



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The New Vision School

Public School 69

560 Thieriot Avenue

Bronx

NY 10473

Principal: Alan Cohen

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Reviewer: Cheryl Baker

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The New Vision School serves 481 students in pre-kindergarten through grade 4. The school will add grade 5 in September 2007. Thirteen percent of the school's population are special education students while 12% are English language learners, most of whom are Spanish speakers. Hispanics represent 72.1% of the population. Just over 22% are Black, 2.8% are Asian and 3% are White. The school is Title I eligible with the proportion of qualifying students exceeding the City average. Attendance averages 93%, which is above the City average.

As an empowerment school, The New Vision School benefits from reduced paperwork and reporting requirements and enjoys greater discretion with respect to expenditures and professional development choices.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal routinely communicates high expectations for student achievement and teacher performance that assumes the best from all members of the school community.
- The administration models the expectation that all members of the school community embrace the notion that students' emotional, social and academic needs are interdependent.
- The school provides a safe, nurturing environment where students and parents feel respected, known and valued.
- The facility is bright and welcoming and is adorned with numerous displays of students' academic and artistic achievements.
- Administrators and teachers make good use of the analysis of student achievement data, especially in grouping for targeted small group instruction.
- Teachers are well supported in their instructional development and professional growth through routine observations and access to a variety of workshops and conferences.
- Parents are proud of the school's accomplishments and feel confident that their children are receiving effective instruction and support.
- Students are supported creating a calm, thoughtful environment for learning through the institution of peer mediated conflict resolution.
- Student achievement on State tests has shown dramatic improvement in all content areas and among students of all sub-groups under the current administration.

What the school needs to improve

- Refine goal setting and planning practices that incorporate long and short term targets for improvement that are measurable and are supported by clear actions, timelines and responsible parties.
- Increase professional development regarding the use of data for differentiating instruction for individual students within the classroom based on their identified needs.
- Devise collaborative practices and structures to support the vertical alignment of curriculum and instruction in all content areas as the school adds an additional grade.
- Continue efforts to infuse the school-wide enrichment model into the school's curricular and extra-curricular program.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well-developed school.

The New Vision School has been led by the current administration since 2003 and in that time has made dramatic improvements in achievement and attendance while reducing behavior incidents. The school has been aided in its success by its partner, the Center for Educational Innovation-Public Education Association. The school is data driven with respect to instruction and overall decision making. The school's direction is well understood by all constituents. Curriculum and instruction have improved learning. Leadership is collaborative and inclusive.

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 uses the available data such as State test scores, teachers' formative and summative assessments, conferencing notes and anecdotal data, grade level pre-test baseline data to understand the performance and progress of its students, classrooms and grade levels. This data is further enhanced by the routine use of Princeton Review interim assessment results and results from an additional interim assessment which informs instructional groupings. The mathematics coach undertakes rigorous item analysis of students' performance on all mathematics assessments and provides teachers with this diagnostic data to aid their instructional decision making.

The performance of special education students and English language learners is monitored through the mandated assessments germane to their programs and the specificities of their individual education plans. The school endeavors to educate these children in the least restrictive environment so as to ensure their access to the general education curriculum. The school monitors the relative success of its ethnic groups and genders. Other categories of interest include a small number of students who have not been promoted. These students receive lunchtime tutoring by administrators and other non-instructional personnel who monitor their success. The school has also gathered data on the interests of all students to establish baseline data for the design of its school-wide enrichment program that celebrates the gifts and talents of all students.

The school is vigilant with respect to comparisons with neighboring schools, similar schools and its own past performance. All of these measures reveal high levels of improvement for individual students, the school's sub-group populations, grade levels and tested academic subjects. Graphs and charts describe aggregate and disaggregated achievement data which are prominently displayed throughout the school.

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.

The school leadership team collaborates to formulate the Comprehensive Education Plan which sets forth demanding and objectively measurable goals for annual improvement of all aspects of the school. The plan and its goals inform the discussions of the leadership team’s monthly meetings. Short term targets and measures of success are not a feature of the plan, which is shared with leaders, teachers and parents. The principal’s performance review targets specific goals including; increasing the use of data to inform instruction and institution of the school-wide enrichment model and literacy instruction. These goals include action steps with responsible parties and, while the plan was not explicitly shared with the school community, its goals clearly underpin the focus of leadership and resulting manifestations of its intended outcomes.

Other plans such as curriculum maps and pacing calendars, the school safety plan and the professional development calendar inform the actions of the school community and support the achievement of school goals. For students identified as a particular focus area or in need of greatest improvement, the school has devised a network of programs and interventions to support these students. Support programs include morning tutoring, after school activities and tutoring, Saturday and holiday school, lunch time tutoring and push-in and pull-out academic intervention services. Personal intervention plans dictate the interventions for level 1 students. Special education students and English language learners are carefully placed in the appropriate instructional settings. The school’s peer mediation program trains students who have exhibited behavioral needs to resolve their conflicts peacefully and they are empowered to assist their peers in conflict resolution. Specialized interventions such as Wilson reading, New Heights, Read in Tune, and Voyager provide targeted support to identified students.

The school’s motto, “Educating Minds and Hearts” demonstrates the holistic approach to education that is embraced by the school. Each day the principal reminds students and teachers that they are ‘the best’ and that the school is ‘the best’. This constant level of confident praise embodies a tacit assumption of excellence which has helped to create a school community that achieves at high levels, is proud of its success and is supportive of one another. Parents are regular participants in the life of the school, some serving as learning leaders. They feel welcomed and known by the principal and teachers and appreciate the level of engagement they have with respect to their children’s education.

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’s curriculum is aligned with State standards and is described in scope and sequence charts and pacing calendars that reflect collaborative planning and reinforce the horizontal alignment of the taught curriculum. Assessment practices embedded in the balanced literacy model generate large quantities of data regarding individual students’ progress in English. The extensive analysis of mathematics unit tests and other measures of students’ mathematical growth provide an equally rich source of information for

understanding students' needs. The school's curriculum is enhanced by opportunities for students to study music and art. Their physical education instruction includes yoga and access to a child size exercise room.

Teachers are held accountable for improving their instruction and the outcomes of their students through routine observations of teaching by the administrative team, conferences with teachers whose students are not showing the desired progress and reviews of lesson plans and students' work. They use their own assessment data and student groupings created by the administration to group students for targeted assistance in their identified areas of weakness. Differentiation of instruction at the school is largely by program placement and instructional grouping. Instruction is active and engaging, particularly in instances where the schools' rich instructional technology capabilities are used well.

Students like their teachers and enjoy learning. They feel supported academically and emotionally by the administration, the guidance counselor and their teachers. They are especially appreciative of the arts and enrichment opportunities included in their educational program. They like coming to school and most participate in some form of extended day, weekend or holiday program. Attendance is rigorously monitored and rewarded. Average attendance is approximately 93%, above the City average.

All manners of student data inform the decisions administrators make with respect to budget allocations, staffing and scheduling. The maintenance of small class sizes, the provision of ample instructional and technological resources, the support of one-on-one and small group instructional and the institution of looping have all been informed by student performance data and the research based on best practices for improving student achievement. The school's focus on improving literacy instruction informed the hiring of three coaches. Teachers' schedules were redesigned to include common planning time for curriculum and instruction. And, teachers and students schedules were revised to incorporate the activities encompassed by the school-wide enrichment activities identified through student and teacher surveys.

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 principal, who is highly regarded by parents, staff and students, is credited with the school's dramatic improvement in the recent past. All believe that he will continue to move the school forward. He and the assistant principal, who he views as a co-leader, have hired half of the current staff. Candidates must demonstrate a child-centered approach to teaching, a strong belief in public education and a love of learning. The capacity to use data is not part of the current criteria.

The school provides teachers with a rich array of professional development opportunities that have focused on needs identified through staff surveys as well as observations of instruction and student achievement data. Literacy consultants provide in-class coaching, model lessons and conduct day-long grade level workshops to assist teachers in improving literacy and writing techniques. Teachers are also supported in pursuing their personal professional development such as attendance at national conferences, training in the use of instructional technologies, and techniques for special education inclusion. Inter-visitations within the school and among other schools further support teachers in their instructional growth. The principal and assistant principal visit classes on a daily basis to

view instruction and talk to students about their learning and look at student work. Feedback to teachers from these informal observations, along with formal observations, informs the improvement of the quality of each teacher's instruction.

The school's governance structure is characterized by collaborative team based decision making. Several teams such as the leadership team, grade level teams, the professional development team, the accountability team and the academic intervention team operate to address school-wide topics or issues relative to their respective constituencies. An overall theme of self-reflection is apparent in the work of these groups as the administration models the use of guiding questions such as, "What works?", "What does not work?", and "What do we need to do to improve?"

The school is highly organized and has well developed policies and practices that are set forth in the handbooks for teachers. Communication of expectations to students occurs daily and parents are well informed regarding school rules and procedures.

Several youth development and support services organizations support the school in achieving its academic goals. Among them are Publicolor, Education through Music, and the Kipps Bay Boys and Girls Club. While each group makes a contribution, the school credits its own extensive platform of extended time activities with supporting students' academic growth.

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.

While the school's Comprehensive Education Plan expresses annual rather than interim goals, its components are understood by the community and, with the more tightly delineated principal's performance review, has served to guide the school's activities. The effectiveness of instructional goals embodied in the school's curriculum maps and pacing guides are informed by classroom assessments and student success on State and interim assessments. The effectiveness of the actions specified in the school's professional development plan is measured through the observation of instructional change. While some school plans lack specificity with respect to interim goals and diagnostic assessments, the agile and flexible realignment of resources and practices based on the analysis of student achievement data is a well developed feature of the school's practice.

Comparisons of student progress within and across classrooms are informed by the routine analysis of classroom and standardized test scores which inform interventions by academic intervention services and other personnel. Particularly effective is the administration's practice of disaggregating the results of periodic assessments to diagnose common weakness among small groups of students and provide targeted interventions. Subsequent periodic assessment results inform the regrouping of students for interventions based on their success or continued need. The effectiveness of this practice has been the focus of the 'Empowerment School Intensive' carried out by the achievement team. Comparisons across schools inform the exploration of programs that have shown merit for specific groups of students in the greatest need of improvement.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The New Vision School (PS 069)	∅	✓	+
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