



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Brookfield Public School

Public School 181

**148-15 230th Street
Queens
NY 11413**

Principal: Cheryl Auguste

Dates of review: November 27- 28, 2006

Reviewer: Rowena Onions

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Public School 181, Brookfield School, is an elementary school in Springfield Gardens, Queens. It has 549 kindergarten to grade 6 students. A large proportion of students 92% are Black. There are small numbers of students from a range of other ethnic backgrounds, with 4% being Hispanic, 2% Asian and 1% White. Ten percent of students are special education students, mainly educated in self contained classes, and a small proportion 3% are English language learners. The proportion of students known to be Title 1 eligible, 70% is slightly above that of similar schools but lower than that of the City as a whole.

The school has larger than average numbers of students 12% entering the school at times other than into kindergarten. The proportion of students recently entering the country is 5%, with most of these students coming from Jamaica and Haiti. Attendance rates at the school 91.4% are a little lower than those for similar schools and for the City as a whole.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Staff know and value individual students, providing them with an environment in which they trust adults, knowing they will help them to succeed.
- The principal is very well respected by students, parents and staff, enabling her to make changes to improve the education provided.
- Data is used well to show strengths and weaknesses in individual student's work, assisting teachers to find ways to help them.
- The school ensures that students and their parents know what is needed to help improve their work.
- Professional development is carefully linked to whole school improvement goals, as well as to the individual professional development of staff.
- Staff support each other productively, planning together and observing each other's work in order to share expertise.
- Staff are increasingly linking work in one subject to that in others, giving students increased opportunities to understand and practise what they have learned.
- Students work hard in class because they like school and enjoy what they do.

What the school needs to improve

- Seek a simple system for showing annual progress made by individuals and groups of students.
- Use this information for the setting of goals for whole school, group and individual improvement.
- Include in the planning of school improvements more detail about the steps to be taken and interim goals to be met.
- Analyse more clearly the data collected about attendance so that strategies for raising this are more precisely focused.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school.

A key strength of Brookfield School is the way all that work in it, whether they be students or staff, are valued and nurtured. Students are known well to all staff, including the principal, and are very comfortable in the knowledge that they are supported academically and personally and that everyone wants them to succeed. Similarly, staff are valued, and this means that they all work together and strive to do their best for the students. There is increasing use of data to understand the ways that the school needs to develop to assist the students to achieve even better, as well as in identifying the ways each individual needs to improve his or her work. Some further development in the way data is managed is, however, required to maximize its impact on the work of the school. Special education students and those of lower achievement are supported well though work in class and through the additional programs offered by the school. The principal is central to the way the school operates as a team and she is very well regarded by all who are associated with 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 collects comprehensive data about the individual achievement of its students. A mix of formal testing and at least weekly individual conferencing with students means that staff have an objective picture of the strengths and weaknesses of each student. The data is carefully reviewed by the principal and other school leaders who thus have an overall understanding of the achievement of students in different grades and classes. These findings are clearly communicated to all staff, who are expected to use this information to promote progress. Instructional leaders look carefully at overall annual achievement and are aware of the relative achievement of students in different grades and classes and how overall school achievement relates to that in other schools.

The progress made by special education students and by the small number of English language learners is tracked carefully. Records are maintained of their day to day progress as well as more formally, for example through the evaluation of the goals in their individual education plans. This assists the school to be sure that instruction and additional programs meet the needs of the students.

The amount and complexity of the data, however, makes it difficult for the school to easily track the achievement of students on an annual basis. In addition, there is no detailed analysis of the progress made by particular groups of students. There is, for example, no detailed analysis of the overall progress of boys in different classes, or the progress of the small numbers of students from different ethnic groups.

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.

Goal setting at whole school level is collaboratively managed with staff and parents working with the principal to identify quantifiable goals. Grade and class goals lead from this. Data is analysed to identify areas for improvement including, for example, the current focus on problem solving in mathematics. Although the overall goals for improvement are clear, interim goals to ensure that sufficient progress is made throughout the year are not clear enough and are not fully understood by all staff. In addition, the lack of a strategic overview of trends in achievement means that there are no goals for the advancement of certain groups of students, and not enough is being done for example, to close the gap that exists between the achievement of boys and girls that exists in some grades.

Most staff are confident in their use of individual student data to set goals for the improvement of achievement. Teachers know what students are expected to learn during each unit of work and over time and they are able to adapt their teaching to assist individuals to achieve appropriately. A newly introduced portfolio assessment system is making this individual goal setting even clearer and easier to monitor.

Expectations are systematically conveyed to students. There is good emphasis on the target learning for each lesson and students are very aware of what is expected over time. The regular student teacher conferencing is used to ensure that students know how to improve their work. Parents are also given good information about what their child needs to do to improve and how to help.

Appropriate emphasis is given to helping the students with greater difficulties succeed. Teachers are careful to set expectations and work at an appropriate level so that special education students are assisted to make steady progress. Data is used productively to help them to meet their goals, for example, through the allocation of students to additional programs such as the extended day.

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 curriculum is aligned appropriately with the needs of the students. Data has, for example, been used to identify a need for additional mathematics instruction for some students and to allocate students to programs such as reading recovery and Wilson phonics. This is helping the students concerned to achieve better. Teachers, particularly those working with the lower grades, are becoming increasingly adept at linking subjects. This means students gain greater understanding of what they are learning and are given increased opportunity to practise the skills they have learned.

Teachers are accountable for the success of their instruction. The principal has high expectations for the quality of teaching and learning in the school and is probing but sensitive in the way she talks with teachers about their work, for instance, during the daily "walkthrough". In the best lessons, work is very well differentiated to meet the learning

needs of different groups of students in the class, with the higher achieving students being as effectively challenged as the lower achieving are supported. This is not, however, the case in all classes.

A focus on the use of practical equipment to support the learning of all students, irrespective of their age, is paying off, and students report that this not only helps them to learn but makes their learning more enjoyable. Although individual staff are responsible for planning their own classroom work, there are regular opportunities to discuss what they plan to do in whole staff and grade meetings.

Staff know their students well. Students comment that teachers try hard to help them enjoy learning and to enable them to do well. Because these relationships are so productive, most students work hard in most lessons.

The major staffing and budgeting decisions are taken by the principal in discussion with the cabinet, leadership team and staff. There are good links between the decisions made and the goals in the Comprehensive Education Plan. The scheduling of staff is good, using the specialist skills of some, for example in physical education, to the greater good of all students. Careful thought is given to the development needs of the school, for example, the use of the mathematics coach to link with the current development focus in mathematics.

Although the attendance at the school is not worryingly low, there has been a small annual decline. Some good measures have been taken to reward full attendance, but there has not been sufficient analysis of attendance data to assist the school to fine-tune the measures it is taking to prevent further decline and to promote better attendance.

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.

Good efforts are made to develop the school's work with a view to providing the students with increasingly effective teaching. Staff are carefully chosen to both fit into the school's culture and to add enthusiasm and new skills. New staff are expected to know how to use data to plan and fine-tune their teaching.

Professional development is promoted well and is suitably linked to the school's Comprehensive Education Plan. The focus of professional development is sometimes driven by a relative weaknesses in student achievement identified from the data, sometimes from self identification by staff and sometimes as a result of classroom observations. As a result of the daily "walk through" and from more formal class observations, the principal knows the teachers' development needs very well. The impact of this is increased by the written feedback provided when something of note is observed. The principal is very systematic in following up any areas for development seen.

Staff support each other very well. There is a culture of openness that makes this a successful aspect of professional development. Teachers plan together and discuss the outcomes of the resultant classes. They observe each others' teaching, making helpful observations and pooling expertise. Teacher coaches assist teachers to develop their skills through a variety of well targeted support.

There is a high level of respect for the principal. Students, staff and parents agree that she leads by example and works to help everyone succeed. This respect means that when initiatives are introduced, staff are willing to take on the changes. The introduction of student portfolios, for example, has been embraced even though it will be some time before significant benefits are evident. The high profile of the principal ensures the school runs smoothly day to day.

The school makes suitable use of links with outside bodies to support after-school activities and to ensure that special education students are fully supported.

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 Comprehensive Education Plan is well thought through. It is drawn up after discussion with parents and staff and is based solidly on the data available to the school. A sensible number of priorities are negotiated and time frames are identified. There are numerous references to the current achievement of students and overall goals and strategies to meet these are clearly outlined. The principal uses the available data and the new student portfolios to check the impact of the work on accelerating learning. However, the steps towards some of these goals, for example a current goal to increase the ability of students to problem solve in mathematics, are not included in the written plan and so interim goals are not explicit and easy to achieve.

The implementation of the plan is regularly reviewed by the school's leadership team and cabinet. As the impact of work is seen, changes are made where necessary, for instance, in refining professional development. There is flexibility in all levels of the planning. Money saved by the unexpected loss of a staff member, for example, is being directed towards assisting the improvement work in mathematics. Student progress is very regularly discussed and changes are made to programs of work as a consequence.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Brookfield Public School (PS 181)	∅	✓	+
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	