



**NYCDOE**

**Quality Review: Final Report**

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



# **Quality Review Report**

**Chester Park School**

**Public School 062**

**97-25 108 Street  
Queens  
NY 11419**

**Principal: Angela O'Dowd**

**Dates of review: May 25 – 29, 2007**

**Reviewer: Carol Carlsen**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

PS 062, Chester Park School, is a kindergarten through grade 5 school located in the Richmond Hill area of Queens, New York. There are 978 students enrolled at the school. The ethnic balance of the student body is 65% Asian/Pacific Islanders, 27% Hispanic, 6% Black and 2% White.

The special education program accounts for 7% of the students who are in one self contained class, two collaborative team teaching classes and general education classes supported by the school's special education teacher offer support services. English language learners comprise 14% of the student body, with Guyanese as the main home language.

The daily average attendance is approximately 94% which exceeds the comparison rate of both similar schools and schools throughout the City. The proportion of children who receive Title I funding is 72% which is higher than both similar schools and other City schools.

The school has taken on the status of an empowerment school. These schools have more flexibility to make decisions and control the resources for their entire school community. This process allows the school to develop or purchase professional development services as well as make other critical changes that will benefit the school's goals.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal and her cabinet demonstrate strong leadership qualities and foster an atmosphere of high expectations for the academic, social and emotional progress for every child.
- Teachers and support staff work in a highly efficient collaborative manner that provides a positive climate for learning where everyone strives to improve on what they do.
- The school collects a wide range of data which is used comprehensively by the administration and by teachers who track individual student's progress effectively.
- The principal has created a highly effective professional development program that implements exemplary systems for integrating additional support for all students.
- The school environment is well maintained and stimulating displays of student and other work is everywhere.
- Students and parents feel a high level of excitement at the wide range of opportunities and the quality of experiences the school provides.
- The school works closely with parents who are frequently informed of school and home partnership expectations to accelerate student progress.
- The students feel confident in their learning abilities and are fully engaged in their learning.
- Standards of student achievement are high and have been improving over recent years.
- A highly developed monitoring system has been established for evaluating student progress.

### What the school needs to improve

- Continue to develop year long curriculum pacing calendars that include the use of periodic rigorous assessments.
- Continue to expand the professional development opportunities for teachers so they strengthen their analysis, and broaden their use, of the data collected by the school.
- Continue to develop ways in which teachers employ differentiation in their planning and teaching.

## Part 3: Main findings

### Overall Evaluation

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

The principal provides an exemplary leadership style that has far reaching positive effects on school achievement. In conjunction with her assistant principals and the literacy and math coach team she has developed a strong sense of caring and excitement in students for their learning. Under this leadership all members of the school community have had professional opportunities to learn and grow and discover their interests as they work side by side. Students enjoy coming to school and teaching is engaging. This is a school which has made excellent progress in developing its curriculum and ensuring that students make good progress and reach high standards of achievement.

Teamwork and collaboration is strong. Parents and students feel that they are partners in the development of the school leading to ever-higher levels of achievement. Everyone knows their roles and responsibilities and through the inspirational leadership of the principal, good planning and teaching maximizes the progress made by students.

The school collects and uses a wide range of performance data. The good monitoring systems help ensure that students make good progress and this has been recognized over the past three years through the New York State award showing Chester Park School as a "High Performing Gap Closing School". Staff are never complacent about the information they gather and continue to integrate technology into their teaching to broaden student's learning opportunities.

The decision to move into the empowerment school status is allowing the school to design and implement both budgetary and instructional initiatives that match the present needs of the school goals. Presently the progress of the schools achievement has made strong incremental strides that indicate that the united efforts of the school and home communities are working in a highly supportive way in promoting student enjoyment of learning.

The school has planned clear progressive steps in both teacher training and the development of assessment analysis that will deepen the level of differentiation for all groups of students.

#### **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 is extremely proactive in collecting, analyzing and using data to improve student achievement. The administration and teachers use data on an almost daily basis. Assessment results are compared against preset benchmarks to identify whether students have any additional needs before providing support services. In the early childhood classes teachers use a variety of useful assessments, including their own detailed evaluations of student performance. In grades 3 through 5 teachers use more formal

periodic tests, the data from which helps determine further support for individuals or groups of student.

Intervention initiatives are embedded at every grade level which includes additional support for students who are falling behind, English language learners, especially those new to the country, and special education students. The leadership efforts have also been focused on an expansion of the use of technology driven programs that efficiently provide assessment results.

Students work closely with their teachers in developing an understanding of the data that is collected. They are actively engaged in both the gathering and the reflection of this information in order to increase individual performance.

The school has a very good understanding of the substantial improvement it has made over the past few years as it reviews its short and long-term goals set forth in the Comprehensive Education Plan. Accurate and meticulous record keeping using comparisons with similar schools and their own past performances are already within the fibre of the life in the school. The systematic review of the data collected for appropriate ethnic groups and other sub groups are studied in order to better analyze any trends. The impact of this work continues to enhance school wide achievement and enables each student to achieve to the best of his/her capabilities. However, not all teachers use data beyond the results of individual students.

**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.**

A high quality of collaboration and inquiry has been established at this school. Systems and procedures for both the collection and analysis of data are evident in the communication efforts made between and among staff, students and parents. The principal and her leadership team are proactive in monitoring both short and long term school wide goals in order to evaluate the daily teaching and learning within their school.

Through the professional development plan, teachers have a good understanding of the process for setting individual goals for each of their students and willingly work with their peers to develop alternative interventions. Students are able to identify their individual levels in both reading and mathematics and are confident in using a selection of strategies to improve their progress.

Students who are at risk because of low academic achievement or for social reasons are well supported through a wide range of effective measures. The high level of cooperation between various staff together with the good links made between home and school ensures the success of these support services. Staff members are good at providing additional opportunities to motivate and meet the needs of students at risk. These professional commitments are well matched to the over all progress of these students and those meeting and exceeding their identified benchmarks.

Parents feel that their children are well supported by the school. Members of the senior leadership team assist the principal in affirming the high level of expectations for achievement through monthly progress reports, newsletters, as well as to engage in the

dissemination of long-term school wide goals. Parents describe the principal's leadership style as one that has had an impressive impact on their child's love of learning and joy in wanting to be part of the many activities and programs provided for children at the school.

**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 provides the mandated curriculum which includes a new balanced literacy program and Everyday Mathematics. The administration as well as coaches is purposeful in their modelling of different ways to teach specific topics. Staff involvement is pivotal in coordinating resources in grant writing to extend both the academic and arts programs for students.

Budgetary and staffing decisions are made with a thoughtful plan to support each grade level equally. Recognizing that the early learning experiences are critical to success in reading, writing and problem solving, class size is maintained at 18-20 students K-3, with larger groups of 26 in grades 4-6. Academic intervention service teachers use a push in approach to all classroom instruction and know that their belief in individualizing instruction provides successful learning.

The progress of all students drives the scheduling of programs and is of primary importance to the entire working community. To that end all goals and programs are designed to support both new and continuously enrolled students with regular review for additional services. This level of attention to individualization is predominant in every aspect of contact made for students, staff and parents, including the introduction of security agents as the welcoming agents at the front door, which extends into classrooms and general meeting areas.

Students love their teachers and attendance incentive announcements made by the principal every day add to their joy for learning. Attendance is above average (94%) and provides a good example of the picture of a well-run school filled with well-motivated and courteous students. Colorful student work is displayed in both hallways and classrooms which exhibits creative exemplars of the high expectations for performance throughout the building.

**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 well respected by students, staff and parents for her exemplary dedication as an instructional leader. A philosophy of shared leadership, decision making and shared communication successfully drives school improvement and reveals a strong capacity to effect further improvement. Staff are hired based on their experience and ability to bring additional competencies to the school to expose students to a wide variety of learning initiatives for both academic and social growth. The process is fair and thorough. The principal and assistant principals are highly visible within the school, know their staff and children well, and take every opportunity to speak with staff to support the rigorous level of expectation for improvement. Teachers state that everyone in the school knows their roles

and responsibilities and all work hard to extend their learning into concrete action plans that support the development of the whole child.

Formal and informal professional development initiatives abound. Improvements in long term planning of curriculum programs, lesson planning and teaching has occurred. The principal has dedicated the structure and the process for both student learning and adult teaching, with an emphasis on coordinating the most recent data available. The clear purpose of evaluating present school wide performance outcomes is visible in the design of a systematic approach of ongoing revisions throughout the year, as staff members revisit and refine the depth within their curriculum.

The principal has established a history of developing partnership opportunities for students to partake in some new academic programs, such as; the Stock Market Game, Think Quest, and newly expanded art programs. Such initiatives have gained excellent results in enhancing children's attention to school rituals and enrichment activities.

**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.**

Foremost in the minds of both the leadership and school community is the conscious plan to build strong independent learners who are able to translate their skills and use of strategies into another part of their world. Within the clearly defined mold of a caring and supportive environment, there is persistence in the work to accelerate student progress through the monitoring and evaluation of both class and grade level progress. Accurate records of student performance are recorded by classroom teachers, support staff and auxiliary personnel. This information is a product of frequent interim assessments used to gauge how well classes, grades and the school are on track to reach their interim and long term goals. The data also allows for efficient comparisons with similar schools throughout the City and schools within the network to be made.

The principal fully recognizes that the analysis of a variety of data is necessary to structure tighter cycles of comparisons and predictions for all students. She uses every possible public opportunity to widen the circle of knowledge and influence about the school's goals as she broadens the participation of new and well know families. The school successfully refines its plans for the differentiation of both teaching and learning initiatives as it further embeds a comprehensive understanding of ongoing goal setting that guides school improvement planning.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: Chester Park School (PS 062)</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 knows and respect students and responds 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 are 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