



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The George L. Egbert School

Intermediate School 002

**333 Midland Avenue
Staten Island
NY 10306**

Principal: Michelena DiBuono

Dates of review: January 10 – 12, 2007

Reviewer: Corinne Brown

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The George L. Egbert School is an ethnically diverse six through eight grade intermediate school which serves over 900 students. Located in the Midland area of Staten Island, the building has recently undergone external refurbishment. The school library is currently going through the same process and so is not currently the resource it has been for students, teachers and parents. There is a school wide Title 1 program.

Students come from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds but the majority is White (65%) with approximately twenty-three percent Hispanic, seven percent Asian and others and six percent Black. There has been a significant increase in numbers of students recently arrived in the country. Approximately five percent of students are English language learners and over thirty different languages are spoken in the school community.

Within the student population, approximately eight percent are special education students provided for in seven full time classes and two collaborative team teaching classes.

There has been an increase in attendance and, at 94%, it is comparable to similar schools and higher than city schools.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school climate is one of co-operation and respect among all members of the school community.
- Teachers, the parent coordinator and all staff work hard to help students feel valued and achieve success.
- The principal is respected for her calm, authoritative manner, and good communication.
- The school benefits from an administration and a school leadership team that ably support the principal through collaboration.
- The principal and administration know their students well and care for their safety and wellbeing.
- The school offers the students the experience of success through the arts, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Positive praise and reward for effort underpin student success and foster self esteem.
- Through many methods, the school makes strenuous efforts to communicate with parents.
- The school uses data, such as the Princeton Review, to assist in differentiation which enhances student performance.
- The school has closely aligned instruction to standards through examination of data and associated professional development, particularly in English language arts and mathematics.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue efforts to further increase parental involvement in the school.
- Continue to develop the use of technology by all teachers to aid learning.
- Deepen the analysis of subgroup and performance data to improve achievement.
- Continue work on the provision made for special education students and ensure their continued good attendance.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well developed school.

The school is a community of culturally diverse learners where expectations are high and all students are encouraged to achieve according to their ability. Within a nurturing and safe environment, they are provided with the services, resources and opportunities to enable personal fulfillment and demonstrate success. The school has seven honor classes and a continued commitment to offer opportunities through the arts for students to experience success, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. Thorough analysis of data, led by the principal, has enabled the school over several years to tailor programs across the curriculum to meet the needs of the constantly changing student population. Meeting the particular needs of special education students and English language learners within the context of State and City tests has been a particular challenge. The school has largely been successful in this.

Teachers, parents and students speak highly of the principal's calm yet authoritative manner which sets the tone for the atmosphere in the building. Respect for others and cooperation is encouraged and modeled by administration and teachers. Collaborative working supports and fosters a sense of involvement for adults and students.

The school maintains an attractive, informative website which indicates commitment to the use of technology as an aid to learning. This also motivates students. They are helped to develop skills in decision making, critical thinking, organization and social responsibility in order to prepare them for later life.

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 overall with well developed features.

The school administration uses data to prioritize goals and objectives for the school year. Trends are observed and the performance of discrete groups analyzed. Hard and soft data, including standardized test results, interim assessments and information created by teachers such as observations, portfolio assessments and classroom tests, inform decisions. Informal walkthroughs, individual education plans and other specialized assessment and diagnostic tools help to continually monitor the progress of targeted individuals, including English language learners. The instructional team is highly skilled and familiar with a variety of established complementary reporting systems.

The analysis of data is effective in leading to appropriate development of timely interventions. Teachers and all staff know their students well and consider how best the individual student can be supported. Expertise from coaches and other specialist staff, including guidance counselors, is used to ensure students have the best opportunity to succeed.

The school appropriately responded to the needs of the significant group of special education students. The introduction of collaborative team teaching and formation of self-contained classes for these students has allowed them to flourish which is reflected in improved performance scores. The students feel more confident as they receive increased individual attention and parents are very pleased with the outcomes achieved.

The principal sets the example for data analysis. She continually evaluates performance and progress based on comparisons with previous years, with similar schools and various other groups of interest, such as ethnicity or gender. In the school there is considerable experience and expertise in the use of available data and in monitoring performance. A deeper analysis of subgroup performance data is not consistently applied throughout the school although the principal is aware of the potential of such scrutiny.

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.

Teachers and support staff use data to identify individual students who are in need of support. Student progress is monitored on a regular basis to ensure that goals and targets are appropriate for individuals, groups and classes and programs are adjusted accordingly. Data is also used to form groups and to aid instruction. Specialist trained professionals effectively deliver a range of interventions. These include flexible small group and individual tuition, as well as enriching after school and Saturday programs.

There is a focus on ensuring that all students make adequate and timely progress, with particular emphasis on those who are at risk of falling behind or are struggling. Higher achieving students are also suitably challenged. Positive praise and reward for effort underpin student success and foster self esteem. The school celebrates achievement in personal as well as academic development. Recognitions of performance are displayed in classrooms and corridors and are motivational.

The school believes the learning partnership of student, school and parents is vital to a child’s education and makes strenuous efforts to engage parents. The parent coordinator, for example, maintains an attractive and informative website and uses an automated telephone message system to contact parents. The school shares results and strategies in order to set expectations and keep parents involved in their child’s learning. This meets with variable results as some parents do not involve themselves with their child’s learning due to personal circumstances.

Parents recognize the improvement made in student performance and value the open, compassionate and warm atmosphere of the school. It is seen as a structured place for students to flourish with one parent commenting, “Each teacher has had a profound impact on him”. Equally, students feel known and respected by all adults in the school and enjoy opportunities to achieve success through an enriched curriculum, including music, art and foreign language.

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.

Teachers are accountable for improving instruction and outcomes. This is encouraged by the collaborative culture of the school and by knowing and caring for the students well. The school has aligned instruction to standards through examination of data and associated recent professional development, particularly in English language arts and mathematics. Balanced literacy is a significant element across the curriculum which makes for a consistent approach that is helpful for students and enables them to use skills learned in a variety of contexts.

The instructional team meets regularly to review, evaluate and implement research based strategies and programs. Student members of the school leadership team are actively involved in decision making. Surveys of teachers, parents and students are used to measure effectiveness of instruction and plans are adjusted accordingly. An example of flexible planning was the decision to ease the transition into intermediate school for sixth grade students through the delivery of the core curriculum in their home room. This has proved very successful and has also eased traffic in corridors, contributing to improved safety for all.

Technology is used to support learning and increase student engagement and achievement although some teachers are more comfortable than others in its use. The expanded use of technology, such as all homework being posted online, and the re-opening of the library as a multi-media resource center for the school and community, is included in budgeting decisions. Allocation of budget and decisions about staffing and scheduling are appropriately driven by needs as identified through data analysis.

Students are positive about their school and their learning and this is reflected in good behavior. An examination of data on the issue of student suspensions resulted in professional development on effective teaching to prevent disruption. This was delivered to all staff, including substitute teachers, with the result that numbers of suspensions in the school substantially decreased.

Student attendance and punctuality are given a high priority. Attendance has improved to 94% through targeted use of the automated message system and efforts of all staff, but the school continues to set its goals higher. Targeted efforts have resulted in improved attendance of special education students in particular.

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.

Leaders, faculty and staff are carefully selected based on their personal qualities, data expertise and demonstrated interest in the school and its students. Student feedback is also part of the process and gives responsibility to students in a school where cooperation is the norm.

Teachers have common planning time to articulate, plan and evaluate best practice. Professional development workshops, faculty conferences and grade or subject meetings provide teachers with effective training. This means the Princeton Review and other tools are used to aid differentiation. Coaches also share expertise, which has a positive impact on the quality of teaching and student achievement. Inter- and intra-visitations are used to aid professional growth. Within the culture of collaboration that exists in the school, teachers feel well supported. The school makes particular efforts to include substitute teachers in appropriate professional development. Professional development is clearly linked to student need as identified through data analysis. It is systematic, to address whole school and individual teacher requirements. The impact of professional development is monitored closely, through use of hard and soft data.

The school generally runs smoothly as expectations are clearly communicated. There is a calm working atmosphere evident in the school, which is the tone set by the principal. She leads by example with her positive manner, welcoming attitude and listening ear. Skilled at the use of data to improve instruction, she is totally committed to helping all students experience success. The principal is ably supported in her vision by the administration. She knows her staff well and is respected by all the school community.

The school uses support services effectively to help students achieve and forges partnerships with outside bodies to enhance learning through enjoyment and activity. The Police Athletic League is an example of effective community support. It offers tutoring in several academic skills and runs programs in sports and other motivational activities. Guidance and support services are also sensitively used as appropriate to help students achieve success.

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 is a collaboratively devised document and clearly a blueprint for improving overall performance. It is time referenced and indicates lines of responsibility. As a working document, it is revisited regularly to monitor developments and to inform future planning. The school is student centered and continually reflective as it seeks ways to improve the quality of education it offers so that all can achieve success. Teachers have the students' best interests at heart and will try new initiatives and flexibly revise plans when data or observation indicates. The school is fortunate to have considerable expertise among the staff in using data to objectively measure progress and revise plans and interventions accordingly.

The school tries to involve all partners, teachers, parents and students, in the learning partnership and looks at the whole person in order to inform planning. Teachers make subtle adjustments to refine their practice through their knowledge of the individual student.

Within the print rich environment, the school is working to improve technology use to aid learning, engage students and prepare them for later life. Skills to enable lifelong learning are effectively developed so that the students can participate actively in their community.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The George L. Egbert Intermediate School (IS0 2)	∅	✓	+
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