



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Flushing Manor School

Public School 184

**163-15 21st Avenue
Queens
NY 11357**

Principal: Dora Pantelis

Dates of review: November 14 - 16, 2006

Reviewer: Renee Middleton

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Public School 184 is a pre-kindergarten through grade 6 school with a population of 512. From 2007, the school will lose approximately 80 students due to a restructuring that removes grade 6 to the neighboring middle school. White students represent 52% of the population, Asians 32%, Hispanics 15%, and Black students 1%. There are 8.6% English language learners and 8.8% special education students enrolled. Average attendance figures are well above those of similar and City schools (95.9%). The school is not Title I eligible.

The current administration began at the school in April 2002. Since this time, students at Flushing Manor School have shown growth in English language arts and mathematics results as measured by the New York State testing. The school's culture is one that nurtures students and teachers and is described by parents and staff as 'being part of a family.' In 2005, the school received the NYC High Performance School for Closing the Academic Gap award.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal effectively leads the school through clear vision and actions to sustain high expectations amongst all members of the school community to improve students' achievement.
- Most students meet proficiency levels in English language arts and mathematics, and achieve well in other subjects.
- The school has established very good literacy strategies across the curriculum.
- Teachers create inspiring learning environments in their classrooms.
- The focus on teachers' continued professional development, coaching, and disseminated 'turnkey' processes promote good teaching strategies.
- The school has built capacity amongst teachers through collaborative planning which contributes to the effective development of instruction and promotes teachers' strategies for accelerating the learning of their students.
- The school's intervention strategies are effective in supporting a range of students' needs.
- The students behave well and work hard towards improving their learning.
- The school works well with parents through the work of the parent coordinator, good communications, and by promoting parental involvement in the education of their children.
- The school maintains a calm, safe, and welcoming setting for teachers to teach and students to learn well.

What the school needs to improve

- Improve teachers' use of explicit lesson aims and learning objectives to reflect the aligned curriculum standards.
- Improve teachers' consistency in marking students' work, their use of assessment to inform differentiated groupings, and the setting of individual student goals to personalize their learning.
- Enhance and evaluate students' written work through the scaffolding of skills, use of rubrics, and development of calibration processes.
- Inform the review of the Comprehensive Education Plan more effectively through formalized monitoring, evaluation, and the realignment of school goals based on the school's own rigorous assessment of students' learning across the curriculum.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well-developed school.

Facing the loss of student register in 2007, the school is presented with a number of challenges. The principal is clearly focused on keeping staff morale high and how the school can continue to improve. She has a demanding agenda for change which continues to move the school forward and raise achievement. The school's leaders have developed understanding of how the use of data can influence students' progress. The school is yet to make all teachers accountable through consistent use of data and assessment of students' learning to inform school actions and goals. The school has developed an effective collaborative approach to teachers' planning and strategies for raising student achievement. There is a shift in culture which has had a positive impact on classroom practice and expectations. Students enjoy learning and, through the support of their teachers and parents, show a high level of engagement.

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 develops and analyzes a considerable range of data. At whole school level, the principal and school cabinet members review all data from State and interim test scores. There is comprehensive analysis of data on the performance and progress of each student including the collection of students' sampled written work, and discussions from lessons observed. In generating its own data, the school undertakes interim testing such as the Princeton Review tests which help to diagnose students' strengths and weaknesses in English language arts and mathematics.

The academic intervention service collects and reviews data from the school's staff responsible for the extended day programs. This team draws on teachers' assessments of student performance in literacy and mathematics, tracking and analyzing the performance of the targeted students, including English language learners and special education students. Meetings involve members of the pupil personnel team and the English language learner teacher who all contribute to the analysis of school data and assessment to effectively evaluate student needs. The focused scrutiny of data helps the school build a clearer picture of the performance of ethnic groups and differences in attainment between girls and boys. As a result of the school's tracking student performance, it has focused on non-fiction reading material to improve boys' enjoyment of reading and, ultimately, their academic performance.

Teachers assess their students' subject content understanding on a regular basis, testing mainly at the end of units. The school uses its own past performance results to track student achievement mainly in English language arts and mathematics. The school is yet to establish data which breaks down the full curriculum performance of students in order to

make comparisons with similar schools, although there is sharing of data between local schools in a supportive network.

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 with one area for improvement.

The whole school community has been given a clear indication of the school's high expectations and improvement agenda. Collaborative meetings have focused agendas where the performance of classes and individual students is analyzed and strategies resolved. For example, the development of written work in the early years through to grade 2 English language arts lessons provides good scaffolding strategies. However, there are inconsistencies in how teachers develop students’ extended writing skills across the curriculum, sometimes not requiring students to use full sentences for their responses.

Students who are in most need are given high priority for support focused on literacy, numeracy, behavioral and social skills. There is regular scrutiny of whole school data and articulation with teachers that enable them to evaluate progress and decide on the most appropriate type of intervention, including ‘push in’ and extended day programs. This comprises programs for the enhancement of reading and spelling through phonetic awareness, mathematics tutoring and other support services. such as counseling guidance. Data is also used to inform the enhancement program of those high achieving students in need of challenge and this is beginning to impact on their learning.

Although school goals are being addressed at grade level with effective tracking of cohort progress and intervention strategies, students are not regularly set personal and challenging subject area goals to accelerate their learning. The principal recognizes that teachers’ data should be shared with students and parents regularly, monitored to track progress, and serve as an additional means of measuring learning and raising expectations.

Much work is done to involve parents in the education of their children. There is very good coordination of curriculum workshops which have been successful in drawing in large numbers of parents, who also participate in class lessons. The parents’ conference evenings are well attended. Effective communication between home and school is exemplified by telephone calls, newsletters, curriculum updates, diaries of school events, and teachers’ interim progress reports. Letters go home in English with translations in a range of home languages. These have raised parents’ expectations and understanding of academic matters affecting their children.

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.

Frequent reviews of individual student and cohort performance take place among individual teachers, through discussions at grade level, and at senior level meetings. This

collaboration has helped improve strategies for teaching and the effectiveness of instruction throughout the school to ensure that students are engaged in lessons. There is thorough curriculum alignment, mapping and planning to improve student learning and the school ensures that resources are used for maximum benefit.

Effective intervention strategies are based on results of data analysis. For example, students who perform below level 3 are identified and their skills developed through a range of literacy and numeracy programs with the support of the academic intervention service and the collaborative teaching team. The enrichment team stretches high achieving students in the core subjects, supplemented by interest areas of visual arts, technology, media studies, science and social studies. All extension programs are aligned with the mandated curriculum and focus effectively on improving student learning.

At class level, teachers work hard to record a vast amount of student information, but this is not used well enough to differentiate lessons to meet the wide range of student abilities in their classes. Although teachers are diligent at testing children and collecting data, the paperwork lacks focus on specific skills to inform their record keeping and student conference discussions. Class teachers are developing a more comprehensive view of students' strengths and weaknesses. However, the use of data by teachers across all subject areas is variable. There are areas that the school has agreed as non-negotiable, such as lesson aims and objectives being made explicit and the marking of student work. The principal recognizes the need to improve teachers' marking of student work to better inform their interim assessments of achievement and progress.

Student attendance is consistently high because of the school's concerted efforts to track student absence and liaise with parents. These strategies significantly contribute to the school's academic outcomes which help students enjoy their learning, behave well, feel secure and well supported, and achieve their full potential.

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 appointment of staff is well informed by the needs and priorities identified by the principal, cabinet members and aligned with the goals in the Comprehensive Education Plan. New teachers are well supported through professional development and collaborative teamwork. All teachers are certified and highly qualified with most teachers in the school holding advanced degrees.

The principal is committed to bringing about a smooth transition with the pending loss of students and potentially some of the school staff next year. The principal is very well respected by staff, students, and parents, especially in maintaining high expectations and support for all students. Staff members recognize the challenges the principal faces over the next few months. They accept that actions are data driven and based on collaborative decisions where possible.

The excellent support and professional development systems in place continues to support individuals and help staff morale. There has been a significant investment in professional development which takes place in team meetings and on allocated days. A culture of team working has developed well and encourages the sharing of strategies. There has

been a clear focus on linking data to teaching and this is evident in the way that priorities have been identified. The school effectively sets up 'turnkey' dissemination of professional development strategies but these have yet to be implemented consistently across the school.

The literacy and mathematics coaches advise on teaching materials and model effective teaching approaches. This support successfully reinforces good practice to impact positively on learning. The principal has also placed high importance on frequent lesson observation as a means of developing teachers further. However, teachers are not yet set goals by the principal to focus the improvements they need to put into practice. Teachers state that they welcome feedback from lessons observed and have gained from support to improve their classroom environment, planning, and quality of classroom teaching. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis and has established effective links with local institutions and support services for the benefit of both staff and students.

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 school sets goals that include percentage increases for student test results. These are reviewed frequently during the academic year and form the basis of the annual Comprehensive Education Plan. Priorities for the plan are established through collaboration with cabinet members, the pupil personnel team, academic intervention services and the school leadership team. Monthly meetings update members on standardized testing results and review priorities within the school's action plan, including budgetary reviews.

Goals are communicated and focused on English language arts and mathematics at each grade level and for those students served by the intervention programs. These goals are communicated to teachers so they can focus instruction on accelerating learning for each student.

The Comprehensive Education Plan's broader goals are not consistently broken down into manageable plans. The goals in their current state do not fully represent where the school is in terms of actions to enhance students' reading of non-fiction and the need for greater emphasis on improving students' extended writing.

The principal has correctly identified that these goals and school action plan can become better informed through improved consistency in the use of teachers' interim assessments and marking of students' work to more accurately measure incremental progress. The school's focus on teaching practices and the drive to improve learning, underpins how it plans to continue to refine the use of data to drive whole school improvement. The school has the capacity to take the next steps in setting more rigorous and challenging goals to improve students' learning and academic outcomes.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Flushing Manor School (PS 184)	∅	✓	+
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