



# **The New York City Department of Education**



# **Quality Review Report**

**The Huguenot School**

**Public School 005**

**348 Deisius Street  
Staten Island  
NY 10312**

**Principal: Katherine Corso**

**Dates of review: December 12 - 13, 2006**

**Reviewer: Helen Donnellan**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

The Huguenot School is an elementary school serving students from kindergarten through grade 5. Recent changes in the demography of the area have resulted in a fall in student numbers, although statistically, student stability at 99.1% is higher than the City and similar school average.

Nearly all students (91%) are White. Other ethnic groups include 2% Asian, 5% Hispanic and a small proportion of Black and American Indian students. The proportion of students newly arrived in the country is lower than similar and City schools and includes students from the Philippines, Russia and the Ukraine.

The proportion of special education students is 5.4% and is 4.5% for English language learners. Both proportions are much smaller than similar and City schools.

The average attendance of 94.3% is the same as that of similar schools and higher than in City schools. The school does not receive Title 1 funding.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal ensures that the school runs smoothly and calmly, creating a purposeful learning environment.
- The principal and coaches work as an effective team.
- Extensive use is made of data to measure and compare progress made by individual students and groups of students.
- Data is used well to identify goals and to measure progress towards these goals.
- Lessons are becoming more practical and actively involve students so most are interested and motivated to learn.
- The school's changes are integrated into the Comprehensive Education Plan and this drives professional development, particularly in relation to English language arts and mathematics.
- Students and parents are positive about the changes to learning and classroom organization.

### What the school needs to improve

- Broaden the curriculum through the inclusion of more opportunities for music and art.
- Implement the changes necessary to deliver the revised curriculum fully.
- Increase the opportunities for students to use computer technology to support and record their learning.
- Take account of student views in the school decisions that affect their experience.

## Part 3: Main findings

### Overall Evaluation

#### **This is a well developed school.**

The principal is committed to maintaining the school's good achievement. The staff take pride in valuing every child and, due to the small size of the school and stable student population, they know each child and their families well. Students are happy at school and like being more involved in lessons. They express their views informally to staff, but there is no formal process through which they can do this.

The principal ensures that the school is well run and, with the very effective work of the coaches, has created an active and purposeful learning environment for students. The changes introduced so far to the curriculum are under-pinned by extensive professional development. Further changes to broaden curriculum opportunities are planned but not yet implemented.

Data is integral to school development and is used well to inform whole-school planning, instruction and to monitor and track student progress. The school recognizes that some inconsistencies exist in instructional practice and the way students' progress is recorded and tracked. English and mathematics dominate the work of the school and limit the time available to provide a wider curriculum.

### 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 principal ensures that data is used effectively to track the progress of each student over time and of overall achievement in English language arts and mathematics. A range of data on student performance is collected through formal City and State tests. It is supplemented with teachers' own assessments and analyzed carefully to guide instruction. This gives the school a secure picture of how well individual students, ethnic groups, boys and girls and different performance groups are doing across upper classes and grades and from year to year in tested subjects.

Guided reading test results are used across the school to identify students in need of additional instruction, including special education students, English language learners and those at risk of not reaching grade standards. Information from data analysis is used to group students in classes and those considered in need of the extended-day sessions. Progress made by each student in reading is tracked appropriately. Detailed analyses of grade test papers and overall scores are used to understand where instruction needs to be strengthened in order to raise achievement.

The school compares its performance from year to year against City and State scores effectively, to evaluate the progress of different groups and cohorts of students. The

principal is starting to address her concern that test results are not always immediately available, by putting into place a consistent school system for recording and tracking student 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 well developed.**

Close analysis of assessment data is used to set relevant goals and inform action planning as detailed in the school’s Comprehensive Education Plan. Goals are measurable and focus on ensuring that individual students are making their expected progress. There are clear links between the school’s and students’ end-of-year goals in different aspects of English language arts, including independent reading and comprehension skills, writing and mathematics.

Intervention programs are matched well to students’ needs, so that the special education students and English language learners reach their goals. The pupil progress team and academic intervention team uses data from assessments well to set small-step goals in individualized education plans and organize small group instruction.

The school works closely with parents to share its expectations for their children’s progress and to offer support so they can help them to reach their learning goals. At the start of each school year, formal discussions are held to explain the content of the curriculum their children will be learning. The parents’ handbook gives additional valuable information and curriculum workshops give helpful guidance on the content and methods of instruction. Information is provided in formats and in home languages that parents can understand. Teachers use their tracking records well to share with parents a clear indication of the students’ strengths and areas for improvement.

The students speak articulately and confidently about their education. They are well aware of what is expected of them because most teachers share the learning objectives at the start of each lesson. They like the rubrics because they guide their learning and help them know how to do better. Students, parents and staff are all fully focused on improving achievement and progress in mandated subjects.

**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 principal, in consultation with the newly appointed literacy coach, decided to implement America’s Choice English and Everyday Mathematics schemes to meet the mandated curriculum. The two coaches link the school’s programs for English language arts and mathematics with other subjects and help teachers plan opportunities to practice skills and apply knowledge across the curriculum. In addition, curriculum maps have been introduced for teachers to align the English, mathematics, social studies and science curricula with the City and State standards. Currently there are not enough regular opportunities for students to study arts subjects, including music and art, and sport to give

less academic students chances to excel. The school has an appropriate range of computer technology, but its use is undeveloped in both instruction and learning.

Data is used effectively to differentiate instruction and to group students appropriately according to their learning needs and goals. As a result, most students are engaged in lessons. Teachers are held to account by the goals for student achievement at the end of each year and are expected to use data to demonstrate these have been achieved. Analysis of phonological awareness assessments highlights the particular phonics to be taught in lower grades. In the past two years, the style of instruction has moved from teachers telling students what to do to one where students are more involved and active in lessons. This has increased their interest and motivation to learn. As one student commented, "I'd rather teachers use a rubric than a text book." The literacy coach works collaboratively with each teacher in common preparation time, to establish a consistent approach to planning, to underpin changed methods of working and ensure they are used consistently across classes.

The school uses the specific small school funding effectively to maintain small numbers in classes. The school has secured additional funding to improve its academic intervention service and hire additional staff to give individual and small group support. Effective use is made of curriculum schedules.

Students speak positively about the school. They are confident to express their concerns to adults, reflected when one student said, "I've seen people in class share worries and it got fixed". Parents value the staff for their care for the children and for dealing with their concerns.

The school places a strong emphasis on good attendance. Parents know the systems, including the need to advise the school of reasons for absence straightaway. Students know they are expected to catch up work they have missed in lessons.

**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 school demonstrates its commitment to high expectations for student performance through the cohesive work of the school leaders. The staff is a blend of long-established and recently-appointed members, who work well together as a team of caring professionals. The principal looks for strengths in classroom management, subject knowledge and a positive approach to change in new appointees. Her appointment of a resourceful English coach has been pivotal to curriculum and instructional change.

Professional development is planned and organized in response to outcomes from a range of data and influences all aspects of the school's activity. Needs are identified by a survey of teacher's views, student performance data, scrutiny of student work and lesson observations and used well by the administration to plan imaginative training activities that strengthen the quality of teaching. Models of good practice have been identified in each grade. These teachers support colleagues with clear guidance and advice.

The principal visits classes regularly, giving written feedback to teachers which details specific strengths and areas for improvement. The principal and coaches provide appropriate follow-up support for teachers. 'Lab site' classes and lessons modeled by the

English coach are used to demonstrate good practice to improve instruction. Resources are shared efficiently to maximize their use. Teachers work well collaboratively during common preparation time to discuss what is going well and to plan and evaluate their work. They talk honestly about their practice and are open to advice and new ideas.

The principal is respected for her fair and consistent treatment of all staff. She runs the school calmly and ensures everyone is clear about what is expected. Parents consider the changes in the curriculum and to classrooms contribute to effective learning for their children and they respect and value the principal for delivering her promises.

The school works with agencies where it is considered that involvement will enhance the content of the school curriculum. Grants are used to fund visits to museums, to support the social studies lessons.

**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.**

A structured series of regular team meetings enables the school to keep track of how well its initiatives are helping students to make progress towards their goals. In this way, it evaluates its own effectiveness and whether its action plans are working or whether they require adjustment, especially in English language arts. Programs to improve students' learning are monitored at frequent intervals, to ensure that the input meets the needs of each student. The use of data to show progress in relation to the curriculum map is not yet fully used by all teachers. Where it is being used, it provides an effective tool to review and update instruction plans.

The good use of data to set the goals of the Comprehensive Education Plan and monitoring progress towards those goals is a strength of the school. Both at individual student and whole-school levels, data is used to monitor progress and the administrative team is prepared to make changes to achieve intended outcomes. Staff and administration share concerns at an early stage, so that adaptations can be made. This was illustrated during a meeting to discuss concerns about writing, where all staff spoke of their experience and explored possible ways of overcoming the issue. A particularly close watch is kept on students in most need of support.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: The Huguenot School (PS 005)</b>	∅	✓	+
<b>Quality Score</b>			<b>X</b>

<b>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.</b>	∅	✓	+
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"> <li>• each student, classroom, grade level,</li> </ul>			<b>X</b>
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"> <li>• ethnic groups, English language learners, special education students*</li> </ul>			<b>X</b>
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"> <li>• all other categories of interest to the school*</li> </ul>		<b>X</b>	
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.			<b>X</b>
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>			<b>X</b>

\* 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.

<b>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.</b>	∅	✓	+
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.		<b>X</b>	
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.			<b>X</b>
2.3 Particular attention is given to improving the performance and progress of students in greatest need of improvement.			<b>X</b>
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.			<b>X</b>
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.			<b>X</b>
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>			<b>X</b>

<b>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.</b>	∅	✓	+
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
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>			X
<b>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.</b>	∅	✓	+
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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>			X
<b>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.</b>	∅	✓	+
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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>		X	