



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Edith K. Bergtraum Elementary School

Public School 165

**70 - 35 150 Street
Queens
NY 11367**

Principal: Sonya Lupion

Dates of review: November 15 - 16, 2006

Reviewer: David King

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

Edith K. Bergtraum, Public School 165, is located in Queens. It has a very experienced staff and a principal who has been in the position for eight years.

The school motto is 'Safety and Respect First' which is firmly endorsed by everyone who works in the building.

The school is pre-kindergarten through grade 6, with 620 students of whom 22% are White, 16% are Black, 23% are Hispanic and 39% are Asian/Other nationalities. The school population reflects the diverse multi-cultural community and has 20% special education students and 16% English language learners.

The school is a showcase for the Everyday Mathematics program, balanced literacy, alpha and collaborative team teaching. The staff demonstrates a high degree of commitment and they are good role models as life-long learners themselves.

Attendance is 93% which matches that of similar schools and is above the average of City-wide schools. The school receives Title 1 funding and uses its budget wisely to support its most needy students.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal is a strong leader with a clear vision for the school and a motto 'Safety and Respect First' which is firmly delivered.
- The school maintains year on year improvements at levels 3 and 4 in English language arts, mathematics and science.
- The school uses data very well in a variety of forms to monitor student progress and performance, and to make any necessary interventions.
- The school has built capacity through empowering staff and providing a range of teaching opportunities including working with gifted children, English language learners and collaborative team teaching.
- The school schedules a wide range of programs targeting all levels of ability including morning breakfast classes, lunchtime and afternoon classes.
- The school shares information, goals and targets with parents and staff.
- The school provides a language rich environment for students to learn in.
- The school provides a wide range of extra curricular and enrichment activities.
- The school aligns professional development programs with the needs of students and staff.
- The school has developed a number of partnerships with outside organizations.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop an 'in house' system of assessment to provide data and an opportunity for accreditation for those special education students with profound learning difficulties.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well developed school.

Edith K. Bergtraum Public School 165 is a remarkable school with a welcoming, caring and inclusive environment that provides a rich educational experience for the whole school community.

The principal has created a school where the staff feel empowered, where students enjoy learning and where parents are happy to send their children. The principal has very strong values and insists on high standards. She is deeply committed to her students getting the best start in their education and she has the full support of her staff in trying to achieve that goal. She works very closely with her administration and knows the strengths of the individuals on her staff.

The school's performance in English, mathematics and science has shown a yearly improvement over the last four years, although there is no complacency and the school cabinet and staff are constantly reviewing progress and updating programs for the students.

The school has many strengths, the key one being the detailed knowledge that is held about each child and the ease of communication that exists between school and home. Instruction is delivered through a range of programs designed to ensure that students make progress at all levels. The students themselves are well mannered and articulate young people.

The school is a showcase for good practice and is engaged in a number of pilot initiatives such as the Everyday Mathematics program for pre-kindergarten students. The school receives a number of visitors wishing to see them at work and has been recognized by New York State as a high performing/gap closing school for the years 2003 – 2004 and 2004 – 2005.

The school is concerned that some of its special education students are faced with such profound learning difficulties that, despite receiving a rich and varied diet of instruction, they still fail to reach the standards required at level 2. There is, at present, no 'in house' assessment system to provide some form of accreditation for these 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 regularly collects data to track the progress of its students year after year for the whole school. The sources for the data include a range of formal assessments, interim assessments, end of unit tests, study island and teacher observations. The rubrics

displayed in every classroom are used to understand student performance. The picture is one of a successful school with a steady rise in the percentage of students achieving levels 3 and 4 over the last four years. More than 80% of students achieve at this level in English, mathematics and science. The principal also makes use of the data to monitor teachers' performances.

With the data the school has been able to gain a clear picture of the progress of all groups of students. The school is very knowledgeable about the progress being made by special education students and English language learners. The resulting instructional programs for these groups are carefully considered and efficiently deployed.

The school is aware of how its performance compares with other similar schools and understands the issues which are unique to their community, such as a transient population and the arrival of many families who do not speak English.

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use available data to understand each student's next learning step. Through collaborative planning and student and parent engagement, they set high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating each student's learning.

This area of the school's work is well developed.

The school is fully aware of the performance of its students and continues to set challenging targets for them. Many pupils are aware of their levels and how to improve. Students can find out from their assessment folders where they are within a level and they are aware of how to improve their percentage score. The records show that teachers will reward a compliment, describe an input for improvement and propose a next step. This information is used extensively at parent-teacher conferences. Good reading records are also maintained in all classes.

Gains reports indicate changes in levels, and regular staff conferencing is used to determine factors that may be affecting progress. Other professionals within the school are engaged as student observers, and their findings are used to plan a fresh strategy for improvement with the subject coaches. Interventions are planned based on assessment scores in grades 4, 5 and 6. These interventions are applied with those identified as being at risk and any other students who may have language or emotional difficulties.

Goals and expectations are shared with parents. Parent-teacher groups meet once a month and there is also a quarterly newsletter. Individual parent-teacher meetings take place twice a year and parent workshops are arranged to inform parents about the texts the students are using, what the teachers are doing with the students and how to get on line to review data themselves. A 'Crossroads Café' workshop is held regularly to teach English to non English speaking parents. This enables parents to have a clearer understanding of the work going on in the school and the ways they can support their children.

Teachers are confident in using data to inform future planning and to change groupings. Assessments take place every six weeks, providing teachers with a clear picture of student progress. All classrooms contain a rubric so that pupils know what the levels mean and how they can improve.

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 follows the mandated curriculum and the staff use their knowledge of the students to decide on groupings and method of delivery. Content is standard but method of delivery may change according to groupings. There are, for example, alpha groups for the high achievers and collaborative team teaching groups for those with special educational needs. The school day is arranged so that staff can meet in each grade for common planning time and general student discussion. Title 1 funding has allowed extra staff to be hired and additional classes to be scheduled. These include before school classes for those at levels 1 and 2 or below. These groups receive extra instruction based on skills analysis. This has been particularly beneficial in helping the neediest students to achieve a minimum level 2 performance.

The staff is familiar with planning together and helping each other with resources. Regular meetings are held, including intervention groups looking at those students who are most vulnerable and seriously at risk of failing. There are also regular instructional group meetings at which a range of academic concerns are discussed and additional interventions are suggested. The greatest area of concern for the school is the progress of English language learners and special education students. The report cards for many of these students show that they are achieving the goals in their individualized education plan (IEP) but not the standard for their grade and the gap gets wider as they get older. At times of assessment the school provides as many as 40 venues in order to provide extra support for the 20% of the students with an IEP for special educational needs.

Students enjoy receiving interesting instruction, behave well and feel challenged when asked to think about strategies for achievement. The students feel that they are encouraged to become independent thinkers and express themselves freely. They are encouraged by a staff that listens and helps them to solve problems, as well as keeping them aware of their levels of performance and how to improve. As a result, the school continues to maintain its excellent results each year.

The staff is respectful of parents and there have been instances of staff and parents working collaboratively. For example some parents are known as ‘learning leaders’ and have been engaged in many Arts projects. Attendance is regularly monitored and parents are contacted in the event of any absence.

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 has a highly experienced staff, most of whom have well in excess of five years experience. They share the school’s vision and demonstrate a high level of commitment with many arriving early and leaving late. There is a strong feeling of trust between the principal and her staff which means all are empowered to make decisions and supported in carrying out their plans. There is a high level of consistency that contributes to a smooth running building.

Professional development is a daily feature of the school where intervention strategies are discussed and piloted with groups such as the Everyday Mathematics project and the English teachers' workshop. Coaches are used to closely support new staff and observations are conducted with prompt and supportive feedback. There is also a professional development library for staff, a program of study groups, lunchtime staff meetings and a monthly book club. 'Adopt a Student' and tutoring programs are menu items for professional periods. This has been effective in maintaining high levels of student performance and planning for improvements.

Formal and informal groups meet to engage in grade conferences and all members of staff are aware of outcomes and situations requiring interventions. This means that appropriate interventions for students can be prepared and delivered promptly.

The principal is well respected by a staff that rises to her expectations. She has a low key positive and professional manner and teachers do not want to let her down. She is extremely well liked by the students, all of whom she knows by name. One student described her and the staff as being able to 'open up people's minds' and they like the fact that she understands them and takes care of them. The parents are equally supportive of her work in the school and acknowledge her key role in maintaining high standards.

The school has developed some good partnerships to enrich the school. These include storytelling festivals, dance festivals, band and singing concerts and the City-wide 'Blueprint for Arts' initiatives.

Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has built-in structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year, recognizing weaknesses in its improvement plans and teaching practices, and flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerated learning.

This area of the school's work is well developed.

The principal and her staff are constantly striving to raise standards and help them to achieve the vision of the school. Many decisions are reached collaboratively and always with the needs of the students in mind. The staff has a thorough knowledge of student progress and engages in regular discussion about it.

The principal has a detailed Comprehensive Education Plan with action plans for its implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Plans are also revised at regular intervals when new information comes to light and student schedules are being continually re-evaluated.

The school is flexible in its approach to scheduling and learning is organized to respond to the needs of its students. This is effective in the support for the high achievers and those in need of extra help. The majority of students are challenged by the teaching offered and the atmosphere in the school is very positive. The school acknowledges that the needs of its special education students must be catered for through the development of in-house assessment process.

The constant evaluation of student performance and the willingness of all the staff to modify student goals and plans where necessary make this school particularly successful.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Edith K Bergtraum Public School 165	∅	✓	+
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