



**NYCDOE**

**Quality Review: Final Report**

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



# **Quality Review Report**

**John C Drumgoole School**

**Public School 036**

**255 Ionia Avenue  
Staten Island  
NY 10312**

**Principal: Barbara Bellafatto**

**Dates of review: January 3 - 5, 2007**

**Reviewer: Candido DeJesus**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Public School 36 is an elementary school with grades kindergarten through 5, located in Staten Island. It is a mid-sized school with a population of 945 pupils. Ten percent are special education students and only 2% are English language learners. The ethnic makeup of the students is 90% White, 5% Hispanic, 1% Black and 4% Asian. Attendance is 94% which is equal to that of similar schools and slightly higher than City schools. The school does not receive Title 1 funding.

The school leadership consists of a new principal appointed just under a year ago and two veteran assistant principals. The principal took over a fairly successful school with a traditional staff and school culture. The school is undergoing a number of changes along with the change in administration. The physical plant consists of a main building and an annex which houses the second grade.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The new principal provides excellent leadership and has effectively shared her vision with an energized school community.
- The school supports its youngest learners with a comprehensive pre-kindergarten program that demonstrates differentiated instruction.
- New accountability systems based on the use of student data to drive plans and goals for academic achievement have been successfully implemented.
- High expectations of students and parents create mutual partnerships which have a positive impact on student learning.
- Professional training is effective and valued as evidenced by the commitment of staff to attend professional development off site and on site.
- The strategies used for planning and goal-setting are efficient and sharp as a consequence of stronger levels of collaboration.
- Team work is strong and is having a positive effect on school development.
- There is a strong parent involvement at all levels of school life.

### What the school needs to improve

- Analyze existing data to ensure that all groups in the school are doing equally well.
- Ensure that teachers in all grades demonstrate investment in the school's plans and goals for improving student performance and progress.
- Build on the successful implementation of balanced literacy by offering professional development in guided reading.
- Develop accountability protocols to make consistent use of student data to plan differentiated work systematically.
- Build on existing good practice in pre-kindergarten to develop child-centered instruction to further motivate and engage students.

## Part 3: Main findings

### Overall Evaluation

#### **This is a proficient school.**

The principal's biggest challenge has been moving the entire school community to a child-centered philosophy from the traditional teacher-centered model. She has introduced a number of new accountability systems. Teachers are beginning to use student data more effectively to differentiate instruction for students in need, although this remains an important area for development.

Common planning time facilitates professional development in-house. Teachers are becoming more accustomed to planning together during formal and informal meetings. Instructional walk-throughs are well focused, occur frequently and provide positive feedback to teachers, allowing for changes to occur. This focus on professional development is improving students' experiences at school and the quality of their learning. Public School 36 has been identified as a "gap closing school" for special education students. Special education students are improving in academics and approaching achievement levels equal to students in mainstream classes. Parents are enthusiastic in their support of the school.

### How well the school meets New York City's evaluation criteria

#### **Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor student progress over time.**

##### **This area of the school's work is proficient.**

The principal collects and uses data efficiently. She uses many different measures to make comparisons about the performance and progress of students across grades, classrooms and small groups. Data is gathered and used by teachers to write progress reports for parents. Teachers and parents are able to view a child's areas of strengths and weaknesses. Each teacher maintains a "Monitoring for Results" folder to document students' progress in terms of reading levels. Data is well organized in separate binders for separate subject areas and frequently examined to make decisions the grouping of students for instruction as well as to drive the types of teaching strategies used to improve achievement. When students are identified through this process as not demonstrating enough progress, teachers and administrators meet to plan specific interventions to meet individual students' needs.

Checkpoints are established by the administration throughout the year in order to provide a constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of all categories of interest to the school. The "Monitoring for Results" folders are collected and reviewed by the administration each month. Interim assessments such as the Princeton Review are administered three times a year. The data derived from the reports are used to provide an ongoing picture of the progress of students. Periodic monitoring of students' progress also includes running records, teacher-student conference notes, results arising from an examination of readers/writers notebooks and writing portfolios. This school-generated data is often gathered daily. The staff have become very competent at consistently gathering data and using it to compare class by class and grade by grade. However, they

need more practice at making comparisons between similar schools and the school's own past performance, as well as the relative achievement of ethnic groups. This aspect is just proficient.

**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 proficient.**

The principal is developing consistency in the gathering of data and its use to monitor student progress, although not all teachers fully recognize the benefits for student achievement of goal-setting in this way. The staff are becoming proficient at analyzing the information to plan lessons and adjust strategies. Teachers are clear about the strengths and areas of improvement for their students. They are adept at changing their instructional strategies and using the school resources to better meet the goals for student outcomes. There are now higher expectations conveyed to students and parents based on actual short-term and long-term data collected and analyzed by the teachers. Parents are strongly encouraged to provide any additional information that may be pertinent to the progress of their child.

Timeframes are now well established to measure the success of interim and long-term goals for improvement. This information has become an important tool to plan professional development, interventions, and modification of teaching strategies. There is evidence of the writing workshop model in most classrooms. Literacy teachers have logs recording information collected by conferring with students individually to assess reading and writing levels.

A portfolio team made up of teachers meets monthly to address the procedures and strategies needed to standardize the way teachers use rubrics to examine students' writing work. The data they gather streamlines teachers' work and drives improvement efforts. Teachers are accountable for submitting portfolio checklists for literacy and mathematics to administrators in a timely fashion. They then collaborate successfully to provide or modify interventions for students in need. Although data is used to plan units of study, there is less use of data to plan differentiated learning for individuals and small groups.

**Quality Statement 3 – Align Instruction: The school aligns its instructional activity and resources, and student engagement around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.**

**This area of the school's work is proficient.**

This is an exempt school, and therefore does not have to follow the mandated curriculum. Data is used to decide on school-wide curriculum initiatives. For example, Everyday Mathematics has been implemented successfully in kindergarten through grade 3 and will continue to move into the fourth and fifth grade. This program is also used in self-contained and collaborative team teaching classes. The staff are developing systematic approaches to looking at student work and collaboratively constructing reading and writing calendars that introduce timeframes and deadlines. Units of study in writing are being introduced, based on student writing samples collected and reviewed last spring. Classroom teachers develop reading and writing calendars for yearly pacing in all grades.

Public School 36 has a strong mainstreaming component threading throughout. In collaborative team teaching classes, the ratio of adults to students allows smaller group instruction and some individualization. This personalized attention and an expansion of enrichment activities at the school have made instruction more engaging for students. However, the school recognizes that this practice has not yet been adopted in general education classes. Teachers are beginning to collect data to identify areas of need and differentiate instruction for all students, although not all teachers are yet proficient at this work. The school is aware that the analysis of student work to determine the next steps for students is as yet not consistent enough. Teachers have not yet fully adopted the practice of guided reading in small groups to further improve differentiation of instruction.

Most teachers have adopted the workshop model. Where this occurs, students are engaged and learning is effective. However, much teaching is still whole-class based and teacher-directed. A child-centered approach to instruction is most evident in the instructional practices and strategies observed in the pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classes where students engage in self-directed activities, but this is not yet common practice across the higher grades.

The principal has begun to put in place protocols holding teachers accountable for using data to develop their learning objectives for their students. This is now an important focus used to rate teachers. Teachers that are struggling are required to undertake professional development in their areas of weaknesses.

Budgeting and staffing decisions are driven by the school's plans for accelerating learning, although there is a need for more money to be allocated for additional interventions and personnel. Scheduling decisions are positively affected by the new emphasis on data and intervention services. Several part-time teachers have been hired recently to provide additional intervention time for students in need.

There is a culture of mutual respect, and students are confident to approach adults if they need help. Public School 36 has an attendance rate of 94%, higher than the City-wide rate and about equal to the rate for similar schools. Good procedures are in place to maintain good attendance, from keeping updated records to calling in parents for conferences.

**Quality Statement 4 - Build and Align Capacity: The development of instructional leadership, staff, and capacity are aligned around the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.**

**This area of the school's work is proficient.**

There are effective procedures in place for appointing staff. An interview team of administrators and teachers intensely review a candidate's credentials and measure if the individual can use data effectively, use period assessments and revise plans and methods. Professional development is based on whole-school and individual priorities. On-site professional development is often the product of teachers sharing teaching as observed during walk-throughs. In other circumstances, teachers model their best practices for other teachers and become buddy teachers to those requiring support. Special attention is allotted to new teachers in the form of new teacher workshops, assigning of mentors and observation of effective teachers. The principal and two assistant principals visit classes on a daily basis to check for quality classroom practices and to make sure children are engaged in learning. Model classrooms are being identified, inter-visitations occur off-site

and on-site, buddy teachers are being assigned, and professional development centers/conference rooms are being established, all of which is improving students' experiences at school and the quality of their learning.

Teamwork is a strength of the school. Teachers frequently meet during common preparation times, during lunch and after school to engage in planning and professional development. During such meetings teachers evaluate their work and student results, so that successful aspects of their work can be built upon and improvements planned for weaker areas.

The principal, although fairly new, is respected as a reformer and has introduced a number of positive changes to procedures at the school. A number of areas where she has made changes have already begun to effect improvement in student performance, such as in the pre-kindergarten. Children are happy and engaged in their learning activities. The school runs smoothly and effectively. Its two buildings are clean, safe and orderly. Support services are organized proficiently around the stated academic goals of the school. Outside partnerships also support the academic and youth development goals established for students. The staff has become adept at aligning these organizations' activities with the school's plans for accelerated learning.

**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 proficient.**

The administration demonstrates that it is practiced at making comparisons across classes and grades to target areas of needs for academic achievement. There are now checkpoints during the school year that include interim goals and diagnostic assessments of student progress. The administration, in consultation with teachers, reviews whether plans are being effectively implemented and whether targets for student outcomes are being met. Plans and goals are now modified immediately instead of waiting to the end of the school term. This has been proven important especially when examination of these periodic assessments demonstrate that a student needs additional help.

Academic intervention services are monitored on a six-weekly cycle in order to realign practices or redirect resources in order to improve student academic and social outcomes. Changes are then made to interventions and strategies that more closely match the needs of students. Teachers are noticing improved outcomes for students in need since they are more closely monitored for progress. Students at this school score above the City rate in standardized test scores but just below similar schools. Using student data comprehensively is providing the school a more authentic method of assessing their students and efficiently addressing their academic needs.

In addition, committees have regularly scheduled meeting times to gather additional data from running records, conferring notes and portfolio checklists generated by the school. The administrators collect protocols and document these processes a number of times during the school year. The use of these new accountability systems allows both administrators and teachers to become more agile at the realignment of practices and resources to improve student achievement.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: John C. Drumgoole School (PS 36)</b>	∅	✓	+
<b>Quality Score</b>		X	

<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>			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"> <li>• ethnic groups, English Language Learners, special education students*</li> </ul>		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"> <li>• all other categories of interest to the school*</li> </ul>		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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>		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.

<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.		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		
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>		X	

<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>	∅	✓	+
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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>			
<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>			
<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	