



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Carl Ullman

Public School 213

**231- 02 67 Avenue
Queens
NY 11364**

Principal: Bruce Baronoff

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Reviewer: Peter Williman

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Public School 213 is a small elementary school for grades pre-kindergarten through 5 located in the southern Bayside area of Queens. The school serves an ethnically diverse neighborhood. The total school population of 416 students is 55% Asian, 25% White, 15% Hispanic and 5% Black.

Approximately 10% of the students are English language learners. A further 13% are special education students. A significant proportion of these are bussed from other areas to the school. Attendance, at 96%, is higher than the City average. Approximately 19% of the students have Title I eligibility.

Built in 1955, the school is well maintained and presents a clean, bright environment with large classrooms. Open hallways have attractive displays of a wide range of student work. A large gymnasium, dining room and an auditorium provide additional flexible accommodation. The spacious central library is well stocked. The schoolyard is large and provides play equipment for younger students in a partitioned area.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school collects a comprehensive range of data and uses it to understand the progress of students and to provide them with the necessary support.
- Achievements in English language arts, mathematics and science have consistently risen above those of City and similar schools in State tests.
- Teachers use the data available to inform the next stages of instruction and to accelerate student progress.
- The school places high value on progress, to good effect. .
- The school selects new programs, projects and strategies with great care to promote instructional goals and breadth in its curriculum.
- Teachers know their students well and use a range of strategies to encourage collaborative learning and student awareness of their learning.
- The principal has, by his determination brought his vision to a reality and, as a result the school continues to improve.
- The school uses its data effectively to guide instruction for higher performing students, for English language learners and for special education students.
- The school is a caring community, which, by its open communication with parents promotes commitment and loyalty.
- There is a reflective learning culture in which teachers are spontaneously engaged in school improvement and personal enrichment.

What the school needs to improve

- Further refine the already good use of the Gains report data to even more accurately track the annual progress of students, by subject, classroom, ethnic group, and other relevant categories so that gaps in achievement can be identified even quicker and so that appropriate action can be taken even faster.
- Further develop the training of all staff in the analysis of data to better inform planning and the differentiation of instruction.
- Further Improve planning in order to further refine judgments about progress.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well-developed school.

The Carl Ullman School is very successful in achieving scores which are significantly above those of similar schools in English language arts, mathematics and science. Student' achievement and the success of the school overall are the result of effective school leadership combined with the good use the school makes of data of all kinds.

The school is small and therefore there is greater pressure upon the principal, who must necessarily work without the support of an assistant principal. However, his collaborative style of leadership makes good use of leaders and also fully engages faculty in a commitment to school development and improvement. Formal professional development focuses on school need and teachers work together well as a team. This leads to improvements in the quality of their teaching. Teachers also make good use of student performance data to target instruction to current individual student needs.

The school effectively challenges students of all levels of achievement to master the mandatory curriculum. It also seeks enrichment through the extra curricular activities organized by the parents association and teachers. The Glee club, for example, provides a stunning example of this in the high quality of its singing in rehearsal for a Christmas entertainment.

A successful school always has limited leeway to raise the percentage points of attainment. However, this is the challenge the school must face by tracking all groupings and categories of students even more closely to identify gaps and to ensure that each cohort of students continues to make good progress.

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 collects a comprehensive range of data and uses it well to understand the progress of students. The principal and the school leadership team examine the data from the State and City assessments closely to identify the progress of all students and break that information down by performance categories. Data is also analyzed to examine groups of students according to their gender and ethnicity. Teachers in every grade are informed by the analysis of commercial assessments for English language arts and mathematics. In addition, they maintain detailed running records of their class's progress based on conferences and review of student work.

The progress of Special Education students and English language learners is monitored with special care. Examination of case study notes and the work of the pupil review panel demonstrate the remarkable detail of data drawn from specialists, assessments, teachers

and parents which is reviewed monthly to ascertain the progress of these students. The principal also keeps other groups, including gender groups, under review.

Careful annotation of assessment data ensures that students who are identified as needing close monitoring are not overlooked. The school compares its performance with similar schools and carefully tracks the progress made by each student according to the value that is added to cohorts and groups of students through intervention and instruction.

The school's records shows that achievements in English language arts, mathematics and science have consistently risen above those of City and similar schools in state tests. This reflects the school's high expectations of its students and the effective use it makes of data to inform instruction. The use of comparative data underpins discussions at student progress at all levels within the school in management overviews and grade meetings.

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.

The principal believes fervently that the school should be a learning community of teachers, students and parents, set in a collaborative culture to maintain a momentum of rising achievement. As a result, instruction and learning are firmly seated in collective reviews of data in this school. High expectations are shared with parents through conferences, report cards, workshops and informal contacts. Teachers share their expectations with students in their conferences. Students use rubrics that clarify what they must achieve in their work to reach higher levels. Classroom displays model effective learning strategies.

The school's Comprehensive Education Plan sets goals and priorities for each school subject for the coming year. The plan identifies objectives, which may be measured quantitatively by external assessment or qualitatively, through classroom observations. Parents are consulted by a survey of their views. Teachers, individually and in their grade cluster meetings, regularly review students work, set against City and national standards and associated skill rubrics, and carefully plan next steps in learning. Throughout the school, teachers use their assessment binders to record students' learning and to relate student's progress in class work to assessments. Teachers create their own assessments specific to their instruction, some of which are computer-based. They identify the next stages of that learning together with instruction plans or groupings for instruction.

The school uses its data effectively to plan instruction for higher performing students, students with English as a second language, and students with special needs. Teachers identify students who achieve levels 3 and 4 in state standards to receive enrichment programs. Special education students have well-conceived Individual Education Plans. These clearly define next steps and result from the many assessments, teacher commentary and the outcomes of specialist interventions.

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.

As a school that is exempt from the requirements of the mandatory curriculum, the school makes good use of the available funds to select new programs and projects. This promotes the achievement of demanding instructional goals and gives a good breadth to the curriculum. The reading program, for example, clearly delineates student progress through a set of carefully-defined levels. Benchmarks define the expected average achievement of students in each grade and this standardizes judgments of attainment. Reading and writing workshops have been chosen to enhance flexibility in styles of instruction. The school mathematics program has been revised twice to ensure easier differentiation of the levels of instruction, enrichment for higher attaining students and pre- and post-topic assessments to level students.

Teachers recognize their responsibility to deliver high quality instruction. Increasingly they understand and effectively use the data available to them from state and school-generated tests to augment the information from their own detailed records to determine the next stages of instruction. The data also assists them in making the best match of work to students’ stages of learning. Teachers also differentiate their instruction in English language arts and mathematics based on this data. Cluster meeting discussion and planning enable greater consistency of instruction and curriculum coverage across a grade. The principal’s decision to balance the instructional strengths within grade teams, where possible, also gives support to consistency.

Instructional teaching actively engages students who are generally very attentive, concentrate well and enjoy their lessons. For example in kindergarten, students sit reading back-to-back and enjoy their books without disturbing each other. High attaining students in grade 3 are fully absorbed by challenging computer programs in mathematics.

Thoughtful and well considered staffing decisions are made and students have responded enthusiastically to the recent adoption of the Schoolwide Enrichment Model program, a project-based curriculum that concentrates on ‘real world authentic learning.’ The principal has correlated a block of time in the schedule of all classes to facilitate this program as a means of enriching and broadening the curriculum. This program symbolizes the schools’ commitment to develop wider personal values in the curriculum and to further the warm relationships and respect, which is the students’ everyday experience. Students confidently report that they feel very safe in the school and that there are numerous adults they could turn to if they faced any problems in school.

Although the school’s statistics are significantly higher than the state average, the principal takes his responsibility to raise attendance seriously. For example he regularly advises parents of the impact of extended holidays on progress and learning.

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 principal is a highly respected and effective leader who has made high expectation the cornerstone of his judgments on school development. He has very clear strategies to build a skilled and committed teaching team. Several recent appointments have been student teachers in the school and as a result these teachers develop their work within the culture of the school. Although unable to appoint an assistant principal because of budget limitations, the principal has hired an assessment coordinator and a literacy coordinator and in this way has effectively created a well-rounded leadership team. As a result the school runs very smoothly.

The principal has defined professional development as the 'critical component' to underpin new initiatives and this is demonstrated in practice. Planning takes place regularly with staff working in teams. The principal has made teachers' reading workshop practice the focus of his formal observations in line with school priorities and this gives an effective overview of the impact of professional development. Although a significant proportion of teachers were apprehensive, all staff have been given training in the use of computers to manage data analysis associated with new assessments. The new confidence which this engendered has led to wider use of information technology to create, for example, classroom assessments.

The school has greatly benefited through a long-standing partnership with 'Studio in a School.' This partnership significantly enhances the visual arts curriculum but also makes learning connections for students. For example, students experiment with ideas of size and proportion in drawing alongside similar ideas in mathematics. This work has been funded for some ten years with an Empire State Partnership Grant.

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 Comprehensive Education Plan and the principal's review identify measurable final outcomes of school priorities, together with details of teaching programs, staff development, and staff or logistical changes. Although interim goals are not always set proactively, the principal reviews data as it becomes available from assessments to compare the progress of classes and acts accordingly through day-to-day interventions. He uses half-yearly reviews with teachers, to add another opportunity to track teacher's contributions to the overall progress of the school. Teachers use the data of class assessments to modify their instruction over time. Case studies clearly illustrate how the school adjusts plans for special education students to reach expected standards over the course of a year.

The school responds directly to reviews of the impact of programs. For example the principal, in consultation with the leadership team, has replaced the mathematics program twice in the past three years in response to his monitoring of the benefits for all students. The criteria for the most recent change may lead to the adoption of a new program, which would not only provide a sound basis of instruction for all students, but would give greater depth, challenge and enrichment to students attaining levels 3 and 4 as apart of the schools commitment to raise achievement for all students.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The Carl Ullman School PS 213	∅	✓	+
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