Republic, Guyana and Ecuador. Special education students make up 13% of the enrollment, with 5% of those in self-contained classes and the remaining 8% in cooperative team teaching and general education classrooms. The school has top classes on grades 3 through 5. Just over 71% of students have Title 1 eligibility, comparable to similar and City schools. Attendance stands at 93.5%, which is higher than the norm.

The school building, which opened in 1964, is beautifully maintained. It has a spacious library and new playground. Recent upgrades include air conditioning in half of the school's classrooms and offices, and wireless capacity throughout the building.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal is a highly effective instructional leader and provides strategic support for students and staff to improve student achievement.
- The principal is focused on student achievement and marshals all resources to ensure that each student has an opportunity to learn.
- The principal, administrators and teachers demonstrate the ability to organize and analyze data and to translate results into targeted instruction.
- There is a coherent data-driven plan in place for students identified as needing academic interventions and a strategic plan for supporting each child's learning
- The staff uniformly demonstrates high expectations of all students and provides a challenging curriculum in every classroom.
- Administrators, coaches, teachers and all support staff work effectively to share best practices in support of student achievement.
- The school is well run and maintained, and provides a welcoming learning environment for students, parents and staff.

### What the school needs to improve

- Continue to develop community collaborations to enhance academic and support services programs.
- Strengthen differentiation of instruction and continue to build the pool of academic interventions with classroom teachers
- Continue to develop arts and enrichment programs to balance the strong academic program.
- Build goal-setting and reflective practices with students to support self management of learning.
- Continue to build technology base so that all students can develop important technological skills.

## Part 3: Main findings

### Overall Evaluation

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

Public School 60 is a large neighborhood elementary school, successfully serving students in the Woodhaven section of Queens. High expectations for all students permeate the culture of this school and focus all constituents on achievement. This, coupled with the fact that every student is closely assessed and well known to staff, provides a solid foundation for growth.

The staff is stable and works collegially to elevate the level of practice in every classroom. As a result, the school has made consistent gains and met annual yearly targets for all student groups over the past three years. For example, the school received a *Closing the Achievement Gap* award from the New York State Department of Education in response to gains made by the school's special education cohort. In addition, Public School 60 is one of approximately 300 on the City's *Higher performing Schools* list this year, indicating that it is exempt from following the City curriculum because of an overall high level of student achievement, and consistent gains in annual yearly progress.

All staff use data well to assess learning, and to continually improve the effectiveness of the instructional program. Goals, which are proactive and anticipate progress, are frequently reviewed and revised if necessary in response to student needs. Though the staff is highly adept at setting goals, students are not yet sufficiently involved in this process. The principal is aware of this and has taken steps to address it. Progress is effectively reviewed from year to year to gain insight about overall progress, and to develop long-range plans when writing the Comprehensive Education Plan. The staff also closely monitors progress throughout each year to adapt plans as new data is available.

Parents are very pleased with the school's academic program and the progress of their children, though many feel that the school's arts program is inadequate. Public School 60 has a long-standing collaboration with St. John's University which provides student teachers, many of whom have joined the staff. The Woodhaven Civic Association is another enduring partner, and recently funded resurfacing of the children's playground and installed new play equipment.

### **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 principal and staff of Public School 60 effectively monitor all manner of quantitative and qualitative data to support student achievement for the school as a whole, and for each group. This school follows a very organized and comprehensive process for collecting existing data and generating its own qualitative information. This is an ongoing process which provides a clear learning profile for individual students, and an assessment

of progress in each classroom, across grades and for the school as a whole. Staff consistently disaggregate data to compare progress and proactively strategize for each group, including special education students, English-language learners, general education students who under perform, and students within each ethnic cohort.

The principal has been in place for three years, and in that time student scores at the Woodhaven School have shown consistent improvement. Under his leadership, the staff views assessment results from year to year, and monitors their own effectiveness by analyzing student progress in relation to that of similar schools. The staff also studies results internally to determine the impact that curriculum and instruction in each content area has on learning for all students and all groups.

**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 staff works collegially to understand learning benchmarks at and across grades. Good subject knowledge and a close understanding of the content for sending and receiving grades assists teachers in setting effective instructional goals. Goal setting is an ongoing process. Curriculum goals and instruction are flexibly revised as staff carefully monitors student achievement against learning benchmarks for the school and for each grade and group. For example, though English language learners have made annual yearly targets, the cabinet recently met with English as second language staff to explore new staffing and grouping measures for next year, to further diminish the achievement gap for this group. The school has been particularly successful in setting and meeting goals for special education students, as evidenced in the achievement of annual yearly performance targets in language arts and mathematics for the past three years. Because of this success, the staff has a firm foundation for developing plans and goals for general education students requiring additional support. All staff work together to ensure that this and all student groups experience academic growth. For example, there are weekly *linkage* meetings whereby specialists and classroom teachers discuss their work with targeted children to certify that all efforts are carefully coordinated to best impact learning. There is also a daily common planning period for all academic intervention staff, who work with both general and special education students, so that they can compare student progress across grades for students who are at risk.

Every child is expected to progress and learn, and grade-level goals reflect this belief. Students readily discuss their learning and are very aware of the content they need to master for long term summative assessments, however students are not sufficiently involved in reflecting on their learning and determining personal short-term goals that will enhance optimal understanding. Parents and staff communicate well, sharing information about students and working together to nurture growth.

**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 rigorous curriculum aligns with City and State requirements, and includes several additional programs, selected because they provide more specific information, to supplement City mandates. Students are expected to achieve, a belief reflected in the careful analysis of every student’s progress, resulting in ongoing adjustments to curriculum and instruction. Teachers are expected to be conversant with the scope and sequence across grades so that their instruction makes valid connections to previous and anticipated learning. For example, a teacher from every grade participated in scoring of the State 4th grade English language arts test, to focus conversations among grade level staff about how curriculum inter-relates as students advance through the grades.

The large staff has an impressive range of training in English as second language and special education training. Teachers pool skills and strategies to support differentiation of instruction, though both principal and staff acknowledge that this is not sufficiently done, and requires more focus.

The school is very well resourced and funds are equitably used to support learning for every child. Teachers are carefully matched with students, who are flexibly grouped for instruction, in response to ongoing data about individual and group achievement. The school has wireless capacity and is fairly well equipped with computers, though the number is not adequate to address the needs of this large school. There are plans to increase the inventory of laptops and Smartboards to build student access and diminish the digital divide.

The school carefully nurtures the academic, social and emotional growth of students and supports each to reach potential by setting high expectations and providing a rigorous and challenging curriculum. Students feel supported in school and are engaged in studies though they miss fine and performing arts programs which have been discontinued. They readily discuss their work and the strategies they are using to learn. Student engagement is reflected in attendance which is typically at 93.5% and above that of similar and City schools.

**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.**

Improving student achievement is the focus of all professional learning experiences. The principal has long-range professional development goals for the school which align the Comprehensive Education Plan and parallel with needs seen in data, in June, and as it develops over the year. He also knows the staff well and matches their individual and collective needs by providing for learning opportunities, on site, and by sending staff to regional seminars and outside conferences. In addition, teachers are encouraged to identify areas for personal growth and to select additional professional development programs that will hone skills and build expertise. Teachers intervisit to share and model best practices. The staff is highly collegial and works well to develop, field test and assess curriculum and to refine instructional methods and strategies such as differentiation. This

expertise is supported by six Schools Attuned teachers, and nine Wilson trained staff, which includes all kindergarten teachers. Plans are in place for 1<sup>st</sup> grade staff to receive Wilson training in the fall. Because of its strong program, the school will be a Wilson demonstration site next year. The principal is completing his 3<sup>rd</sup> year and has made significant changes each year, which are gratefully acknowledged by parents, staff and students. Student achievement has made steady gains during his tenure, and all aspects of the school function well.

Applicant teachers are asked to present a planned lesson to demonstrate effective instructional and management strategies and content understanding. In addition applicants must believe that all children are learners, and show capacity for flexibly developing instructional plans, from ongoing assessment, to successfully scaffold their learning. The principal and assistant principals share oversight of staff, with formal and informal observations occurring as required, but as needed for new teachers. The staff indicates that professional growth is well supported by administrators, coaches and curriculum specialists and that the school's curriculum provides an excellent platform for teaching. The school successfully partners with St. John's University and the Woodhaven Association, but community partnerships are not sufficient, particularly for a school of this size. The principal has plans to develop new alliances to augment and enhance the school's academic and support service programs.

**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.**

The principal has long-range and annual goals for improvement and involves all staff in developing each year's plans, and in using established protocols for monitoring progress. Throughout the year, the staff refers regularly to the Comprehensive Education Plan to check for anticipated growth and modify elements of the program which are not showing sufficient results. Administrators meet regularly with a team of teachers from each grade to review goals and objectives and proactively address needs revealed in all manner of formal and informal data. New information is used to assess and compare progress for students, classes across each grade, and for the school in relation to similar schools.

The staff convenes in June to weigh overall student progress, and that for disaggregated groups, against Comprehensive Education Plan goals to frame the writing process for next year's document.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: The Woodhaven School (PS 060)</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