



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

John Thompson School

Public School 52

**450 Buel Avenue
Staten Island
NY 10305**

Principal: Evelyn Mastroianni

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Reviewer: Georgie Beasley

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

This elementary school has about 636 students enrolled from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school's population is made up of 74% White students, 15% Hispanic students, 8% Asian students, and 4% Black and Native American students. Ten percent of students are English language learners, a slightly smaller proportion than found in similar schools. At 21%, there are many more special education students than typically found in schools of the same type. Those with more specific needs are taught in five self-contained classes, although some have good opportunity to work with students in other classes when appropriate. The school receives Title 1 funding. The percentage of eligible students matches that of similar schools but is much lower than the average for City-wide schools. At 94%, attendance is about the same as that of similar and City-wide schools.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school is a place where students are valued and all staff are dedicated to do the very best for them.
- The principal gives very clear leadership and emphasizes what is most important in the school's work.
- The administration gives very clear guidance on how to improve instruction and the curriculum, and so these aspects are well developed.
- The needs of special education students are met particularly effectively.
- Teamwork is evident in everything the school does.
- A considerable range of data is collected and used well to differentiate instruction and so help students move to the next level.
- The school has high expectations of students' personal and academic development.
- Students behave very well, are polite and have positive attitudes towards school.
- Learning is fun and engages students' interests.
- Strong partnerships with parents and support services build good levels of support for students' learning.

What the school needs to improve

- Separate the content and skills identified on the curriculum maps to give all teachers clearer guidance as to what is to be taught when.
- Analyze data by gender and use the information to determine whether boys can do better in English and girls in mathematics.
- Continue to find additional ways to organize regular professional development opportunities.
- Make goals more specifically linked to each grade's potential achievement.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well-developed school.

The school is a lively and positive place where students, staff and parents are welcomed as learners. Students' work is everywhere, and is displayed with care to celebrate their achievements and show that their contribution is valued. The school is always looking for ways to help students succeed, by building their confidence to enable them to do well. All members of staff treat the students positively and with respect and so the students treat each other in the same way. This creates the warm family feel in the school.

The principal is highly visible and is well known to everyone as she walks around the school. She knows each student by name and this helps them to understand that they matter and that they are an important part of the school. She emphasizes what matters most and this enables staff to get on with the most important job first, that of raising students' achievement. The administration gives clear leadership on how to improve student performance and creates a passionate drive for all students to do well. Staff work very well together. They share ideas and support each other's work during joint planning meetings and through the pupil progress team meetings, held for every grade each month. There is a clear focus on making sure instruction meets the needs of all students so they all do as well as they can.

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

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

This area of the school's work is well developed.

The school collects an extensive range of test data, as well as its own assessment data which provides very good information about what individual students are able to do in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers constantly update the information collected so they have an objective and current view of students' progress in their classes. Information is shared at grade meetings so that performance can be compared and discussions focused on how one teacher can help another to ensure students do even better. The school uses this information alongside a careful analysis of the school's test results in English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies to gain an accurate understanding of student performance in all content areas. The school puts particular focus on collecting and evaluating the assessment data of special education students and English language learners. This enables suitable programs to be implemented immediately to support and accelerate progress in equal measure.

The school analyzes its data extremely carefully and so identifies which students in each class and in every grade need support or enrichment to help them meet or exceed the standards in tested subjects. This ensures individual students' performance is monitored closely and enables the school to compare how well students are doing in every class and grade. The school compares its overall performance with similar schools and against its own past performance to make sure it is improving year by year. The school looks at the

performance of ethnic groupings closely, and therefore has an accurate view of students' performance. While it recognizes that in many grades girls perform better in English language arts and boys in mathematics, it has not investigated the data closely. It does not therefore have a clear enough view why this is the case.

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.

All members of staff work closely together to identify goals for student performance. These are recorded on detailed sheets which enable individual teachers to see quickly how each individual student is progressing towards their goals. The school analyzes data to identify which aspects of the school's work require improvement and findings are transferred to action points in its Comprehensive Education Plan. Particular attention is given to special education students, some of whom require specialist support and guidance. Action plans for improvement detail developments for all aspects and subjects of the school's work.

The school sets high expectations for its students, both personally and academically. Parents are given good opportunities to receive and communicate information about their children's progress, both formally at open school nights and informally at other times. They value being able to pop in at any time to talk through concerns and receive feedback about how well their children are doing. Parents play a full part in helping the school evaluate its programs, and the information they give helps the school revise plans and programs if and when required. Goals and agreed programs for improving students' progress are shared and this helps parents help their children effectively at home. All members of staff are clearly committed to ensuring all students do as well as they can and are constantly striving to help them improve even more. Progress is checked regularly and questions are asked if any student is at risk of slipping back and failing to achieve their goals. As a result, standards have shown an annual increase over several years.

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.

Curriculum maps clearly set out the knowledge and skills students will learn for all subjects and in every grade and enable the school to ensure that chosen programs align with the mandated curriculum. Information gained from an in-depth analysis of data is used to adapt the curriculum maps. This is then shared with teachers who use it to plan instruction which successfully fills the gaps in students' knowledge, skills and understanding. In grade 5 and in English, the knowledge and skills are recorded separately on the maps and this enables teachers to see quickly what is to be taught and when. In some grades and subjects, the knowledge and skills are mixed together and so it is more difficult for teachers new to the school to synthesize the information quickly. The skills in English language arts and mathematics are further defined in small steps on separate sheets so that teachers can plan activities that will develop students' skills at the right level. Some

subjects link learning effectively, for example using science and social studies topics as a context for writing and by representing social ideas through art.

Teachers take full responsibility for checking the progress of each student in their class and so know both their personal and academic needs exceptionally well. They use the full range of data to plan learning at different levels and to organize groupings based on the skills, knowledge and understanding that different students need to learn and develop next. Students are motivated by the lively and interesting teaching observed throughout the school. They behave very well in class, in the lunch room and when moving about the school. They rise to the school's high expectations for their conduct, not because they have to, but because they want to.

Teachers acknowledge the way budget decisions support their work, ensuring resources are made available when new programs are introduced. Time is used effectively during the day providing staff with good opportunities to meet to share ideas and plan together. The day is organized well so students have access to the full range of instructional programs, with older students learning to play an instrument and taking part in band and chorus. A good number of paraprofessionals support special education students admirably, helping when necessary and knowing when to stand back to let students do things independently.

Attendance is effectively addressed by the school. Good attendance is rewarded and celebrated and parents acknowledge that if procedures for reporting absence are not followed then 'you get the phone call.'

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.

Staff are selected for their dedication and commitment to do the very best for students in their classes and the ability to use data to plan suitable learning programs. As a result, teachers work together effectively to evaluate how well students are doing in their classes within the same grade. They talk to each other openly about how they can improve instruction even more and develop and revise plans accordingly. A suitable range of professional development activities are planned and organized by the school. These are closely linked to the needs of individual teachers, to the school's needs and to the identified needs of students arising from data analysis. Teachers share the ideas they gain from attending workshops off site with other teachers so they all benefit from their attendance. Teachers would welcome more regular opportunities to build on skills and knowledge learned at workshops when they return to school.

The principal, assistant principal and coaches regularly visit classes. They observe instruction, and check how effectively new resources are being used, whether agreed programs are being taught effectively and whether training has improved particular aspects of teachers' work. Teachers regularly watch each other teach and this helps them to gather additional ideas to improve their own practice. Coaches provide good training by giving model lessons for teachers to observe, especially when new programs are being introduced. A considerable number of meetings enable all staff to discuss every student's needs at some point and identify whether further support or extension programs are required. Open and honest evaluations on how effectively class programs and instruction

are helping individual students to make good progress and also lead to adjustments in programs and goals.

The principal is well respected by staff, students and parents and all acknowledge that she 'is always one step ahead'. She has a very clear knowledge of the school's successes and has set up systems, along with her administration team, that enable the school to run smoothly. There is a strong focus on student achievement and success. The school works closely with parents and support services to help it achieve its goals. Workshops for parents deal with curriculum issues relating to each grade. This makes information and sharing of ideas relevant and supports parents in helping their children with learning at home.

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 administration team, school leadership team, instructional team, pupil progress team, and attendance committee, all have a hand in putting together the Comprehensive Education Plan. They meet regularly to review how well the school is doing against its long-term and interim goals in response to data about student performance. Every team is given a section of the plan to review, evaluate and use the information to adjust goals as necessary. All parties are responsible for identifying goals for the following year based on the school's most recent reviews and information of data analysis.

The school's performance goals in its Comprehensive Education Plan are closely linked to student performance in all subjects. The school's goals identify an expected increase on the previous year's performance. While goals are aspirational, they are not linked directly enough to the standards students are expected to reach at the end of each year. It is therefore difficult to ascertain whether the goals are set too high or indeed whether they could be set even higher in some years for some grades.

The effectiveness of interventions for special education students is particularly well monitored, and is set within a comprehensive system for monitoring the progress and performance of all students. Close evaluation of assessment data leads to immediate changes in programs and interventions should the school note that progress is not as good as expected. The committee structure for reviewing all aspects of the school's work ensures that the needs of all the students are evaluated and programs identified to further meet theirs and the school's goals.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: John Thompson (PS 052)	∅	✓	+
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