



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Pomonok School

Public School 200

70-10 164th Street

Queens

NY 11365

Principal: Denize Brewer

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Reviewer: Margaret Lee

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The school has 495 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 7. It is currently being restructured into a pre-kindergarten through 8 school. Grade 7 was added this year and a grade 8 is to be added next year. The principal is in the early months as a new principal after having been the assistant principal in the school.

The school's student population comprises 34% White, 32% Hispanic, 20% Black and 12% Asian students, and a small minority of students from other ethnic groups. The proportion of special education students has increased over the previous five years, and is now above average at over 25%. There is a lower proportion of English language learners (approximately 5%) than in most similar schools. Attendance, at 93%, is about the same as that of similar and City-wide schools.

The school is part of the Physical Best program, a comprehensive and certified health and fitness program, which assists students in meeting the National Association for Sports and Physical Education national standards. The school's theme of being the Magnet School of Health, Nutrition and Fitness offers a curriculum which emphasizes the importance of health, nutrition and fitness as an integral part of daily living.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal is a committed educational leader who takes a personal interest in all aspects of the school and the continuing improvement of teaching and learning practices.
- The school leadership team works inclusively with parents and reports openly and frequently to the school community.
- There is evidence of thoughtful placements of staff to give students quality school and enrichment programs.
- Teachers and parent volunteers demonstrate a highly committed approach to their work with children.
- Staff professional development is maximized wherever possible and is focused on improving school practices.
- A range of useful student assessment information is routinely collected for each grade level.
- The students are well-behaved.
- The school is attractively presented, well organized and runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis because student movement is managed very well.
- The school has high expectations of student achievement, supporting children and their families to succeed educationally.
- Classrooms are well resourced with a range of materials that supports teaching.

What the school needs to improve

- Use the information from data analysis to create timed action plans that are measured by student performance and progress in each class, grade and subject.
- Use information from data analysis to set measurable goals for all ability, gender and ethnic groups, to identify their precise and expected achievement and accelerate progress.
- Use assessment data and goals to contextualize and focus discussions in grade-level meetings so teachers continuously reflect on how they are meeting all students' learning needs.
- Ensure all teachers use data to plan instruction that more accurately and closely meets the needs of all students in classes.
- Consider further ways to engage and motivate students' learning.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school.

The principal has shared her vision for productive learning environments with staff, so the classrooms are rich in displays that record previous teaching points and celebrate students' work. While the overarching vision is shared and agreed, goals for school improvement are not yet as proficient as the school would like. Individual students have goals that guide planning and instruction, but these are not transferred consistently to goals for some identified groups and class, grade and subject goals. As a result, action plans are process-driven rather than goals-led.

Care and support for the social and emotional needs of children is good. Needs are discussed in detail, as part of the dedicated effort to develop students' personal development alongside their academic development.

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 a suitable range of data from State and City tests to gain a secure understanding of what students know and are able to do. It supplements these with a range of its own assessments including information produced by the Grow report and Princeton Review that helps identify specific aspects of the curriculum that students need to work on. In addition, teachers keep ongoing records from their daily observations and routine conferences with individuals and groups of students to give them a secure knowledge and valuable insight into each student's needs. As yet there is no whole-school policy for gathering and recording data, so teachers use their own systems. This inconsistency makes it difficult for the administration to keep track of performance and progress.

The principal has analyzed the State and City test data to identify students at risk of not reaching grade standards and has organized a range of intervention strategies and after-school programs to provide test preparation and build more secure knowledge and skills. English language learners are assessed in kindergarten. They are fully integrated into mainstream classes and their progress is carefully monitored to inform the additional support that is provided for them. Student records are used progressively through the school, so that student progress can be tracked and monitored.

Data is analyzed and shared with teachers through individual meetings and in classroom visits so most teachers now know and understand that assessment is a fundamental part of their teaching. The school compares how well it does from year to year against its own performance and that of other similar and City schools. It does not analyze data by ethnicity and gender so cannot make secure comparisons about the performance of students in these groups. It does not therefore know whether additional support and challenge would accelerate their progress.

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 undeveloped.

The process for establishing goals in the Comprehensive Education Plan is structured to include a range of views from all representatives from the school community. Long- and short-term school goals are identified, but these are not measured against students’ expected performance at the end of each year. As a result it is difficult to evaluate the quality of instruction in terms of how effectively it is raising students’ attainment and accelerating their progress.

The school is beginning to build a climate where goals for improving student achievement drive the work of the whole school community. However, the analysis of the data is still not in sufficient detail for the school to set objective and measurable goals for individual students in each class, grade and subject. Teachers are generally aware of students’ levels of learning but this information is not the focus of collaborative discussions, the emphasis being on process rather than outcomes. The principal makes it her business to know each child. She is very familiar with the learning conditions of each classroom and reviews student work regularly. However, without secure goals and interim timed targets, the school’s awareness of students’ progress in each class, grade and subject across the school is limited.

Assessment data is used sufficiently well to plan suitable intervention strategies for accelerating the progress of special education students, English language learners and those at risk of not reaching grade standards. However, data is not used to set targeted goals for all students’ achievement. Consequently, the needs of some ethnic groups, some boys and girls and higher achievers are not always met.

The principal has high expectations of staff and students and has started to make inroads into improving learning and achievement. In particular, she demonstrates high expectations for a quality learning environment throughout. As a result, all classrooms are attractively presented, making students feel a sense of belonging. Parents feel very much a part of the school through various workshops, for example the family mathematics night. A range of formal and informal opportunities to discuss their children’s progress ensures that parents are clear about the school’s expectations for their children’s success and they are very supportive of the principal’s plans for improvement.

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 develops monthly curriculum maps at each grade level to assist the planning of instruction and uses pacing calendars for the mathematics program. The curriculum puts particular emphasis on developing and improving students’ health, nutrition and fitness. Physical education and dance programs and lessons, taught by physical education majors from a local college and a community dance artist, help students to meet national physical

education standards. In addition, the school's enrichment activities, which aim to give students a variety of opportunities to extend their experiences and learning at each grade level, are a strength of the curriculum.

The principal sets clear expectations to teachers about using data to plan suitable instruction and to organize relevant individual and group intervention work in classes. This is now happening in most classes with many teachers beginning to use information from their ongoing records, from the Grow Report, and the Princeton Review to guide their classroom instruction. There remains some work to do in making sure this is consistent practice across the school and so make sure all teachers are accountable for instruction in their classes. Some teachers, usually in the lower grades, are more successful than others in adapting activities within the classroom to take account of the different ways students learn best and to build on what they already know and can do. However, not all teachers have given sufficient thought as to how students with different performance levels within the same class can be given different work to challenge thinking, improve performance and accelerate progress.

In classes where instruction is matched well to individual learning needs, students are involved in their learning tasks. They are attentive and focused on their work. When teachers use technology, students are engaged and motivated in lessons because teaching is enlivened and interesting.

The school's budget is used appropriately to support learning. For example, the new technology classroom provides regular opportunity for students to use computers to support their learning. As a result, there is a steady and consistent improvement in the quality of students' written work. The school facilities are excellent and the environment is well organized and maintained. Time is scheduled during the day to make sure students can experience a wide range of subjects but also to put good focus on developing key skills in English language arts and mathematics. Additional staff have been hired to ensure teachers receive additional time to plan together in grade teams.

Students respect their teachers and are confident to talk to them and ask for assistance to help them learn. Attendance is closely monitored by the school and home visits are made when the absence of particular students becomes a concern.

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 selection and assignment of staff are determined on the basis of targeting identified student and school needs. The professional development program is planned to meet the principal's vision for future development, to build on individual teachers' areas of development identified in classroom observations, and on teachers learning about additional ways to improve each student's academic and personal growth. Teachers visit each other's classes and attend external conferences and seminars to gain new ideas and to share good practice. Teachers organize their own study groups to extend their personal professional knowledge of a particular aspect of their work.

Teachers' meetings during common preparation time are used to improve teacher planning and development. The lead teachers have worked with the teachers to produce a clearer version of the standards for each study area. This is enabling teachers to think about

ways to make sure that they are teaching directly to the standards. The administration and intervention teams meet regularly to discuss how well strategies are going. However, because goals do not have objective measures of performance and time, discussions are rarely focused enough on students' expected progress and outcomes against which to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction and review practice.

The principal is respected by staff, parents and students who all value her collaborative style, and in particular her direct involvement in leading teaching and learning practices. Staff support her clear vision for the continuation of school improvement. She regularly visits classrooms to monitor progress and quality of teaching. After every visit, she confers with the teachers about their individual work and areas for development are identified. However, checks to ensure improvements are put into place are not rigorous enough and dates are not set for when these are expected to be in place and so are not improving the quality of instruction fast enough.

Learning and behavior routines are reinforced at the beginning and throughout the school year. As a result, students behave well and move about the school building with good thought and respect for others' safety. The school is well organized and so operates smoothly and calmly. Students feel cared for, comfortable and safe.

The school has extensive partnerships with the community and other outside body which make good contributions to its work, especially to physical education and dance programs. The faculty have collaborated successfully to produce lesson plans guided by Columbia Teachers College benchmarks and achievement levels.

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 undeveloped.

The process for establishing the Comprehensive Education Plan includes seeking a range of views from all sections of the school community. Regular administration and school leadership team meetings, and faculty and grade group meetings, focus discussions on the matters at hand. For example, following discussions about whether students were making enough progress as measured against scores in an initial test at the beginning of the school year, some adjustments were made to the upper grades' curriculum. However, because data is not a clear focus of meetings, discussions tend to focus on process rather than outcomes. There are no indicators in plans to indicate how the school will know it has been successful and when action is expected to be completed so the school is unable to evaluate its performance or progress towards goals as objectively as it would like.

Progress towards improvement is evaluated on both short-term and long-term basis. Each year a team of teachers, administrators, and parents work together to review goals in the previous year's Comprehensive Education Plan, and to evaluate the appropriateness of programs. Experts in each area are consulted by the team, and an open and honest review and evaluation of the previous year's performance is completed before new goals for the upcoming year are set. Copies of the plan are distributed to the grade leaders, who in turn review and help teachers set individual, grade wide and classroom goals in order to reach school wide goals. As outlined earlier, goals do not yet have objective enough measures against which to evaluate improvement fully.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Pomonok School (PS 200)	∅	✓	+
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		