



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Bardwell School

Public School 29

**1581 Victory Boulevard
Staten Island
NY 10314**

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Bardwell School provides education for nearly 550 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 53.2% White students, 16.1% Hispanic, 14.3% Black and 16.3% Asian students or from other ethnic heritages. Special education students make up 11.6% of all students and English language learners four percent who speak Spanish, Urdu and Albanian. The school is Title 1 eligible, but the proportion of students eligible is lower than in similar schools and considerably less than in City-wide schools. Attendance is 93.4% which comparable to similar schools and higher than the average for City-wide schools.

The school occupies a well equipped and maintained facility with a large yard, gymnasium and auditorium. The building has recently undergone some refurbishment, further enhancing a quality learning setting which serves a diverse and supportive community.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school fosters a real sense of caring and belonging for all members of the school community.
- Data is very well used to maintain a picture of achievement and guide decision-making.
- High expectations of learning and progress are understood and shared by staff, students and parents.
- The school strives to empower students to become organized, independent learners.
- The school benefits from an extremely strong links with parents.
- The strong collaborative leadership style permeates the school, empowering individuals.
- The school heavy investment in professional development contributes to accelerated learning.
- The school provides a high quality environment in which learning can take place.
- The school fosters a sense of social and moral responsibility through individuals helping each other.

What the school needs to improve

- Enhance procedures and formats to establish a uniform system for recording assessments.
- Make more thorough use of data to plan differentiate work which closely matches the needs of individual students.
- Enhance the utilization of technology during parent workshops.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well-developed school.

The school is held in high regard, not only by parents but also in the wider community. The open-door policy ensures a welcoming and supportive relationship with all members of the community which underpins the learning of all students. High expectations are set and a sense of value is shared by all, as embodied by the school's Bengal tiger mascot, 'A Rare Breed', and the 'Pay It Forward' campaign of unconditional support for others. Consistency of approach is facilitated by the adoption of a cohesive literacy program, strong links with home, and sharing of information to ensure each student is making the best possible progress. Data is used effectively to tailor programs to individual needs, including special education students, high achievers and English language learners. A significant feature that contributes not only to the academic success of students, but also professional support for staff, is the collaborative approach to planning, evaluation and revision of the instructional program at all levels.

Parents are very appreciative that the school embraces them and actively participate in the education of their children. A high level of parental engagement is evident on a personal level as well as through their commitment to the parent teacher association and attendance at events such as workshops run by the very effective parent coordinator.

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 gathers and utilizes a wide range of data, both formally and informally, to apply rigor to instruction and learning. Objective and standards-based tests such as New York State standardized tests and other widely available assessments are effectively supplemented by analysis of student writing, anecdotal records and teacher assessments.

Teachers maintain running records, conference notes, portfolios and assessment binders alongside formal and informal classroom observations to build a comprehensive and in-depth picture of student strengths and to identify weaknesses, both in the short and long term. They use this data effectively to group students and to plan instruction. Assessments are ongoing throughout the year although the binders do not yet have a consistent recording format used by all staff.

The school makes good use of relevant software to facilitate analysis. The principal and cabinet have a thorough understanding of the school's performance relative to similar schools, and of the achievement of groups relative to gender, language and ability. They track progress over time and are able to use data to inform planning, resourcing and decision-making. The school sees further analysis of data as a next step, particularly the more detailed analysis of the performance of English language learners.

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.

A notable feature of this school’s practice is collaboration, from common approaches to assessment to involving students in self-assessment of their progress. The principal’s high expectations of performance from all members of the school community enable the school to set realistic, yet demanding, and measurable, goals for short- and long-term improvement that relate directly to the school’s priorities. Ongoing analysis of both hard and soft data identifies students whose performance requires attention and enables intervention, in consultation with parents, to be implemented quickly and flexibly.

The school has a dedicated staff who readily collaborate, informally as well as during scheduled meetings and grade preps. This enables the expertise of the academic intervention service, speech, special education and other highly skilled teachers and coaches to be used to accelerate the progress of those students most in need of improvement. Rubrics are well used to ensure that students know what is expected of them. They are encouraged to use these to identify their own next steps and are learning to take responsibility for improving their work.

The school has effective protocols in place to interact with parents. Some of these systems are formal, such as regular report cards, as well as informal mechanisms such as telephone calls, notes and personal contact. Parent handbooks for literacy, writing and mathematics, regular parent workshops dedicated to understanding the school’s high expectations, links through the school website and individual student detailed skills analysis have all contributed to improving standards. Parent teacher meetings and workshops provided by the parent coordinator and coaches are designed to allow parents time to understand the instructional approach, offer ideas and ask questions. The Book of the Month initiative is another excellent example of the informal engagement of parents and students in pleasurable activities that resulting in improved skills and engagement. Parents have been involved in workshops to enable them to understand the data that is available to them and to use it to support their child’s progress.

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 decision to adopt America’s Choice school design was based on high expectations for all and a desire to drive instruction through standards-based data and rubrics. It has had a significant positive impact, providing a unified and cohesive methodology through all grades and content areas. Its established rituals and routines help students become better organized and understand the flow of the day and their learning.

Conferencing and other classroom activities based on the America’s Choice school design continually lead students toward critical analysis, reflection and problem-solving, which facilitate good organization and independent learning. The seamless instruction of mathematics and literacy, as well as departmentalization in the upper grades, has also

contributed to the school's success in raising achievement. Common planning time is effective in sharing practice within grades. Data is well used to group students and target instruction appropriately, although not all teachers plan differentiated instruction to meet individual needs, an area identified by the school for further improvement.

Budgeting, scheduling and staffing decisions are driven by the resources required to implement the program. Technology and other media integration used for school projects, research and instruction, has enhanced engagement. Money has been spent on refurbishment of substantial areas, such as the floors and auditorium, and purchase of new furniture. This has enhanced the physical environment in which learning takes place, creating a more welcoming and vibrant atmosphere. Support from the parent teacher association and the community has provided additional classroom resources and transformed the school library into a multimedia resource center.

A high degree of respect for all exists in the school. Staff know students as individuals and respond with sensitivity to learning and personal needs. Students are articulate, feel safe, and trust staff. They are highly engaged in learning and, consequently, attendance is good. There are protocols in place to ensure that attendance is high priority for the entire school community.

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 leadership style in the school is highly collaborative, with the principal involving staff at every stage. She is friendly and approachable, and held in high regard by staff, students and parents. Both she and her assistant principal know the students and staff well, frequently visiting classes on focused walkthroughs to evaluate the impact of the school's action plans.

The school runs smoothly, with clear procedures that are readily followed. Email communication for staff permits swift information exchange. Staff are selected based on their high expectations for student performance as well as personal qualities, and are placed according to strengths. Reflection upon practice is promoted, building on strengths and identifying areas for development, with staff readily given support as required.

Significant investment in professional development is an ongoing feature of the school. Activities respond to student needs and teachers' ability to utilize data to improve instruction and accelerate progress. Professional development from the coaches and from America's Choice ensures that all mini-lessons and lessons are standards-based and focused on data. Classroom inter-visitation is also encouraged. The impact of professional development is measured through scrutinizing test results and also through classroom observation.

Collaborative meetings, such as cabinet, instructional team and grade preparation meetings, are regularly scheduled and professionally supportive. Planning and revision, based on data, takes place in teams. The school places high emphasis on data analysis to identify needs and on realistic planning for future improvement based on data collection.

Public School 29 fosters relationships with neighboring community organizations, providing students with enriching experiences as well as with financial support. These relations, in turn, impact upon measurable results and help produce independent and caring citizens.

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 school is constantly critical of itself and its practices, examining objectively measurable data to fine-tune or revise practice. High achievement for each student, based on detailed analysis of strengths and weaknesses, is the foundation upon which the school's success lies. Whole-school planning involves a range of constituencies, including students, who were involved in selecting the school's mascot and colors. These activities are an indication of the strong sense of pride within the school.

Staff continue to reflect and refine practice to build upon the excellent foundations already laid. As an example of these refinements, the school implemented the Wilson Foundations program in kindergarten and first grade just over a year ago to build phonemic awareness and a strong phonics base. Standardized test data has demonstrated an increase in student performance since the introduction of the Everyday Mathematics program. Professional development in the use of technology has already been incorporated into lessons and routines within all content areas, and the school plans to extend the use of technology to encourage deeper analysis of data.

Plans and interventions include frequent interim goals and diagnostic assessments. Baseline assessments are revisited and staff are flexible and responsive on an individual level. At collaborative meetings, the experienced and skilled staff make comparisons of progress across various groupings to inform short and long-term planning. Goals are modified when it is objectively demonstrated that revision is required. The collaboration of lead teachers of each grade allows each member to gain clear and concise understanding of the foundations that have been laid in the prior grade.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The Bardwell School (PS29)	∅	✓	+
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