



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Daniel Carter Beard School

Junior High School 189

**144-80 Barclay Avenue
Queens
NY 11355**

Principal: Cindy Diaz-Burgos

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Reviewer: Frank Jones

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Daniel Carter Beard is a junior high school that currently serves a population of 612 students from grades 7 through 8. At the beginning of the academic year, grade 9 students transferred to high schools leaving Daniel Carter Beard with only grades 7 and 8 for this year. In September 2007 the school will operate with three grade levels, 6, 7 and 8, in line with other New York junior high schools. Fifty-seven percent of the students are Asian, 32% Hispanic, 6% White and the remaining 4% are Black. The majority of learners are general education students with approximately 23% classified as English language learners and a further 11% being identified as special education students. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 67% of students qualifying which matches that of similar and City schools.

The school has a highly mobile student population with approximately 25% moving in and out during the year. The number of students attending the school can vary by around 100 on an annual basis. The attendance rate, at 93.5% in 2005, was above that of similar and City schools. The principal has been at the school for just over three years. The staffing is stable, with many of the teachers having been at the school for a good number of years.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The highly effective and dynamic principal is totally committed to meeting the needs of a diverse student population.
- The positive and inclusive culture of the school supports a caring environment in which to learn.
- The school uses a comprehensive range of data to measure the progress and achievement of all groups of students.
- The dedicated staff are committed to the academic and personal development of all students.
- The curriculum is well designed and focused effectively on meeting student needs.
- The wide range of extra-curricular activities enriches and enhances the core curriculum.
- There are good examples of lively, stimulating instruction, which captures the interest of students.
- Students and parents value the support and guidance provided by the school.
- Professional development is accurately focused on the individual needs of teachers and those of the school.
- The principal is astutely aware of what is needed to raise achievement and has made judicious budgetary decisions to meet the needs of students and enhance the quality of working areas.

What the school needs to improve

- Increase the use of data to set challenging and realistic goals for individual and groups of students, clearly identifying the incremental learning steps required to achieve them.
- Use assessment data more systematically to refine current strategies for differentiated instruction.
- Continue to target professional development on improving the analysis and use of data by staff.
- Make better use of student data in order to monitor and evaluate the impact of the curriculum and instruction on progress and performance.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school with well-developed features.

The principal has led the school well since taking up her position. Her total commitment to meeting the needs of her student population has resulted in her presiding over a developing school. She has been extremely effective in empowering and welding an experienced staff into a coherent team, which has at its heart a concern for the development of the whole child. The supportive climate and inclusive nature of the school is reflected in the positive relations between all parties and the confident way in which students approach their learning. The school has been successful in meeting the needs of a diverse population by adapting the curriculum and, where appropriate, the language of instruction.

Staff are committed to their work and to enhancing the development of all students. Students in turn recognize the efforts being made on their behalf and feel secure and supported in all they do. They are excited by their work and are engaged and interested by the range of opportunities made available for them. The school understands the importance of the collection and analysis of data. The teachers are gaining confidence in using it and utilize the information appropriately to provide intervention and enrichment activities as required.

The principal is well aware of the strengths of the school and that more needs to be done in relation to strategic planning. Under her strong and dynamic leadership the school is well placed to sustain the improvements made in the last three years and to address the issues raised.

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 uses a comprehensive range of assessments and tests much of which are generated internally. These are carefully analyzed by the cabinet and provide useful information for staff on student progress and achievement. To accommodate English language learners and identify clearly what they know and can do, testing takes place in the language of the student's country of origin. Progress of individual students is measured and monitored throughout the year following Princeton assessments, the four marking periods and core assessments following units of study. This information is used systematically to realign the curriculum to meet learning needs and where appropriate provide intervention and enrichment strategies. The school has a clear picture of performance at class, grade and subject level.

The school uses the Wilson diagnostic test to identify skill deficits for lower achieving students and intervention programs are subsequently quickly implemented. Each student's articulation card is analyzed on entry to the school as is information relating to

their social and cultural experiences. Well-focused programs are provided for each student as a result of this holistic approach to the collection and analysis of data.

The school has a diverse population and recognizes the importance of analyzing the data generated relating to ethnic and cultural subgroups. The school places great emphasis on understanding the culture of the student's country of origin and the level of previous education received. Individual education plans are initiated for each special education student and the progress against these plans is carefully monitored for progress and modifications.

The principal systematically uses comparisons with other schools in the region and past performance as benchmarks against which the progress of Daniel Carter Beard can be measured. The trend of overall results demonstrates steady improvement. Within the school, data illustrates that mathematics outperforms English language arts. The school is working hard to implement teaching and curriculum strategies to address this issue, with particular focused support for English language learners. The school measures the effectiveness of its input not only by the impact it has on achievement but also the acceptance rate of students at specialist high schools.

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.

The school uses extensive data to develop and set long-term goals for the school and individual subjects, which are encapsulated in the Comprehensive Education Plan. The school carefully analyzes student performance on entry and has a good understanding of what students know, are able to do and where there are skill deficits. Insufficient use of this information is made to set specific long-term goals based on prior performance. This lack of rigor results in goals being general in terms of maintaining grade levels. More accurate goal setting takes place when the school looks at the raw scores and, through item analysis, makes more specific projections and plans to raise the raw scores.

Department goals follow a similar pattern. There is sufficient comprehensive data available to set accurate, subject specific long-term goals by aggregating student data, but teachers as yet do not fully understand what is required to do this. Good use is made of the information to set short-term goals and provide intervention or enrichment opportunities to support individual learning. Teachers are quite clear in their understanding of progress that has been made and are now developing skills to utilize this information at a more strategic level. The school has rightly identified the importance of supporting English language learners and those students in greatest need of improvement. It has a very good range of strategies relating to instruction and the curriculum to target skills deficits for individuals and groups of students. This well-developed aspect features close monitoring of progress against stated goals. Class-based assessment and cross-curricular themes are effectively implemented by teachers and shared with colleagues to devise and modify goals and improve learning.

Students and parents value the support and guidance provided by the teachers. The students themselves are well aware of what is expected of them and show a real determination to succeed. Parents are regularly informed about the curriculum being

offered and the progress that their child is making. They appreciate the high aspirations that the school has for their children and fully support them.

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 supplements the mandated curriculum by using a variety of other sources including Wilson and the Read 180 program. State guidelines for scope and sequence for non-mandated curriculum areas are well utilized and added to by each department to provide a curriculum that is well designed and focused effectively on meeting student needs. A wide range of extra curricular activities enriches and enhances the core curriculum. This is particularly evident in art where students produce digital presentations that incorporate a range of cross-curricular skills and expertise. Individual customized packets are given to students prior to entry to the school and subsequently during holiday periods, which consolidate and maintain continuity of learning.

When there is a close match of task to students’ learning needs there are good examples of lively, stimulating instruction, which engages and captures the interest of students. On occasion when this is not the case, assessment data is not used systematically to refine strategies for differentiated instruction. The principal is astutely aware of the improvements required and has made judicious budgetary decisions to meet the needs of the students and enhance the quality of the working areas. The physical science program was identified as requiring updating and this has been rectified. Similarly the introduction of Read 180 emanated from data analysis showing the need to improve literacy skills. Student and teacher scheduling is undertaken following a thorough evaluation of social and academic need to ensure a match of teacher expertise to student ability.

Staff are dedicated and committed to the academic and personal development of all students. As a result, relationships are very good; students enjoy coming to school and the experiences it provides. This coupled with a supportive approach to encouraging high attendance results in consistently good figures. Students feel well supported and are comfortable about approaching adults in time of need.

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.

Given the stability of the staff, the principal has hired few staff since she arrived. She has high expectations of new staff, including a commitment to teamwork and a willingness to use data. The teachers work extremely effectively in teams, both within their subject areas and grade level. Teachers are mutually supportive, share practice, discuss ideas and participate in inter-visitations. These actions reflect the confidence they have in each other and have contributed to the improvement of instruction. Weekly grade meetings focus on strategies to enhance student attitudes to their learning and reflect an in depth understanding of individuals. Joint planning further enhances the development and sharing of practice.

The cabinet has a wealth of experience and is well led. The team engages in regular lesson observations and frequent discussions with staff, which ensures that they are well informed about professional development needs. This information is effectively used to focus professional development accurately on the individual needs of teachers and those of the school. Where appropriate, coaches model lessons to demonstrate and support good practice. Training is provided prior to the implementation of new initiatives, such as the introduction of new technology, to ensure that the potential is maximized. The major focus has been to develop skills in the collection and use of data to measure progress, inform instructional programs and to set goals. Improvement has been made, although the principal realizes she must continue to focus on improving the analysis and use of data by staff so that they are better able to set precise goals for groups and individual students.

The principal is dynamic, highly effective and totally committed to ensuring the school meets the needs of a diverse student population. Staff, students and parents recognize this and appreciate the improvements she has made to student development and the wider learning environment. The school has made significant developments and the principal has demonstrated unequivocally the capacity to maintain and sustain improvement. Well-established systems and procedures are in place to facilitate the smooth running of the school on a daily basis. The principal has worked hard with the community to develop productive partnerships with community-based services that provide valuable support and enrichment opportunities after school and at the weekend.

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 assistant principals have specific monitoring roles in the school and work well with the principal to provide experienced and cohesive leadership that gives a coherent direction for the school. They are instrumental in developing the strategic goals identified in the Comprehensive Education Plan. Progress is measured against these goals, but the team recognizes the need to make more rigorous use of achievement data at whole school, grade and subject level to set more specific, quantifiable goals if monitoring and evaluation are to be more accurate and any subsequent realignment based on secure evidence.

The school is becoming increasingly confident, however, in analyzing data and using this information to inform planning at grade and subject level. Good use of this information is used to realign the curriculum specifically in the case of the introduction of bilingual Chinese and Spanish classes to meet the diverse linguistic needs of the student population. The Read 180 program has been introduced to improve the proficiency of English language learners and the success of this strategy is being carefully measured.

The weekly team meetings, attended by all teachers responsible for the instruction of specific classes of students, provide detailed information on individuals who are not making the expected progress. Specific strategies implemented to address weaknesses are subsequently monitored to measure their impact on progress. Where diagnostic testing indicates enrichment or intervention is required then additional support is made available through the extended day and Saturday sessions. The school is flexible in its response to identified needs.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Daniel Carter Beard School (JHS 198)	∅	✓	+
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	