



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Frank Sansivieri School

Middle School 073

**70-02 54 Avenue
Queens
NY 11378**

Principal: Patricia Reynolds

Dates of review: May 14 -15, 2007

Reviewer: Denis Pittman

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

Intermediate School 73 is located in Maspeth, Queens and serves the educational needs of 1694 students. It is a 6th through 8th grade school, servicing an ethnically diverse population with 62% Hispanic students, 24% Asian, 13% white and 1% black. Approximately 9% are special education students and 18% are English language learners. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding. Attendance figures are broadly in line with city levels and comparable to similar schools.

Intermediate School 73 has adopted the 'Schools within Schools' design with four different academies: Pulitzer, Newberry, Bradbury and Carnegie.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal has a clear vision for the school and leads it with purpose and conviction.
- The school has become a safer and better ordered environment for students.
- Parents are appreciative of the improvements that have been made in the school.
- Relationships between students and staff are positive; students feel that staff are supportive and helped them.
- Students who are English Language Learners are well supported and make good progress in their language acquisition.
- The school effectively conveys to students and parents its higher expectations of standards of behavior and individual achievement.
- The school uses its budget well to acquire and provide expertise and support programs for promoting students' achievement.
- Collaborative planning and team teaching is leading to improved instructional practices.
- The school is establishing a productive working relationship with outside bodies and support services.

What the school needs to improve

- To improve the reviewing and evaluation of instructional programs and outcomes in order to inform strategic planning.
- Continue to develop teacher competencies in analyzing data and using regular assessment to enhance curriculum planning and instruction.
- Provide professional development to promote greater variety in teaching strategies and the use of differentiated activities to support students' learning.
- To develop more robust procedures for monitoring student attendance and punctuality.
- Develop strategies for promoting greater parental involvement in the school.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is an undeveloped school with proficient features.

This is a school in transition. The new principal has a clear agenda for improvement. She is working hard with other members of the cabinet to establish coherence in the curriculum, raise standards and improve instruction. Systems and structures to support these objectives are in the early stages of development but there is still some way to go. A calmer and more orderly community has been established through a more consistent approach to behavioral issues. The move to an Academy structure is helping to promote greater student identification with the school's aims through these smaller learning communities. Students have a greater understanding of what is expected of them. The school is working to achieve a stronger engagement with its parent group so these expectations about student performance are also shared with them. Standards of achievement particularly those who are special education students and English language learners are not sufficiently strong. Currently there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and the use of data within the school. Only recently has the school been collecting data in any coherent form so it is only at an initial stage of using data to make strategic decisions about students' progress within grades or academies. Lesson activities are not consistently attuned to the differing levels of student need. Where lessons are planned to accommodate these varying abilities then students are interested and motivated- this is more evident in English language and Arts lessons. Teachers are committed to supporting and guiding students 'at risk' with a variety of extended day programs. Students value the support they receive and feel that their needs are being more effectively addressed. The management systems and procedures which have been introduced are not consistently implemented in the academies.

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 undeveloped.

The school, until recently, has not collected data in a systematic and detailed manner. An appropriate benchmarking strategy has been adopted by utilizing the DRA to determine reading levels. This test is administered three times a year and a growth in students reading levels can be demonstrated. Formative assessment such as individual student conferencing effectively takes place in English language, at Arts and mathematics. The use of computer-based software such as Read 180 lab and Math Upgrade is used well to identify and address specific areas of student performance. However this increasing 'pool' of information has yet to be effectively organized or interpreted so as to inform the school's teaching practice. The school does not have a sufficiently coherent overview of its performance particularly in relation to specific grades or academies. For example, the relative improvements in progress of students as they move from one grade level to another are not analyzed. There is an absence of an analysis of achievement based on ethnicity. The monitoring of the progress of English language learners is improving but it is

not as strong for students with special education need. In the context of subject disciplines the use of data in subjects such as science and social studies is undeveloped. The school has appropriately focused its efforts on improving the performance of special education students in relation to English language and Arts and mathematics. A program of intervention strategies has been introduced. The absence of any previous structured analysis of data means that the school has very little strategic information to make meaningful comparisons about its past performance in relation to students' progress. The analysis of data based upon similar schools comparisons is now a productive feature of Cabinet discussions.

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 lack of achievement of certain groups of students such as English language learners provided a focus for the schools improvement strategy. In addition the instructional deficiencies highlighted major goals which needed to be immediately addressed such as establishing coherence in the curriculum and improving teaching practice. The principal has effectively identified a specific range of goals for each assistant principal. These are challenging and set specific targets which are to be completed within a specified time frame. These goals are appropriately reflected in the work of the separate academies. For example, the common emphasis on improving the performance of students with special education need is reflected in the systematic creation and use of 'leveled libraries'. In consequence staff members are able to 'scaffold' the reading requirements of these students. These efforts are complemented by an increasing use of computer-based software to provide for the specific needs of students.

The school takes a positive stance in conveying its high expectations of behavior and achievement to students and parents. In practice this means clear expectations about behavior in hall ways and the celebration of students' work on bulletin boards. This reinforcement of the school aims and objectives is increasingly evident within the respective academies. Despite the school's increasing efforts most parents do not show a willingness to be directly involved in their child's education. Nevertheless the structures for providing the flow of information about student performance and how they are to improve are appropriately in place. The quality of the information about activities and plans for the future appropriately complements these procedures. The goals and plans for improvement clearly drive the activity of the school faculty and students but not the whole parent community.

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's curriculum is developing in line with the mandated curriculum. The school is now more systematic and progressive with regard to generating data in relation to the curriculum. Work has been recently undertaken to gain clarity and improve the detail of curriculum units of study. This is evident, for example, in the developing English language

and arts curriculum which explicitly outlines stages and strategies in the teaching of speaking, listening, reading and writing. Similarly, the English language learner's curriculum specifies appropriate levels and approaches in assessing and promoting the student's acquisition of English competency. Other subjects are not yet planned in as much detail. Teachers feel a growing sense of accountability for their instruction and the progress of their students. Where there are explicit curriculum goals and statements the sense of accountability is more vigorous. Accountability is also developed through the monitoring and evaluation of the assistant principals. Differentiation of instruction is a goal set by the school. There are examples of instruction being geared to the needs of the students but in general this is an undeveloped aspect of the school's work. Instruction in some lessons is didactic and aimed at the general level of the students' ability. This inevitably leads to a lack of engagement by some students with the lesson activities.

Budget decisions are being appropriately governed by student need and the outcome of data analysis. This commitment is shown in the funds allocated to improvements to the library and to support literacy initiatives. The turnover of staff has been relatively high. The school is beginning to achieve stability in this area. The designation of assistant principals to have a subject discipline oversight as well as an Academy reflects an awareness of the need to support teachers with their instructional programs. Scheduling decisions to accommodate common planning time appropriately enables student needs to be addressed. In addition the provision of enrichment and extended day programs are an indication of the response to specific student needs.

Overall, staff are supportive of students and there is a mutual respect between adults and students. Students say that they feel safe in the school and know who to go to if they have a problem. Working on improving attendance and reducing lateness are given a high priority. The school has appropriate follow-up procedures in place. Parents are regularly prompted to make their children's attendance and equal priority to them.

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.

The principal has clear criteria for the appointment of staff and these appropriately reflect expectations of staff competence in their ability to use data and to monitor progress. This capacity is being reflected in the increasing dialogue which takes place within the respective academies to monitor and review student progress. As previously indicated this level of data awareness is still at a formative stage. However the commitment to common planning meetings are providing an effective forum for raising staff awareness about the use of data and how this can inform instruction. These meetings are an important aspect of the school's professional development strategy. This collaborative process has been particularly effective within the English language and Arts group in producing improved curriculum units for example in poetry. The changing culture of the school is encouraging inter-class visitations to provide another feature of the drive to improve instructional practice.

In a broader context the identification of the need to improve teaching strategies has been made at cabinet level meetings. The implementation of a common strategy for observing classroom teaching in the academies has been appropriately introduced to achieve consistency of practice. The level of formal observations conducted by the principal and

assistant-principals is appropriately scheduled to establish a basis of consistency and high expectations of teaching performance. The principal is respected by staff, parents, and students. She has the ability to plan and make change happen. The challenge is to achieve a shared vision through effective teamwork within the school. To that end she is creating a network of support through internal and external agencies to provide a basis for sustaining further improvements. The school is calm and runs smoothly. Procedures to control students are being more consistently implemented and in consequence behavior is better and students know where to go and what to do.

The school is developing its community relationships to complement its academic program. It has productive links with the Teacher's College program and America's choice. A community-based organization (Maspeth Town Hall) productively supports the school with it after school 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 undeveloped.

A specific theme in this report has been the issues related to the lack of experience in the use of existing data and the inconsistencies in the way that the school uses it to inform subsequent planning. The short-term review of goals is done well. The principal conducts an effective interim evaluation of the respective goals for the assistant principals. The data in respect of the separate academies is analyzed to measure progress against the previously identified goals. The variation in the monitoring process occurs within the practice of different subject disciplines. For example there is an inconsistent use of individual education plans within different classrooms. In a broader context there is insufficient use of the data of some of the intervention strategies such as the 'Read 180' or the Math Upgrade programs. In general the school has yet to establish consistent procedures for analyzing data on the progress of students. The variability of staff commitment or experience in relation to the use of data impacts negatively upon the efficacy of decision-making in subjects. The comparison of student progress is taking place within some individual classrooms but that information is not coordinated to get a picture of comparative patterns within and between some grades. Some of the formative assessments of students lack detail and coherence. Because there are current inconsistencies in the monitoring of the instructional programs, then there is limited overarching data to inform strategic planning. However, the improvements to data gathering strategies means that the leadership team are becoming more proactive in their management strategies rather than reacting to immediate circumstances. At present some leaders are insufficiently flexible in their management practice to realign practice and resources to improve academic outcomes of students.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The Frank Sansiveri School (IS 073)	∅	✓	+
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		