



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Henry M Boehm Public School

Public School 55

**54 Osborne Street
Staten Island
NY 10312**

Principal: Kathleen Schultz

Dates of review: December 13 – 14, 2006

Reviewer: Derek Lever

Content of the report

Part 1: The School Context

Information about the school

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

What the school needs to improve

Part 3: Main Findings

Overall evaluation

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

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Henry M Boehm Public School is located in Staten Island. It has 672 students from kindergarten through grade 5. White students comprise 87% of the total population. Of the remainder, some 6% are Hispanic and 4% Asian. The English language learners comprise only just over 1% of the school's enrolment. Special education students make up approximately 10% of all students. The school does not receive Title 1 funding.

It is an oversubscribed school although the number of students varies across the grades. Student stability is high. An attendance rate of 96% exceeds the City and similar school figures.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal, her assistant principal and cabinet provide inspirational leadership.
- Good quality instruction holds students interest and promotes positive attitudes to learning.
- Strong relationships promote a family-like atmosphere.
- All members of staff are totally committed to all students.
- The school is an extremely stimulating learning environment.
- There is great support for and from parents in a strong partnership.
- A wide range of curricular and extracurricular programs enhance opportunities for students to learn, express themselves and be engaged.

What the school needs to improve

- Further extend technology to widen opportunities for students to learn, and for staff to extend their repertoire of skills.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well-developed school.

The high quality of teaching, the stimulating and well-maintained learning environments and the family-like atmosphere of collaboration, calm and care are just some of the features that contribute to the school's effectiveness. The school enjoys a well-deserved good reputation. The principal is well respected, partly because of her years in the position, but also due to her uncompromising quest for excellence. She is ably supported by her relatively new assistant principal and her cabinet. There is little teacher mobility and many staff are experienced. This combination of stability and experience contributes to continuity.

There is no complacency. The principal's vision and expectations are communicated clearly and unambiguously to her staff, who respond with total support. Staff know their students well and constantly add to their knowledge by reference to detailed analysis of externally provided data, but mainly by their daily assessment of each student's need and achievement. Their repertoire of skills would be further increased by additional use of technology. The school is aware of this and is already seeking ways to address. The issue

Parents are fully involved in the life and work of the school. They provide superb support. Everyone matters here. The challenge for the school is not just to sustain what they do, but to seek further improvement.

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.

This is a data-rich school. All kinds of data, both externally provided and school-generated, are thoroughly analyzed and the outcomes of a well-developed process are used in many ways. These include the identification of performance and progress of individual students and groups of students, judgments concerning trends over time and comparisons of results against similar schools. Detailed analysis also provides the mechanism to set goals and 'bottom lines', agree objectives and determine how grades are formed and re-formed.

The principal produces an accurate executive summary early in each new school year, based on her own knowledge of what the data is telling, and the feedback she receives from staff, students and parents. This stimulates discussion with senior colleagues and enables her to allocate resources exactly where they will have the greatest benefit. The school is very successful in developing qualitative assessments for its students and teams meet regularly to evaluate the outcomes of intervention and extension programs for individuals. Parents are involved at all stages and this further cements home-school relationships, with the students benefiting greatly.

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.

Staff work in teams and as a team. They are reflective and self-critical, always on the lookout for improvement. Teachers plan together in true collegiate style. They seek information from each other, parents and students to gain the complete picture of what they have achieved and what they hope and intend to achieve. Everyone is willing to say what they believe and are ready both to listen and, if appropriate, change stance. Debate is open and honest. The school has an impressive set of organizational structures that encourage collaborative working.

Staff devote considerable time to planning what is best for students at all performance levels. Records show that progress is swift. Targets are sharp and used to build on what students know, understand and can do. Much of what staff do takes place outside school time and this is to their credit.

Planning at individual student level is a key strength and enables staff to match activities closely and accurately to students' needs. Students are made aware of what is expected of them and can consult with their peer partners to evaluate their progress and/or seek guidance and support. Older students help younger ones, for example when grade 5 students give up their lunchtime to work one-on-one with kindergarten children.

School leaders are assiduous in checking on the progress of students and the academic intervention service team work closely with colleagues to ensure that any student they are concerned about receives immediate, planned and appropriate support. Students with particular talents are constantly challenged and work for them extends their knowledge, skills and understanding. The school rightly celebrates the above average number of its students who achieve or exceed grade levels 3 and 4. However, all staff take equal pride in seeing the progress of all their students. Special education students often work side by side with general education classmates and have great support from teachers, parents, including those trained as learning leaders, paraprofessionals and fellow students.

Orientation and other meetings for parents are used to discuss goals and expectations and the outcomes are revisited regularly so that the school always has up-to-date knowledge of students' progress. Staff rely on parental support but they do not take it for granted nor treat it lightly.

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.

Although the school could have been exempted from the mandated curriculum, it chose to adopt this for reading and mathematics. However, the school also extends its curricular provision by selecting programs that individually and collectively develop the whole child. Its decisions are based on a comprehensive analysis of its own and externally available data and its knowledge of the students. With the addition of an extensive range of extracurricular provision, the school offers a wealth of opportunities and experiences for all students. Priorities, for example vocabulary development in English language arts and problem-solving in mathematics, are addressed across the curriculum.

All learning programs have a rightful place in the curriculum and although literacy and mathematics are high priorities, other subject areas are given adequate time to ensure students receive a balanced diet of learning opportunities. Units of work provide opportunities to use basic skills across subject and curriculum areas. Teachers' planning for cross-curricular working shows evidence of enrichment possibilities, differentiated activities, inclusive involvement, interim and exit assessment and professional development. Students achieve well because the work engages them. Additional provision of technology hardware, including interactive smart boards for example, would add to students' learning opportunities.

The data analysis and data generation process increases teachers' knowledge of their students' needs and they adapt their styles accordingly. When they plan their teaching programs, they show flair and imagination. They are confident and have high expectations. They build in progress points to check that students are learning at the rate they should. All of these are factors in high academic performance that is sustained year on year. Teachers and those with whom they work know how students learn and, led by the principal's example and drive, are neither complacent nor satisfied. There is an appropriate match between work planned and students' needs, and as a result, students make good progress.

Budgeting, scheduling and staffing decisions all follow from data analysis, and are firmly based on students' needs. Decision-making is democratic although the principal maintains the right to have the final say if necessary.

Social and personal development is important in this school and there are well-developed structures for supporting it. Students enjoy school and are confident that teachers are there to help them whenever they need it. Lateness is negligible and attendance is higher than rates of similar and all City schools and this is another indication of the value placed on the school by students and parents.

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 staff is a stable one, with a number of relatively long-serving staff. However, recent movement has allowed for some new hirings. Staff are recruited with clear criteria and a thorough process, in order to fit in with the culture of the school.

Professional development is seen as key in the continued drive to raise achievement even further. Teachers are willing to learn from each other and accept that the program of classroom observation is designed to celebrate what is effective and work on what is less so. Much professional development comes from sharing expertise internally. This includes peer support, assessment strategies, observations, one-on-one conferences, inter-visitations, attendance at workshops and meetings, and even informal conversations. The common focus is to enable teachers to measure how what they do influences the quality of learning for students. Staff develop well, partly as a result of the trust that is placed in them to try new ideas and evaluate the impact.

The school runs well and is a vibrant place. Change is managed well. Meetings are effectively led. There are some areas in curriculum development, classroom organization

and assessment models that are fixed and adherence to them ensures consistency. However, there is ample opportunity for individual and team creativity.

There are productive partnerships with a range of community-based organizations, some of which provide after-school programs and activities, as well as counseling and other services for at-risk students. It also works well with higher education institutions, and develops parents and other volunteers, including as Learning Leaders.

Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has built-in structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year, recognizing weaknesses in its improvement plans and teaching practices, and flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerated learning.

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

The Comprehensive Education Plan is produced with the involvement of a range of constituents including parents and staff surveys. It provides a sharp analysis of data to identify where gains have been made and which groups of students need to be targeted to accelerate their progress. Curricular targets are identified as are assessment opportunities. The plan is regularly reviewed and amended when necessary. Teachers review curriculum maps in relation to the goals in the Comprehensive Education Plan, again, making adjustments when necessary.

One of the significant strengths of the school lies in the flexibility with which it realigns the curriculum and the way learning is organized to respond to the identified needs of students at individual level. Summative and formative assessments are used well. The school knows itself and is able to provide a stimulating and enriched curriculum to get the best out of everyone. School leaders are quick to spot when things are not going smoothly and make mid-course adjustments in the light of objective evidence. Teachers are encouraged to do exactly the same within their class or grade and this ensures the pace of learning is sustained at a high rate.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Henry M Boehm School [PS 055]	∅	✓	+
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

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