



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Senator John D. Calandra School

Public School 14

3041 Bruckner Blvd

Bronx

NY 10461

Principal: A. Robert Guzzio

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Senator John D Calandra School caters for the needs of 536 students from kindergarten to grade 5. Its distinctive philosophy 'We have a kinder way to be all that we can be' underpins all aspects of the school.

Approximately thirty-four percent of the students are White, 7% are Black, 53% Hispanic and 6% Asian or others. This is an atypical mix as compared to New York City schools. The percentage of White students is higher than City averages, that of Black students is lower and the percentage of Hispanic students is slightly higher than City averages. The proportion of English language learners is 6% and 20% of students are special education students. The school does not receive Title 1 funding. The schools attendance is 93.6% which is slightly higher than City averages.

This is an Empowerment School. Empowerment Schools have more flexibility to make key decisions and control the resources for their school community. Empowerment Schools are free to develop or purchase professional development services, choose which schools to affiliate with, and benefit from reduced reporting and paperwork requirements.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school has many sources of available data and is using Developmental Reading Assessment very effectively to understand the performance and progress of each student and groups of students.
- Students and staff put the school's philosophy a 'kinder way' into practice and each day work together to make sure there is a safe learning environment.
- The principal effectively leads the staff, who work collaboratively to support the students on their learning journey.
- All faculty work as a team, committed to setting high expectations for all students and improving their performance and progress.
- The heterogeneous organization of the school effectively supports all students who make good progress.
- Students with the greatest need are very well supported and as a result make good progress.
- The school is inclusive and support staff, parents and community make great contributions to the students' success.
- The diverse curriculum effectively supports students' needs and results in student engagement.
- The professional resource center effectively supports teachers in their instruction delivery and professional development.
- Communication with parents is very effective and they are aware of what their students need to do to improve.

What the school needs to improve

- Further develop the use of data to set objectively measurable goals, including time frames to meet the goals.
- Further develop the planning process related to the refinement of the Comprehensive Education Plan.
- Further develop informal teacher observations to support teacher instruction.
- Further develop the sharing of classroom practice between teachers.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school with well-developed features.

Children and adults enjoy being at the Senator John D. Calandra School. On entering the school you see the school's philosophy: 'We have a kinder way to be all that we can be'. Staff and students follow this philosophy by working in a caring and collaborative manner. Support staff play a very important part in the students' educational journey. For example, the security officer and the parent coordinator greet families upon their arrival at school, listen to problems and see if they can be solved before the start of the school day.

Students are able to explain the philosophy and in classrooms they support each other and listen carefully to each other's opinions. Teachers talk with enthusiasm about the school and their love of working together. This leads to effective academic and personal care of students. The six aspects of the 'kinder way', which are trustworthiness, fairness, caring, respect, responsibility and good citizenship, are always put into practice.

Students are seen as individuals and one of the goals of the school is to find what teachers need to learn and how their practice can be improved to improve students' learning and performance. Developmental Reading Assessment has recently been introduced. This gives staff the tools to access student data in real time. The powerfulness of the program is beginning to be understood and teachers are using the information to refine and differentiate instruction. The school nurtures the whole child and also monitors social and behavioral growth.

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 has always used data to understand individual student performance, including the performance of different ethnic groups, English language learners and special education students. The school has been recognized as a New York State high scoring gap closing school.

Being an empowerment school has provided the opportunity to alter and refine assessment plans and data collecting instruments. Developmental Reading Assessment and Kaplan Achievement Planner are now being used and teachers are able to access student data on-line only a few hours after input. All teachers' understanding of the assessment tools is developing and is allowing faculty to further segregate data to look at other categories of interest to the school. Teachers see the clear link between understanding the data and using it to inform conferencing and to differentiate instruction.

The school compares its progress over time and with other schools and is proud of its improving trends. Teachers are using assessment binders to record student progress and these will be passed to the next teacher when students move grades.

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 school sets clear goals in the Comprehensive Education Plan. For example the professional development committee and the senior leadership team continually look at school data and programs to determine what is succeeding and how this can be sustained and improved. The school data shows many upward trends in student performance. However, the plans do not include objectively measurable goals and timeframes to meet the goals.

The communication systems within the school are very effective. The principal and assistant principal attend monthly grade level meetings where great emphasis is placed on the performance and progress of each student and classroom. Comparisons in progress of similar students and groups of students is developing, using the information from the periodic assessments. Teachers have common planning time and they effectively support each other and share materials.

Attention is given to improving the performance of all students. Students in the greatest need of improvement are very well supported, for example through the bi-monthly special education team meeting where colleagues work collaboratively to understand student need. The school psychologist and the guidance counselor support teachers and every six weeks students’ progress is reassessed.

High expectations are conveyed to students, parents and caregivers. Students speak enthusiastically about their progress and are able to explain what they need to do to perform even better. Special education students spoke enthusiastically about new words they had learned to read and practiced their reading together to understand more. Parents are well informed and are integral to the planning process. The parent coordinator channels parent input through a formal questionnaire and informal discussions.

The goal and planning process is being refined, involving all members of the school community, to ensure that setting goals and measurable targets drives the activities of all members.

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 school has implemented many additional programs based on the review of school data to enrich the mandated curriculum and improve student engagement and progress. Students speak positively about these activities and particularly mention physical education as a place where their program effectively links with the ‘kinder way’. The focused mandated support program for students in greatest need of improvement is very effective and student progress is good. The use of Developmental Reading Assessment and Kaplan on-line are also helping teachers in curriculum alignment. For example, from

the Developmental Reading Assessment outcomes comprehension was identified as a problem. Instruction is now being adapted to take account of this.

There are many examples of good differentiated practice and this is becoming more consistent. The principal, assistant principal and the lead teacher are very supportive of teachers and work collaboratively to help them with their planning based on student need.

Budgeting and staffing decisions are made based on the needs revealed by student data. The school has used its budget effectively to reduce class sizes and improve learning outcomes while maintaining its heterogeneous organization.

Students enjoy school and develop positive relationships with staff. As a result all students feel supported and have a member of staff they can trust.

Students' attendance is good and processes are in place to address absence. Parents speak very positively about the support they get and the principal and assistant principal are always available to suggest solutions to problems.

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 selection of staff is based on the school's philosophy where the interests of the students come first. Teachers must be flexible and willing to share and use data to inform instruction.

Professional development is one of the key goals in the Comprehensive Education Plan. All teachers speak very positively of the support they receive from consultants. Self and peer evaluation is developing through, for example, visits to each other's classrooms. The professional development and continuous improvement committee work very effectively. There are clear lines of communication between the teachers and the committee. One good example of this was the discussions about a recent staff retreat where a group of teachers and administration worked on the refinement of the assessment calendar. This was then shared with all the committee who then communicated the information to grade level meetings. The school appreciates, however, that planning for staff development is not as good as it should be because there are no targets and goals that can be directly related to improved student outcomes.

The principal and assistant principal operate an open door policy and are always available. While they make the requisite formal observations, they are conscious of the need to manage their time more effectively and increase the range of informal teacher observations to support teacher instruction.

Teachers work very effectively in teams and plans are revised immediately when the data shows there is a need. The teacher assessment binders and conferencing notes are used at grade level meetings to inform decisions.

The principal is very well respected by all staff and has the capacity to effect greater change. He is a reflective thinker and always spends time considering any suggestion made by staff. The school runs very smoothly, providing an environment where all students enjoy school and acknowledge the importance of responsibility.

The school has many partnerships with outside bodies which enhance student support and help improve students' academic outcomes.

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 Comprehensive Education Plan identifies key goals for school development that are central to each curriculum area. Data is analyzed to identify some of these goals. For example the school aims to minimize the number of students achieving level 1. High expectations are held for all measurable sub-groups of students but there are not clear interim measures of success and quantified targets for all plans.

Comparisons of students' progress within and across classrooms have developed greatly since the introduction of Developmental Reading Assessment. Teachers who were once sceptical of using data now see the value of this and alter planning immediately to reach stated goals. The professional development committee and the senior leadership team regularly review programs to see how they can be refined and how staff practice can be realigned.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The Senator John D. Calandra School (PS 14)	∅	✓	+
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	