



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Jonas Bronck Elementary School

Public School 043

165 Brown Place

Bronx

NY 10454

Principal: Giovanna Delucchi

Dates of review: January 30 - 31, 2007

Reviewer: Terry Turner

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Jonas Bronck Elementary School is situated in the South Bronx. There are 524 students currently registered in pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The community has a population of high mobility and, this year, the school has a declined register of more than 100 students.

A large number of students are enrolled from three surrounding temporary housing shelters. Just under 70% of students are Hispanic and approximately 30% of students are Black. The proportion of students from other ethnic backgrounds is very small. The proportion of full-time special education students at 17.4% is higher than in other City schools.

The number of English language learners accounts for 16.4% of the school population and has increased significantly in recent years; most of these students are Spanish speaking. Student attendance at just over 90% is marginally below that achieved in similar and City schools. The school is eligible for Title 1 funding for over 97% of students, which is higher than similar schools and much higher than the average for City schools.

A number of serious staff illnesses in recent years have had a significant impact on the life of the school. However, with the appointment of suitably qualified teachers, coaches and paraprofessionals, class sizes are small and staff morale is high. Although the building is now one hundred years, old it is well utilised and maintained.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal has successfully engendered the commitment and support of parents, students and staff.
- Teachers are committed to helping each student to achieve his or her goal.
- The new behaviour policy has had a positive impact on the climate in the school.
- Staff support for each other well and the use of volunteer helpers is a real strength in the school.
- Data on students' performance and progress collected at regular intervals prompts swift and decisive action.
- The school makes good use of a recognized framework for balanced literacy and mathematics instruction.
- Students are encouraged to place a high value on the community in which they reside and recently won an essay contest on the topic 'Save Latin America'.
- The school skilfully aligns its instructional activity to meet the needs of individual students and identified groups.
- The principal ensures that the day-to-day running of the school is calm and orderly and has produced an impressive array of procedures and documentation to support this.

What the school needs to improve

- Build on the developments in data collection to set challenging goals and targets for all groups of students.
- Broaden the range of skills available to all teachers through carefully focused and targeted professional development.
- Provide systematic feedback to students so that they know the level they are working at and what they have to do to reach the next level.
- Encourage the use of modern technologies, such as data projectors and electronic whiteboards, to be more widely available in order to motivate students.
- Explore avenues and approaches that engage more fully the large proportion of students who are English language learners.
- Systematically review the progress of recently introduced initiatives and evaluate their impact on student achievement.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school.

In a relatively short period of time the principal has been successful in a number of important areas. Firstly, she has overcome the outpouring of grief following the death in service of her predecessor. Secondly, she has secured the confidence and trust of parents and staff. Thirdly, she has made good use of all available resources.

The principal and staff are rising to the many challenges that face them, both now and in the future. The significant increase in the number of English language learners in recent months has necessitated the realignment of much of the instruction. Students are being guided to recognise and value success at whatever level they perform. Parents are being encouraged to take an active interest in their child's education.

The school is making good use of its own data and that provided externally, but realizes that there is still more to be done to set challenging goals for all students. Teachers know their students well and the level of debate and collaboration is at times impressive, with information about particular students shared and common strategies for progress agreed.

Students revel in opportunities to take on particular roles and responsibilities, such as broadcasting items of news and information over the public address system, raising funds for charitable causes like Hurricane Katrina and taking part in out-of-school activities such as ballroom dancing. Excellent use is made of displays around 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 with well-developed features.

The school has developed very effective systems for collecting data that relate to the performance of individual students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. Analyses of this data have been central to the school's drive for improvement in all areas of its work. A culture and climate of data-gathering is now well established in the school. A particular strength is the wealth of data on students' performance in English language arts, especially reading. The school has also amassed an impressive array of data on individual students' mathematical skills.

Data is frequently used to determine the degree and level of intervention. Teachers collaborate well to construct a profile of each student, for example by ensuring that the progress of students in intervention classes is collated with the information from general education classes. The school has succeeded in producing very detailed records in folders which contain a wide range of assessment information about each student.

The senior leadership team is proficient in analyzing data relating to identifiable groups. Within the school there are two principal ethnic groups, Hispanic and Black. There is also

a high proportion of special education students, mainly in self-contained classes, and an equally high proportion of English language learners. A significant number of students appear in two of the identifiable groups. The school is prudently making a special effort to enhance the performance and progress of these students.

The school competently analyzes trends and patterns in its own results, although the administration recognizes that it has not always paid sufficient attention to the performance of boys and girls or to the progress of higher achievers. The school has made big strides in comparing student progress within and across classrooms, but has yet to extend this to similar schools.

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.

Assessments are frequent and carefully targeted. All students are assessed weekly in mathematics and monthly in English language arts. Each individual student is then given a unique set of goals and targets. This enables teachers to group students in the most appropriate way. The frequency of assessments means that the composition of groups is continually changing to reflect progress.

Close attention is given to setting goals for those students most in need of improvement. The school is energized by the aim to improve the progress of English language learners and special education students. These are seen as two groups of students in greatest need of improvement. Whilst goals for reading are explicit and clearly understood, students are not sufficiently aware about how they can support their own progress for other aspects of English language arts. The Comprehensive Education Plan rightly includes greater acquisition of reading and writing skills as key areas for development.

The school has become adept at identifying students who are located close to the boundary between levels. These students are targeted for support in order for them to progress to the next level. However, students do not always have a clear idea of precisely what they have to do in order to make this step change because not enough attention has been given to diagnostic assessment or the development of self and peer assessment

The school has managed to instill a climate of high expectations for behavior, personal development and academic performance. The success of this is seen through the impact of the reward scheme. The school provides good information to parents about the progress of their children and strives to work in partnership with them.

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 achieved a high measure of success in implementing the mandated curriculum. In response to data, the school prudently decided to place a considerable proportion of its resources on English language arts. Three periods a day are devoted to

this area of work, with additional support provided during these periods. A reading specialist has also been appointed to offer guidance where it is needed. Although it is too soon to measure the impact, it is clear that students are actively engaged in these sessions.

Teachers feel empowered and excited by the mandated curriculum, which is now in its third year of implementation. As well as being able to purchase books of their own choice, they are able to meet, plan and produce workshop models. This method of instruction is well understood and implemented by teachers. It is used to group students for targeted instruction, but there is little specific matching of work to the performance level of individual students to ensure that all are appropriately challenged.

Support systems for special education students are good. The identification of areas of need for the Hispanic population and the restructuring of instructional practices to allow different points of entry for these students are less well developed. This has correctly become a priority for action in the Comprehensive Education Plan.

One of the strategies to promote the progress of English language learners has been the creation of a number of bilingual classes. Initial perceptions are positive but it is too early to see whether this method of organisation will secure the desired outcomes.

There is mutual respect between teachers and students. The small number of students in each class enables teachers to meet the wide range of learning needs. Teachers ensure their classrooms are stimulating and students' work is displayed. Resources, including books, are well organized. Although students in grade 4 and 5 experience work with robotics, relatively limited use is made of modern technology, like electronic whiteboards or data projectors.

Programs outside of the mandated curriculum are good. Students are able to engage in a variety of classes after school and on Saturdays. These classes help to reinforce the students' learning and meet the needs of those who are at risk of not progressing to the next level. The school promotes and encourages good attendance. The sound range of strategies includes rewards for good attendance and immediate home contact for those who are absent.

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.

The school is effective in its quest to build and align capacity. At the heart of this is the commitment and clear vision of the principal, whose leadership skills are widely respected. All teachers, including those who have been recently appointed, understand the benefits of keeping comprehensive and detailed records of students' progress and achievements.

Staff work collaboratively with one another and value the sense of teamwork and common purpose. They are clear about the importance of data as a basis for analyzing performance and are increasingly effective in using it. Teachers are given many opportunities to share ideas and good practice. The principal, through her accurate and well-recorded observations of lessons, has a convincing grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching in the school. This enables her to identify where support and professional development are needed.

Staff are highly committed professionals who have embraced a whole raft of changes in recent years. They are reflective about what they do, but recognize the need for further professional development in such areas as making best use of modern technologies. They have also had insufficient time to review how well certain initiatives, such as Everyday Mathematics, are working.

The school operates smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Routines are clear and communication is good. Classrooms are calm and orderly and students know what is expected of them in unsupervised situations. For its age, the school building is in good shape and provides a suitable environment in which learning can take place. Students feel safe and are generally happy in school. Parents are fulsome in their praise of the school and what it is trying to achieve, although they would like more opportunities for school assemblies. Reasonable links have been established with a range of external organizations to support the work of the school.

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 school is competent in monitoring, evaluating and revising its current practices. A number of significant changes have been introduced in many areas of the school's work, particularly the way data is collected, organized and used. The frequency of assessments enables the school to revise plans and strategies in order to reach its stated goals. For example, the composition of student groups for instruction is reviewed at regular intervals and, where appropriate, changes are made.

In its Comprehensive Education Plan, the school has a raft of well-judged and measurable goals to serve as benchmarks for its performance. The school is mindful of the progress towards the overarching goals that it knows it must accomplish. These include improving the achievements of Hispanic students. The school has yet to reach the stage where final outcomes drive successive phases of goal-setting and improvement planning, but is well on the road to doing so.

The school has had to prioritize some of its improvement planning and so it is has not been possible to review the progress of all recently introduced initiatives. For example, the school's leadership team does not have secure evidence on whether the initiatives associated with English language learners have been successful enough in reaching the goals set for them. The school recognizes that it has been stronger at implementing policies to address acknowledged weaknesses than it has been in monitoring and evaluating their effectiveness.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Jonas Bronck Elementary School (PS 043)	∅	✓	+
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	