



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Bayswater School

Public School 104

**26-01 Mott Avenue
Queens
NY 11691**

Principal: Katie Grady

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Reviewer: Thomas J. Clark

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Bayswater School, located at the eastern end of the Rockaway peninsula in Queens, has approximately 600 students enrolled from pre-kindergarten through grade 6. The majority of students are Black (70%), considerably higher than in similar schools and City-wide. Hispanic students make up 24% of the student body, considerably lower than in similar schools and City-wide. Few White (2%) and Asian (3%) students attend, both lower than in similar schools and City-wide. The proportion of students recently arrived in this country is approximately half that of similar schools and City-wide, most frequently coming from Jamaica, Guyana and Haiti.

The school provides special education services to 13% of the students in five collaborative team teaching classes and four self-contained classes. Approximately 10% of the students receive mandated support services based on the results of the State and City-wide assessments. Four percent of the students are English language learners. The proportion of students (83%) eligible for Title 1 services is comparable to similar schools and slightly higher than schools City-wide. Student attendance at 92% is slightly higher than in similar schools, but is lower than City-wide.

In spring 2007 the school was identified as a rapidly improving and gap closing school by New York State.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal is well respected by the school community and has the considerable knowledge of curriculum materials and instructional strategies to effect school improvement.
- The administration and teachers gather a broad spectrum of data from formal and informal, quantitative and qualitative assessments.
- Data are frequently used by administrators and teachers to monitor student progress and to plan next steps at the grade, class and student levels.
- The school's curriculum is reviewed frequently and adjustments made when necessary.
- Professional development is differentiated for teachers based on analysis of data and monitoring by administrators.
- The school roster is effectively organized to provide common preparation periods and lunches for grade group planning, sharing and professional development.
- The school budget supports implementation of the school plan and provides teachers with the instructional resources needed to have students succeed.
- Teachers and administrators know the strengths and areas for improvement of every student in the school.
- Teachers are held and feel accountable for continuous improvement in student outcomes.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop measurable interim benchmarks for the Comprehensive Education Plan's goals to facilitate monitoring of the implementation and impact of the action plans.
- Continue professional development focused on the effective use of data to differentiate instruction in all content areas, including identifying specific goals and objectives for each student.
- Develop school and teacher level goals to address the gender achievement gap in literacy.
- Develop assessments processes and procedures to monitor student progress in science and social studies.
- Continue to develop parent leadership skills to foster more parent participation in the school planning process.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school with well-developed features.

Coming the day before school opened in August 2006, the principal has already had a significant impact on the school. As a result of her experience in several administrative positions, the principal brought extensive knowledge of curriculum and instructional practice, enabling her to provide very effective instructional leadership. Through institution of a more collaborative planning process and continuous data analysis, the principal has identified the need for and purchased instructional programs, such as Foundations, to provide interventions for students not making adequate progress. Instruction has become more differentiated as teachers now must maintain comprehensive data folios to better inform them on grouping of students and planning instruction to meet the specific needs of each student. Included in class binders is informal assessment data such as student conference notes, identification of student specific strengths and next steps for learning.

The school is the process of implementing Core Knowledge. Effective professional development is provided to support this initiative, including summer sessions and on-going follow up support in classrooms by the coaches and administrators. Through their frequent observations, the administrators' have thorough knowledge of each teacher's skill level, allowing them to provide support where it is most needed.

The principal uses the budget, selection of staff and scheduling of teacher and student time to maximum effect to ensure that every student receives the support needed to succeed. Given the lack of social support services in this remote section of Far Rockaway, the principal has bolstered the school's support services by adding a conflict resolution teacher and improving the referral process for students not experiencing academic success.

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.

Based on the principal's initial longitudinal analyses of student data, which she had to organize on arrival in September, it was discovered that students' scores were plateauing in the upper grades. The principal concluded that in order to succeed with the higher order thinking skills required in the upper grade assessments, the students needed a better foundation in basic skills. Consequently, an initial focus for the principal this school year was to have teachers more effectively differentiate instruction based on individual student basic skills strengths and needs. This required maintenance of data binders to inform their instructional decision-making. Qualitative data in the form of student conference notes was required to be included in the binders, as were monthly student English language arts and mathematics portfolio entries with authentic feedback to students. Teachers' now have detailed information on their class and for each student in literacy and mathematics, but data for science and social studies is a work in progress.

School data is disaggregated by ethnic groups, special needs and gender; the school has too few English language learners to qualify as a group with reliable data. Comparisons are made by group by grade across years and longitudinally by class and individual student. For example, analysis of gender data revealed that boys were scoring substantially lower than girls on literacy assessments, both formal and informal, resulting in changes in the reading materials the school purchased to reflect boys' interest in non-fiction. Data is not disaggregated by gender at the classroom level so that teachers can more closely monitor boys' progress.

Data for students receiving academic intervention services is given special attention by the staff, and has increased significantly with the purchase of programs such as Foundations and Soar to Success that include built-in assessments to track student progress. The student referral process is being revamped by the academic intervention and pupil personnel teams to include more quantitative data to facilitate the diagnostic-prescriptive approach to meeting student needs.

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 Comprehensive Education Plan, planning process became more collaborative under the principal's leadership by establishment of a broad-based school leadership team. The team meets monthly to review data and to revise the plan as necessary. The school plan inherited by the principal included only long-range goals, but interim assessments and benchmarks are being added as the year progresses and will be included in next year's plan by the school leadership team.

Teachers have detailed knowledge of students' strengths and areas for improvement in English language arts and mathematics through use quantitative data such as Princeton Review and qualitative data like student conference notes, although all teachers are not yet proficient in this process. This data is used effectively to set weekly and monthly individual student goals and objectives. More uniform data collection procedures are still being identified and developed for science and social studies.

Data is used well by staff to identify at-risk students needing additional support through academic intervention services. Student progress is reviewed regularly to determine if the assigned intervention, which may include a push-in or pull-out service provider, is successful. The impact of each intervention program is reviewed regularly and new programs purchased when the need is identified. Students who are not performing at mandated levels in grades 3 and 5 for promotion to the next grade are given additional support. Another group receiving special attention are those 1st graders who did not attend kindergarten that includes providing instructional materials for parents to use at home to reinforce skills learned in class. Preliminary results indicate that this is an effective intervention. Individual education plans for special education plans are reviewed frequently to determine if students are making adequate progress toward their goals.

The school's goals and high expectations for students are made clear to the students and shared with parents through newsletters, flyers, parent workshops, parent teacher association meetings and frequent contact with the teachers. Parents expressed the

feeling that the school does outreach to have them involved in planning for their students, but that not enough parents participate in the process.

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.

Core Knowledge was selected to provide students with the background content knowledge, vocabulary expansion and higher order thinking strategies needed to achieve at higher levels of achievement. For this initial year, teachers worked collaboratively in kindergarten through grade 3 groups to effectively align the program with the standards, including integration of the mandated balanced literacy. Grades 4 through 6 are scheduled to be implemented next year. The Core Knowledge unit tests provide interim data to help assess student progress. The school has selected a number of supplementary programs, such as Foundations, Words Their Way and Making Meaning, which align well with the mandated curriculum.

The administrators hold teachers accountable for the progress of their students through frequent review of their data binders during teacher conferences. Teachers differentiate instruction through tiered assignments, flexible grouping with mini-lessons and guided reading sessions based on data in their binders. Although maintaining a high level of student engagement, some teachers are still learning to be proficient at differentiating instruction.

The principal uses the school’s budget very effectively to support instruction. Program materials’ selection for purchase is done through committee to meet specific needs of struggling students. Staff time is very effectively scheduled, including common planning time in grade group meetings and additional support for struggling students through push-in or pull-out sessions.

The students are actively engaged in their learning. Student work displayed throughout the building shows both high levels of achievement and the student engagement required to attain it. The students feel respected by the teachers and are very comfortable going to someone on the staff in the event of need. Student attendance is a school priority and is very good, with frequent rewards and celebrations for those with perfect attendance at varying intervals during the school year.

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.

Prospective teachers are interviewed at job fairs, with those meeting the stringent criteria, including content area knowledge and understanding the use of data, invited to come to the school for interview by the faculty and to conduct a demonstration lesson in their grade, scored using a rubric. Once selected, new teachers are very well supported through monthly meetings and frequent classroom visits by the administrators and coaches. The continuing needs of teachers are well met through the professional development opportunities provided by the school’s instructional cabinet. Training for Core

Knowledge implementation is on-going and thorough, with follow up in the classrooms. Teachers meet frequently in grade groups and provide excellent peer support through sharing instructional materials and strategies and doing classroom intervisitations. Coaches peer evaluate teachers as well, using established list of criteria. Teachers are supported in attending conferences outside of school, and turnkey what they learn during frequent study groups and grade meetings, to good effect.

Administrators visit classrooms frequently, providing feedback viewed by teachers as constructive and helpful in improving their instruction. For example, as a result feedback from informal observations by the administrators, literacy centers in the upper grades were improved by more closely aligning tasks with skills aligned to the State assessments.

Much of the planning and evaluation of the school's progress takes place in teams, to good effect. The school leadership, pupil personnel, academic intervention, attendance, professional development and instructional cabinet teams all play a crucial role. The most important team planning and review of student progress takes place in the weekly grade group sessions during which grade leaders turnkey information from the administration.

The principal is respected by parents, teachers and students and has made noticeable school improvements in just one year. The school runs very well, with excellent support services provided by multiple partnerships and other external groups, including the Rockaway Artist Alliance which provides activities for student and parents during the day, after school and on weekends.

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.

Although the principal inherited a school plan developed by the previous administrator that contained no interim goals or provisions for assessment of progress, action plans are now frequently reviewed through sub-committee progress reports. Goals and benchmarks have been added to the plan and more measurable interim goals and benchmarks are planned for next years plan.

Comparisons of student progress within and across grades and classrooms are made frequently during the various team meetings, especially during the monthly school leadership team and weekly instructional cabinet meetings. Discrepancies between the desired impact of planned programs and what the data reveals regarding impact on students are addressed immediately. Data is used very effectively and proactively to plan programs of instruction for the coming year. For example, to address the need for increased reading fluency identified in the review of data for students receiving academic intervention services, the school next year will implement Soliloquy and Focus on Fluency, both computer driven programs that track student progress in developing fluency.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The Bayswater School (PS 104)	∅	✓	+
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	