



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



# **Quality Review Report**

**Inocencio Casanova School**

**Public School 062**

**660 Fox Street  
Bronx  
NY 10455**

**Principal: Lourdes Estrella**

**Dates of review: 20 and 23 - 24 October, 2006**

**Reviewer: Margaret Lee**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

The school serves students from kindergarten to grade 5. The total school population is 615 with 15% special education students and 17% English language learners. There is one inclusion class and one bilingual class at each grade level. Grade 5 was introduced for the first time this year. The school population is 40% Hispanic, 30% Black 15% White and 15% Asian. Eighty-eight percent of students are Title 1 eligible which is higher than the City average. School attendance is 91.7% which is below the City average but the same as similar schools.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal is a committed educational leader who takes a strong lead in developing teaching and learning.
- The school is a stimulating haven that supports students and their families to succeed educationally.
- A range of useful quantifiable student assessment information is routinely collected for each grade level.
- The administration works inclusively with parents and reports openly and frequently to the school community.
- There is thoughtful placement of staff to achieve best outcomes from quality school programs.
- Teachers and parent volunteers demonstrate a dedicated approach to their work with students.
- Students are well-behaved.
- The school is well organized, exceptionally well resourced and attractively presented.
- The parent coordinator accommodates the diverse range of parents' needs, enabling them to support their own child's learning and providing them with many valuable services.

### What the school needs to improve

- Develop ways to ensure that all teachers are more accountable for improvements in students' performance levels.
- Give greater attention to improving the performance of those students most at risk.
- Link the findings from the range of data analysis more closely to learning plans and goals for students.
- Make explicit the implications of information from data analysis for differentiated teaching for particular groups of students across all grade levels.
- Structure grade level teacher meetings to develop further professional learning between teachers and develop self-reflection.

## Part 3: Main Findings

### Overall Evaluation

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

The administration has established systems for student data collection, common preparation time, faculty meetings and monthly professional development time. The school has a range of experienced teachers with seventeen new teachers teaching new grade levels this school year. Professional development time is used appropriately to establish good teaching practices and classroom routines for new teachers. The principal has conducted professional development on looking at students' work and data collation to encourage a consistent approach among staff. Classrooms are well resourced and are print rich with material to support teaching. There is much celebration of good work.

The parent coordinator has been committed to the school for many years and has established a welcoming parent drop-in center which is used very productively to involve parents in the life of the school and to support their own children's learning.

The school operates with high levels of cooperation and care and concern among all members of the school community. The principal has been a consistent leader in the school for eight years and she is ably supported by two assistant principals, one of whom has similar length of experience at the school. The school is well resourced and is the focus of the local community offering many enriching activities for students during and after school.

The school was recommended to receive a Federal Grant to become part of the Reading is Fundamental (RIF) program which will see the purchase of reading books for children given to families for safe keeping and use at home.

### **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.**

Teachers undertake both informal and formal assessments. The teachers have conducted a range of base line assessments and documented the results for all students for this school year. Student data and intervention practices begin early with a progress report sent home to parents at the start of the school year. Teachers maintain student portfolios that are continuously updated to record progress. They use diagnostic tests, and commercial testing programs, such as Princeton Review, for mathematics and literacy. Teacher-student conferencing also takes place and the administration is keen to further refine and develop this procedure. The school is currently reviewing the need to reinstate the use of further item analysis assessments.

The progress of all teachers in responding to their students' data is monitored by the assistant principals through individual teacher meetings, faculty meetings and through frequent classroom visits. The inexperience of some staff members and the limited cross-referencing by teachers between data analysis and teaching outcomes has inhibited some

areas of effective teaching. Teachers do not always use available information in formulating their teaching plans.

The needs of the school's high proportion of special education students are monitored weekly when support staff and coaches meet to discuss and plan work for these students. The academic intervention services operate in grades kindergarten through 2 as well as in grades 3 through 5 where it is mandated. This work is ably managed through regular documentation of the students' progress and clear decision-making in meetings. There is some scrutiny of results of various groups within the school, but these are not always used effectively to set goals or ensure that all groups are doing equally well.

**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 administration sets high expectations for teachers' instructional practice and the quality of classroom presentations. All teachers have adopted the workshop model and use balanced literacy approaches to teaching and learning during literacy lessons. All classrooms have established learning centers and student work is continually stimulated through the teachers' use of a rich array of resources and teaching materials. All classrooms are attractively presented.

Most classes are heterogeneously grouped; however, the administration has created a class of higher performing students for the first time this year. This was one way to ensure that these students' achievements could be maintained. The wide range of students' performance within each classroom underlines the need for teachers' classroom management to be effective.

The school's intention is for teachers to make better use of the range of information available to further develop the student-centered learning that currently occurs in balanced literacy classrooms. Teachers have some way to go in adapting their instructional practice and goals for individual students and groups to take account of all available data, particularly those who are most at risk.

The school shares information about progress with parents. The parent coordinator also holds regular parent workshops on ways to support learning at home and she also organizes excursions to various museums and institutes for families at the weekends. She has also been very proactive in gaining scholarships for parents to further their own education and has facilitated for some parents to offer classes to students outside of school hours.

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

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

The school has developed curriculum maps for the whole school together with pacing calendars at each grade level. The staff has also produced associated lesson plans.

Curriculum plans and pacing have been modified to make them manageable. Instructional practices and content are followed according to the set programs. The school is focusing on students' writing at all grade levels and using writing processes produced through Columbia Teachers College to improve the students' writing. Samples of students' writing are being collected and recorded in the principal's office so that the impact of this initiative can be monitored and evaluated.

Good teaching to a whole class is evident across a number of classrooms but teaching to individual or particular student groups is limited. There is insufficient use of differentiated instruction within grade level groupings to meet the learning needs of individual students who are underperforming. All teachers are held accountable for regular review of student rates of progress and levels of performance for both interim and the longer term.

The school's budget is used efficiently for classroom instruction and additional instructional support for the benefit of all students. The school is justifiably proud of its central book room and the range of materials available for teachers. There is a rich range of classroom books together with an exceptional central library. The school is very well resourced with classroom materials. There is a technology classroom providing computer access for each child. The impact of this valuable support is evidenced in the range of teaching and learning practices in the classroom and in the steady and consistent improvement in the students' results.

Learning and behavior routines are reinforced and emphasized at the beginning of the school year. Students are engaged and involved in their learning tasks. They work calmly, and are generally focused on their work. Their new school uniform is worn proudly. Students feel safe, comfortable and cared for. The students have many social and emotional needs yet the school manages to meet these while ensuring the continuation of students' academic learning. The administrative team supports the teachers to maintain good learning environments within the classrooms.

Teachers maintain records of the students' attendance notes and alert students to the need to attend school regularly. There is a concerted drive to improve attendance levels.

**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 principal has built staff leadership and capacity and has seen a number of staff members gain promotion to the regional office or become principals of other schools. The assistant principals have been chosen for their particular strengths and skills. They are responsible for designated grade levels and improvements have already been noted as a result of these designations of responsibilities. This is particularly evident with DRA results for the current grade 2 showing that 73 of total of 115 students are performing above grade level.

The principal and assistant principals regularly visit classrooms and use qualitative and quantitative data to monitor teachers' performance. They routinely and formally observe teachers in classrooms and confer afterwards with the teachers about their individual work. Assistant principals are also involved in meeting teachers during common preparation time and use this time to improve teachers' planning. Teachers recognize the value of inter-classroom visitations and the practice is being extended. There are some outstanding

teacher practices which result in very good student work, but these practices are not widely known across the school.

The school is aware that not all teachers accept and readily act by the goals of the school. These matters are being addressed through continuous staff and professional development. The program of professional development is based on staff selection and whole school needs as identified by the principal and assistant principals. Teachers are given the opportunity to visit each others classrooms with follow-up discussions held in faculty conferences.

The school operates smoothly and calmly and is well organized. The students are well disciplined as they move throughout the school building. The need for immediate teacher response to the special behavior needs of some students is a constant requirement for school management.

The school works in partnership with Citizens' Advice Bureau who conduct the after-school program. This program is effectively integrated with the daily lesson plans of the relevant classroom teachers. There is evidence of continuity and cross-referencing through communication between members of staff and teachers. The school is currently endeavoring to establish a relationship with the 'Virtual Y'. Students also attend the Police Athletic League offered in a neighboring school. The Parents' Association forms a valuable partnership with 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 monitoring of students' progress is a high priority and is referred to in weekly meetings and academic intervention service team meetings. Individual student folders are maintained and regularly updated.

The staff leadership team and faculty members all review progress towards goals. The Comprehensive Education Plan was produced by the school leadership team which actively includes parents. Teachers are responsible for monitoring their classroom procedures and the management of student improvement. In response to identified needs, modifications are made both to the curriculum pacing calendars and professional development calendar.

The use of diagnostic and classroom-based assessments is beginning to provide teachers with valuable information for productive discussions at faculty and grade level meetings. These practices assist the school to meet the desired change in student improvement.

The establishment of formalized and consistent recording of student progress and data is not significantly well established to contribute fully to future school goals and planning.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: Inocensio Casanova School (PS 062)</b>	∅	✓	+
<b>Quality Score</b>		<b>X</b>	

<b>Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor student progress over time.</b>	∅	✓	+
1.1 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>each student, classroom, grade level,</li> </ul>		<b>X</b>	
1.2 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ethnic groups, English Language Learners, special education students*</li> </ul>		<b>X</b>	
1.3 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>all other categories of interest to the school*</li> </ul>		<b>X</b>	
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.		<b>X</b>	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>		<b>X</b>	

\* These criteria are partially aspirational as of now because schools do not have routine access to all of this data. The NYC DOE plans to provide schools with enhanced access to the necessary data in 2007.

<b>Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use available data to understand each student's next learning step. Through collaborative planning and student and parent engagement, they set high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating each student's learning.</b>	∅	✓	+
2.1 Using data, school leaders and faculty engage in a collaborative process to set demanding, objectively measurable goals for immediate and long-range improvement, and to develop plans and timeframes for reaching those goals.		<b>X</b>	
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.		<b>X</b>	
2.3 Particular attention is given to improving the performance and progress of students in greatest need of improvement.	<b>X</b>		
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.			<b>X</b>
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.		<b>X</b>	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>		<b>X</b>	

<b>Quality Statement 3 – Align Instruction: The school aligns its instructional activity, resources, and student engagement around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.</b>	∅	✓	+
3.1 The school selects the curriculum based on how well it aligns with or implements the mandated curriculum and on the curriculum's capacity to generate meaningful interim data about progress towards goals and to support the school's high expectations and improvement plans.		X	
3.2 Teachers are accountable for improving instruction and student outcomes. They plan and differentiate their instruction based on the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.		X	
3.3 Budgeting decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.		X	
3.4 Staffing decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.		X	
3.5 Scheduling decisions about the use of teacher and student time are guided by the needs that emerge from examining student data and by the focused plan the school develops to improve student outcomes.		X	
3.6 Instructional programs actively engage students.		X	
3.7 Staff know and respect students and respond to their academic needs, as well as their personal needs that affect academic performance. Each student knows and trusts an adult on the staff who is concerned about him or her.		X	
3.8 Student attendance and engagement are high priorities. High rates and patterns of absences trigger immediate intervention.			X
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>		X	
<b>Quality Statement 4 – Build and Align Capacity: The development of instructional leadership, staff, and capacity are aligned around the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.</b>	∅	✓	+
4.1 Leaders, faculty, and staff are selected based on their high expectations for student performance and progress and based on their commitment and capacity to use data, compare outcomes within and across classrooms and schools and develop and revise plans and methods to improve performance and progress.		X	
4.2 Professional development decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes. Professional development is designed to help leaders, faculty, and staff use data, self- and peer-assessments, and collaboration with peers to achieve goals for improved school and student outcomes. Professional development and self- and peer-evaluation are aligned and overlap.		X	
4.3 The principal frequently observes classroom teaching and has a considered strategy for improving the quality of each teacher's instruction. Teachers frequently observe and support each other's classroom instruction with the goal of improving student outcomes.		X	
4.4 Planning, evaluation of results, and revision of plans takes place in teams. Leaders and faculty inform each other of their goals and results, candidly evaluate themselves and each other, and use what is learned to drive improvement.		X	
4.5 The principal is respected and has capacity to effect change.		X	
4.6 The school runs smoothly. Procedures are clear, communicated to all, and are generally followed.			X
4.7 The school aligns youth development and support services around stated academic goals. Partnerships with outside bodies are routinely used to achieve academic goals.		X	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>		X	
<b>Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has built-in structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year, recognizing weaknesses in its improvement plans and teaching practices, and flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.</b>	∅	✓	+
5.1 All school plans and other interventions include frequent interim goals and diagnostic assessments of progress designed to reveal in objectively measurable ways whether the plan is being effectively implemented and reaching stated goals.		X	
5.2 Comparisons of student progress within and across classrooms and schools are used in making interim diagnostic assessments and measuring the progress of plans and interventions.		X	
5.3 Information generated by periodic assessments and diagnostic measures of progress and comparisons is used to revise plans immediately in order to reach stated goals. Interim and final goals are modified when data objectively demonstrate that revision is required.		X	
5.4 Each plan's interim and final outcomes drive successive phases of goal setting and improvement planning, and each successive phase is characterized by agile and flexible realignment of practices and resources to improve student academic outcomes.		X	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>		X	