



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Joseph Addabbo School

Public School 64

**82-01 101 Avenue
Queens
NY 11416**

Principal: Laura Kaiser

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Reviewer: Cheryl Baker

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Joseph Addabbo School educates 689 students in kindergarten through grade 5. Eight percent are special education students and 23% are English language learners for whom the predominant home languages are Spanish and Bengali. Forty eight percent of students are Hispanic, 41% are Asian, 8% are Black and 3% are White. The school is Title 1 eligible with the proportion of qualifying students (76%) exceeding that of similar and City schools. Attendance at the school averages 93.7%, above that of the City and similar schools.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal provides strong informed leadership particularly for the implementation of the mandated English language arts curriculum.
- The school has increased the quality and quantity of resources for teaching English language arts.
- The principal sets clear expectations for instructional quality and holds staff responsible for demonstrating improvement in their teaching.
- Teachers are provided with a rich array of professional development programs and expert support from the principal, coaches and consultants.
- The school provides students with a safe nurturing environment for learning.
- Student work is celebrated and displayed throughout the building.
- Students feel known and valued by their teachers, support personnel and the administration.
- The school is responsive to the needs of its English language learners, special education students and those needing academic interventions.

What the school needs to improve

- Provide training in the analysis and use of the available statistical data regarding students' academic achievement.
- Provide professional development in techniques for differentiating instruction based on the analysis of individual students' learning needs to cover all tested areas.
- Implement routine use of periodic assessments to increase the capacity to diagnose students' learning needs and monitor their progress incrementally.
- Develop the quality of teachers' skills in perfecting their delivery of all components of balanced literacy.
- Broaden the variety of interventions available for students in greatest need of improvement and for those needing acceleration.
- Expand planning practices to identify measurable short-term targets to aide in monitoring progress towards long-term goals in the Comprehensive Education Plan and communicate these broadly.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school.

The principal, in her first year as a school administrator, has made significant progress towards implementing balanced literacy practices in the school. Increasingly, teachers are utilizing the assessments of student learning imbedded in this approach to instruction to understand their students' needs. Professional development programs are tailored to the needs of teachers and students. Decisions are collaborative and team-based. As the school continues to move forward, expansion of the use of the available statistical data in understanding needs and planning for improvement is a goal.

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

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

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The school relies heavily on data generated through conference notes, reading benchmarks, student portfolios, writing notebooks, regional practice tests, mathematics unit tests and the item analysis of State examinations to provide a constantly updated understanding of the progress of each student, classroom and grade level. Results of State tests are used more for administrative analysis of the school's overall progress than at the classroom level. For example, the principal has used school performance data to compare the school's progress by grade level longitudinally and across neighboring schools, especially in the areas of English language arts and mathematics.

The progress of ethnic and income groups has been disaggregated by the school and the relative success of some groups over others is being examined. The progress of English language learners is monitored through annual and periodic assessments of these students as mandated by the State. Students with special needs are monitored relative to the stipulations of their individual education plans.

With respect to other categories of interest, the school has undertaken to analyze State test results regarding the progress of boys and girls. When discovering that girls were not performing as well in mathematics the school created a garden club to provide girls with hands-on practice in basic mathematical skills.

The comparative performance among classrooms and grade levels is informed by the correlation of students' reading benchmarks, their performance on State tests and their report card grades, giving the principal insight into the effectiveness of instruction as revealed by three assessment data points.

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, under the previous principal, did create a Comprehensive Education Plan which expresses conventional expectations for annual improvements in student achievement. While its overall thrust is evident in the improvements the school has made as revealed by recent test scores, it has not been significant in driving the activity of all members of the school community. However, the principal did stipulate her goals for her inaugural year in a detailed plan containing goals for instruction, leadership, community relations, and other categories of school governance. While the goals therein are annual in nature, the activities, resources and measures of success suggest routine monitoring of progress at least at the administrative level is manifest at the level of the classroom and student. Teachers, especially, understand the goals for implementing the components of balanced literacy and using the embedded assessments of student learning to drive instruction.

The school has increased the focus on its struggling students this year. Teachers were asked to identify the six lowest performing students in their class, profile their assessment histories, define areas of strength and weakness and plan interventions. Administrators meet with teachers to review progress of identified students. These students are then referred for further intervention through the school’s network of academic intervention providers who provide effective small group tutoring to students with similar areas of need or provide in-class assistance. The school’s English language learners and special needs students receive support through similar programming that includes tutoring within and outside of the regular classroom. The school also offers effective after school, extended day support programs and has begun to introduce specialized support programs such as Wilson Reading. The school is exploring avenues to broaden interventions to address discrete learning needs for students across the spectrum of achievement.

The school communicates with parents through meetings, letters, and calendars created by the parent coordinator. Numerous instructional programs are provided to help parents with their own and their children’s education and they, in turn, provide the school with support through fundraising activities. To define and increase consistent high expectations for student achievement, the school introduced a developmental report card which expresses students’ progress over the school year and frequently sets targets for increased achievement.

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instruction: The school aligns its instructional activity and resources, and student engagement around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.

This area of the school’s work is proficient.

The school has worked hard to increase its skills in delivering the mandated curriculum in English language arts and mathematics. State standards inform instruction in other subject areas. Teachers are using the assessment practices included in balanced literacy and Everyday Mathematics to measure student progress with regularity. The principal, who is a recognized expert in balanced literacy, provides guidance and support for the quality of all instruction and holds teachers responsible for making the suggested

improvements. She observes classrooms, checks logs, monitors students' reading levels and conferences with teachers to ensure that progress in instruction and achievement is evident. Differentiation at the school is largely programmatic and activity based rather than being individualized to each child but is more apparent in English language arts than in other subjects. Instruction is engaging, for the most part so that students are generally actively involved in their learning. They like coming to school and feel safe and supported there. Students and parents feel well cared for by teachers, support staff and the administration. Many teachers have known the neighborhood and its families over decades. Attendance is monitored closely and the school has appropriate strategies to maintain good attendance rates.

The principal has used her assessment of the effectiveness of the school's programs to allocate funds and adjust staffing and schedules appropriately. For example, when it was discovered that there were insufficient reading books which were also incorrectly leveled, classroom libraries were purchased and resources were properly aligned to provide students with 'just right' books. To address upcoming testing in science, specialists were hired. Additional academic intervention personnel were hired to address students' tutoring needs and a literacy consultant was hired to increase support for teachers in delivering the curriculum. Schedules for the extended day and lunch programs are slated for change to increase attendance and reduce behavioral infractions, respectively.

Quality Statement 4 - Build and Align Capacity: The development of instructional leadership, staff, and capacity are aligned around the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

Under the current principal, qualifications for new staff include knowledge of balanced literacy and the writing process, a willingness to learn new techniques, and a willingness to collaborate. The capacity to use data is not a requirement at present.

The principal is an acknowledged instructional leader in the school which has benefitted from her expertise in instruction in English language arts. Teachers are supported through a strong professional development program that includes monthly full-day in-house workshops, access to off-site workshops, provision of professional literature, and the demonstration of best practice by the principal, coaches and consultants. Teachers receive a high level of personalized assistance based on their level of need. Intervisitations have been arranged to assist teachers in developing, for example, collaborative team teaching, the literacy block and the kindergarten classroom. The principal is frequently in classrooms and routinely provides informed suggestions for the improvement of instruction through formal evaluations and informal commentary.

Team-based governance supports collaboration among and between groups such as the school leadership team, the parents association, grade level teams, and the pupil personnel team. Grade conferences, faculty conferences and individual conferences among teachers and administrators provide additional avenues for shared assessments of progress and expectations. The principal and assistant principal meet on a daily basis to ensure that the school runs efficiently. Procedures are well understood and adhered to by relevant parties.

The school does not partner with outside agencies for the support of academic goals. Rather, it depends on its internal resources to identify students' needs and provide interventions to support their growth.

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.

While school plans such as the Comprehensive Education Plan and the principal's goals, expressed as the principal's performance review, express annual rather than frequent interim goals, that school has demonstrated practices relative to monitoring the attainment of stated goals. The components of the principal's performance review address specific actions to be undertaken to, for instance, increase the practice of guided reading. Evidence of the monitoring of success towards this is seen in written evaluations of teacher's instruction and the routine reference of students' progress towards meeting the established guided reading benchmarks. The school intends to bring greater specificity to its school-wide planning practices.

Intervention plans such as those for special education and academic intervention students do address interim targets and measures of success which are monitored by specialists in these fields. Likewise, instructional plans for English language learners are informed by their demonstrated advances and weakness as measured by anecdotal and more formal assessments.

Comparisons of student attainment within and across classrooms are strongly focused on grade level reading benchmarks. Teachers use conference notes, running records and samples of students' work to gauge progress. Comparisons of grade level progress across schools are informed by published State test results analyzed by the principal. Currently, this data is informational rather than diagnostic with respect to program effectiveness. Information generated by the school's periodic assessment, the Princeton Review has proved less informative than had been anticipated. The school has found the item analysis of the results of monthly regional examinations to be more informative regarding students' academic progress and in providing diagnostic information for instructional adjustments or interventions.

While not driven by the specifics of plans, the principal has demonstrated flexibility and agility in reallocating resources to address needs as they have been identified through her initial evaluations of the school's overall effectiveness in this, her first leadership year. For example, in preparation for the State English language arts tests, time was increased in grades 3 through 5 to extend practice in reading. Supplemental resources were purchased to assist in student's skill development. Needs assessments for social studies and mathematics emerged from the State test scoring process. The daily schedule is being changed to address issues related to extended day attendance and lunchroom behavior. Most significant was the rapid response to incorrectly leveled books that were causing discrepancies in assessment and impeding learning.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Joseph Addabbo School (PS 64)	∅	✓	+
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	