



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Bay Terrace School

Public School 169

**18-25 212 Street
Queens
NY 11360**

Principal: Annette Kunin

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Reviewer: George McLeman

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Bay Terrace School, Public School 169, has 428 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 6. This is the final year during which the school will enroll grade 6 students. The ethnic makeup of the students is 45% White, 3% Black, 13% Hispanic, and 37% Asian and others. There are 37 special education students, approximately 8% of the total enrolment, and 44 students (just over 10%) who are English language learners. Attendance, at over 95%, is higher than that found in similar schools or City-wide. The school does not receive Title 1 funding.

The principal and most faculty members have been at the school for some years, but in recent years some newly qualified teachers have joined the staff.

The school is at the heart of a supportive, self-contained community and has established many links to community organizations.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school encourages parents' involvement in the education of their children.
- There is a strong sense of teamwork among the staff.
- There are systems in place to assess and track students' reading and writing progress.
- The school identifies and supports students who are at risk of falling behind.
- The special education team effectively supports those students it serves.
- Students have enthusiasm for learning and an understanding of how they can progress and achieve.
- The literacy and mathematics coaches work well to support the school's goals.
- There is a range of high-quality extra-curricular activities available to students.

What the school needs to improve

- Further develop data analysis to include consideration of whole-school and group performance and the identification of trends and anomalies in teaching and learning.
- Develop teaching strategies to meet the range of achievement of the students in each class.
- Make whole-school goals more clear and manageable, and put into place a system to monitor their implementation and impact on the school's work.
- Ensure that parents are made aware at an early stage of any problems that their children face in their learning.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school.

Bay Terrace is a relatively small school where the students are well known to teachers and school leaders. The introduction of the balanced literacy program has brought detailed teaching strategies and support to the English language arts curriculum, which encompasses both reading and writing. Similarly, initiatives in the mathematics curriculum have been introduced and are gradually becoming established. The students' State test results in both English language arts and mathematics improved last year. The school was awarded 'High Performing/Gap Closing' status by the City in 2004-05. The identification of and support for students who are at risk of falling behind is a strength of the school.

The school has begun to use data effectively to raise the achievement of students and the quality of instruction. The assessment of the students' progress in literacy is systematic and effective in identifying difficulties and in providing remedies. The use of data to support special education students is good. At the whole-school level, however, a more detailed analysis of the data would be possible. This could inform a more rigorous school-wide plan for improvement. The professional development of teachers aims to meet individual need. Teachers are set clear goals as part of the annual Alternative Observation planning, and individual schedules build in weekly meetings with coaches at which professional needs form a focus. New teachers are given good support, including teacher/supervisor conferences and peer staff development in common preparation time, in addition to working with their assigned mentor.

The parents are very involved with their children's learning and are eager to ensure that the school promotes it effectively. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school.

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 has a wide range of data from State, City, and school-based assessments. School leaders regularly make comparisons between the school's yearly results and those of similar and other City schools. The Comprehensive Education Plan and the principal's own performance targets set clear, measurable benchmarks for student achievement and targets for students' gains. These have been met for the last three years consecutively. Evidence shows gains for students across all sub-groups, with particular care being given to data related to the performance of special needs students so that the effectiveness of additional provision is monitored. At present there is scope for refinement in the analysis of relative performance across classes, subjects, and ethnicity groups, though Grow Report and Start Report information is used to look at relative performance at grade

meetings. Similarly, Gains Report information is used to track individual scores and this is passed between grades as students move through the school.

At the classroom level, teachers have a good awareness of the progress of the students in their classes. This is particularly strong in English language arts, where detailed records of reading and writing ability are maintained. The school has good systems of assessment for the early identification of children who have special education needs. Much of the information about the students' progress comes from scores on literacy tests such as the Developmental Reading Assessment and the Early Childhood Literacy Assessment. This data is enhanced by information generated in the classroom through techniques such as conferencing where the students' progress is identified and noted. In mathematics, the leadership team has been developing a new format for helping parents understand the reporting of their children's performance and progress in the Every Day Math program.

Detailed data is available to describe the progress of students who are at risk of falling behind and those who have special educational needs. This information is shared among teachers, assistants and specialists to identify suitably challenging goals for these students.

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

This area of the school's work is proficient.

A strong feature of this school is the way the teachers work together to share information about the students and their learning. At the classroom level, data is reviewed regularly and goals are set conscientiously for the students. This is particularly evident in the English language arts instruction and in the teaching of students who have social and learning needs. These are shared with specialist colleagues and goals are set for individuals across the full range of achievement. As a result, appropriate programs are tailored to needs, and students make good progress. All students are aware of their learning and what they need to do to improve.

At the whole-school level, administrators set goals, which are approved by the school leadership team and are recorded in the Comprehensive Education Plan. The school has produced a summary of the main goals and targets and this is included in a handbook for staff. Although the summary is more accessible than the Comprehensive Education Plan, neither document clearly outlines measurable goals or identifiable strategies for their fulfillment, and neither makes a strong enough link to the students' performance. No targets are set for grades, classes or subjects over any specified period of time.

The parents at this school are very involved with their children's education and are eager to help at home. The school's goals and curricula are communicated to parents through parent/teacher conferences and parent workshops, both of which are highly appreciated by parents and caregivers. The school provides regular reports to parents and caregivers, which are much appreciated, although concerns are not always communicated early enough.

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 with well developed features.

The school’s learning program is closely aligned to the mandated curriculum. Strong emphasis is given to securing the students’ progress in English language arts and mathematics. Data on the students’ performance strongly influences the range and emphasis of each teacher’s instruction. The data is also used by classroom teachers to arrange groupings and to allocate extended time, supplementary instruction or additional expertise. For example, in the spring of 2006, a group of students were identified through teacher referrals to the pupil personnel team as needing one-to-one assistance to develop reading fluency. This has been successful in raising achievement.

The teachers feel a sense of accountability for improving their instruction, but this is not yet fully linked with a similar sense of accountability for their students’ achievement. They are eager to share ideas and improve their instruction. There is significant variability in the ability of individual teachers to use data developmentally, especially to differentiate tasks so that teaching can be more closely matched to the next step for individual students. Some teachers, often in English language arts classes, are very sensitive to the students’ needs, simultaneously and continuously adapting their teaching. This is not as evident in mathematics classes where the teachers are not as confident in anticipating the students’ difficulties and trying to overcome them in the lesson.

The school’s budget is tight, as the school is not eligible for Title 1 funding. Staffing decisions are informed, to some extent, by the students’ needs. For example, a considerable amount of funding has been provided to enable the work of the academic intervention and special education needs teams.

Staff know and respect their students, who in turn are responsive to their teachers, concentrate and enjoy learning. Students understand and respond well to the strategies to promote good behavior. They know that they can trust members of staff to help them if they need it.

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 school selects its teachers on the basis of their commitment, their high expectations of students and their reflective abilities as professionals. There is a balance among the staff between several who have been at this school for some years and others who have been appointed recently. Although candidates’ capacity to use data has not featured in selection, it is a priority for the school leaders once the teachers are hired.

Professional development has a high priority at the school, although it is not always well aligned with the needs of teachers or the school’s priorities. The literacy and mathematics coaches give much time to encouraging and supporting all members of staff, with a focus on new and less experienced teachers. These coaches have successfully piloted the teachers through the introduction of innovations in the literacy and mathematics curricula.

Some discussions and professional development sessions have also taken place to help teachers understand how to meet the diverse needs of students in the general education classroom.

The principal and assistant principal frequently observe classroom teaching. Documentation provides written feedback for teachers, outlining strengths and areas for development. This is followed up with a conversation and forms part of the school's overall evaluation process. The observations form part of the weekly discussion at the Instructional Team meeting, where the information is shared with the coaches. In turn this supports the work of the coaches in goal setting and professional development for every teacher. The great majority of the teachers chose their own goals and areas for staff development as part of the Alternative Observation Plan option for formal monitoring. Many attend training classes in their own time. Teachers visit each others' classrooms and learn from each other. Grade and subject meetings take place on a regular basis.

Newly appointed teachers benefit from a range of support. In addition to the City appointed mentor, who liaises carefully with the school's own coaches to ensure a consistency of support, they receive individual attention from the school leadership and coaches, as well as the peer support of colleagues in the generous amount of common preparation time that is available. This means that support can be personalized to address identified professional needs.

The school runs well on a day-to-day basis, and is calm and orderly. Links with community-based organizations are very well used to enhance the curriculum, and add to students' personal development as well as their academic progress.

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.

The school's overall plans for the year are contained in the Comprehensive Education Plan and a handbook of instruction. Both documents are large and wide ranging. The main priorities of the school are aligned to curriculum implementation but there are no explicitly stated goals or strategies against which the school can rigorously evaluate its progress.

The school leaders and teachers monitor the performance and achievements of the students. The school has set up a range of programs in order to meet its well defined goals. The sustained high levels of scores in the school and continuous progress of individual students in all sub-groups reflects an ability to be flexible in ensuring that group and individual needs are a focus and are being addressed. Information generated by periodic assessment is used to revise curricular plans, but little emphasis is given to evaluating the quality of instruction or the subsequent setting of goals.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Bay Terrace School (PS 169)	∅	✓	+
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	