



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

**Community School 92
700 East 179 Street
Bronx
NY 10457**

Principal: Brenda Carrasquillo

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Reviewer: Kath Wood

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

School 92 was designated as a community school in 1969. There are 610 students enrolled, from pre-kindergarten through 5th grade. Three quarters of the students are of Hispanic origin, with 24% Black and the remainder Asian or White. A quarter of the students are English language learners and 20% are special education students. Title 1 eligibility is 95%, which is significantly higher than is usually found in the City. Attendance is around 91%, which is in line with similar schools.

The school was built in the 1930's and is presently undergoing some renovation to repair brickwork and windows. The fourth floor of the building is shared with a special education school.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal is an excellent leader with a focused vision for the school.
- There are excellent relationships throughout the school between adults and students.
- Information relating to individual student progress is used very well to make sure that all their needs are being met.
- The school is high performing in all subjects, reflecting the high expectations and commitment to learning of adults and students.
- Systems and procedures are in place which ensure that the school is calm, orderly and runs smoothly at all times.
- Curriculum design is a real strength with rich and varied programs to stimulate student interest and engagement.
- Everyone at the school has a voice and structures are in place to encourage collaboration, open discussion and distributed decision making.
- Much time is expended in making the school building an attractive, lively and stimulating place in which to learn.
- Enrichment work is very high quality with exciting and different programs carefully aligned to curriculum knowledge and skills.
- Relationships with parents and the community create effective mutual partnerships which have a positive impact on student learning.

What the school needs to improve

- The self-evaluation skills of the leadership team need further development so that strengths and achievements are celebrated alongside the identification of precise steps to further improvement.
- Create more opportunities for teachers and support services staff to monitor individual student progress together to plan appropriate interventions.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well developed school.

Community School 92 is a thriving and successful learning establishment. Relationships are excellent and staff and students show real pride in their school community. The energetic and dynamic principal sets clear direction for the school and is relentless in her pursuit of excellence. The school runs smoothly and provides a calm and orderly climate. This encourages good concentration and reinforces the high expectations for all its students. Teachers work hard to make the school an attractive and stimulating place to learn with displays of high quality student work, rubrics and learning prompts in all classrooms and shared areas.

The school is very well resourced with materials and equipment to support learning. For example, the many computers found in classrooms and suites are in constant use for individual and group instruction.

Parents are very positive about the school and believe that every effort is made to ensure that their children are fully supported in their academic and emotional 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.

A wealth of information is gathered across the school to track the progress of individual students. The principal monitors whole school, grade and class data to check that appropriate support is offered to students, and their teachers, as soon as needs are identified. Stability is also carefully monitored within each class so that the large numbers of new students in each grade can be tested quickly and placed in the most suitable learning groups. Over half the students (51.7%) in one 5th grade class have joined the school during the last two years and have required significant support, both in class and in small groups to bring them up to the level of their peers. The principal collects information from new students' previous schools whenever possible to complete the picture of skills, abilities and prior interventions so that the right programs can be introduced from the beginning. Teachers use practice tests, diagnostics and student notes to create class profiles for each subject, highlighting item analysis to influence curriculum content and to plan their instruction. A consultant working with The Princeton Review provides additional information about classes of students on a monthly basis, writing abstracts about areas of deficiency noted in lesson observations.

A quarter of the students are English language learners and their progress is closely monitored to ensure that they are correctly placed in either home language or bilingual

classes until they are ready, and confident to move into general education. These students are well supported and make good progress. Special education students are taught in small specialized groups, depending on their individual need. Their progress is tracked and recorded so that programs can be adapted and modified on a regular basis. The progress of students from different ethnic groups is also monitored carefully and appropriate action is taken where it is required.

The school recognizes that more opportunities should be provided for teachers to meet with support staff to discuss individual student progress and needs. These conversations would help to pinpoint the most appropriate interventions for individuals and groups.

The principal keeps a close check on overall school performance in comparison with all other and 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 well developed.

The school places a strong emphasis on collaborative planning and goal setting. Teachers work together well in grade teams to plan the delivery of their topics and themes. They have regular opportunities to observe colleagues, providing both verbal and written feedback and identifying strengths in teaching practice alongside areas for improvement. Teachers are also encouraged to observe literacy and mathematics lessons delivered in other grades so that they have a good understanding of curriculum content and requirements for younger and older students. This helps teachers to understand their responsibility in providing the appropriate learning steps for their students within the whole school picture and to align their instruction accordingly particularly for those students in greatest need.

The principal has conveyed her high expectations for achievement very clearly to staff, students and parents. Goals, motivators and rubrics are consistently displayed all across the school with effective structures in place to make sure that they are adhered to. Parents are well informed about their child’s progress and respond positively to the open door approach if they have any concerns or support needs. There is a strong and supportive parents group which works closely with the administrators to support student learning. They train learning leaders, provide support for parents whose first language is not English and have been instrumental in introducing the Great Leaps phonic system. These approaches have a real impact on accelerating learning for individuals and groups of students.

Students experiencing difficulties in their learning are particularly well supported. The steering committee meets weekly to review academic intervention models, to report on literacy and mathematics instruction and to look at student work. Insufficient time is currently available for more in depth scrutiny of student portfolios, although the principal is aware of this problem and has highlighted it in the school action plan.

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.

Curriculum design is a real strength of the school. Exciting programs are developed within the project based learning model to increase student interest and engagement in their learning. Topics and themes are designed to complement and extend knowledge and skills in literacy and numeracy across the curriculum, embracing activities such as philately, writing a school newspaper, art, music and sport. Although the model forms part of the city wide gifted and talented program, all students in this school take part, designing class displays, organizing trips and making oral presentations to share with parents and the community. The students are enthused about their studies and the school has been used as a model of good practice.

Enrichment programs are of equally high quality. For one afternoon each week, all the third and fourth graders can select from a wide range of programs to extend and stimulate their learning. Teachers enjoy organizing activities for clubs such as computer skills, tennis, dance, art and cooking; planning fun sessions in which students learn almost without realizing it.

The school appropriately has a strong focus on English language arts. Each morning, students work in achievement based classes across the school so that instruction can be differentiated to provide appropriate challenge. Test scores are used to place students from different grades into classes and other groups to meet their specified needs. Teachers and support staff are carefully assigned to grades and ability groups. This means that the most gifted students are presented with highly challenging instruction to keep them well motivated. The lengths of sessions are flexible so that individual needs can be addressed in mini lessons or specialized programs in full class or small group situations. The principal undertakes complex scheduling and budget organization to make the system work, monitoring student results carefully to ensure that she is getting value for money. School results, high in all subjects, indicate that the system is having a positive impact.

Good systems are in place to monitor student attendance. Students and their families, who are experiencing difficulties with attendance or punctuality, are well supported.

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.

Team working across the school has a very high priority. The principal involves teachers in the selection process for new colleagues so that relationships are strong from the outset and teachers feel loyalty towards and responsibility for each other's development. This has a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning.

Professional development is good. Personal needs are identified through classroom observations and walkthroughs undertaken by all staff and fed back into the planning structure so that they can be addressed. Notes are left in each classroom following a walkthrough to recognize strengths and identify next steps. This means that teachers feel comfortable with the process and are not afraid to ask for support when required. There is

a good balance between in-house and external workshops and training with grade meeting time allocated for feedback on resources and ideas. Teachers are taught how to analyze data and plan differentiated instruction to respond to identified needs.

The school takes its community status very seriously. Strong links are evident with a wide range of outside bodies to support and extend the services provided to students and their families. These include Neighborhood youth and family services, the University of Connecticut, the Bronx Lebanon medical services and a variety of sports programs. Attractive displays and information areas welcome the community at all levels into the school and encourage the school to reach outwards to different groups.

The principal is well respected and has created excellent procedures for the smooth running of the school. The administrators provide energetic and committed leadership in achieving the school's goals. They make sure that the decision making process involves everyone within the school, including students and their parents so that there is distributed leadership and ownership. People feel that they have a voice and, even if the final decision is no, that they have been listened to and taken seriously.

This relentless pursuit of continuous improvement impacts very positively on student achievement, however the administrators tend to focus on the next steps towards excellence. School self evaluation needs to be re-defined so that faculty can recognize and celebrate their many strengths in addition to identifying their areas for further development.

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

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

The well established principal has ensured that, since her arrival at the school, systems and structures are in place to provide a safe, secure and attractive learning environment. Teachers, support staff, students and their parents are fully included in school development plans which results in high levels of commitment towards goals and targets. Individuals at all levels within the school willingly devote their time and energy to making sure that students are well supported in achieving their full potential.

Regular meetings at grade level provide data to inform teaching practice and curriculum design alongside identification of intervention service needs. Leaders from groups such as the project based learning and school enrichment model meet to review and realign their programs to ensure broad curriculum coverage and high levels of student interest and achievement. Information gained from these meetings is used by the steering committee to keep a check on overall progress towards school targets. The Comprehensive Education Plan has been made more user-friendly by the addition of action plans to identify smaller steps towards improvement with clear timescales and success criteria. This provides a firm basis for the principal to monitor the progress of each piece and to adapt or amend as appropriate. She is not afraid to change strategy if the evidence demonstrates that systems are not working as effectively as they should be. For example, a decision to implement pull-out resourcing for all support groups in English language arts was revisited as soon as it became clear that not all students were benefiting from the program. This has now a much more flexible arrangement and results are being carefully monitored to gauge the impact of each intervention.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Community School 92	∅	✓	+
Quality Score			X

Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor student progress over time.	∅	✓	+
1.1 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • each student, classroom, grade level, 			X
1.2 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ethnic groups, English Language Learners, special education students* 			X
1.3 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all other categories of interest to the school* 			X
1.4 Performance and progress are measured based on comparisons with similar schools, with the school's own past performance, and among students, classrooms, grade levels, academic subject areas, ethnic groups, and other groupings of interest within the school.			X
Overall score for Quality Statement 1			X
Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use available data to understand each student's next learning step. Through collaborative planning and student and parent engagement, they set high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating each student's learning.	∅	✓	+
2.1 Using data, school leaders and faculty engage in a collaborative process to set demanding, objectively measurable goals for immediate and long-range improvement, and to develop plans and timeframes for reaching those goals.			X
2.2 Goals and plans focus on the school as a whole and on each student, classroom, grade level, academic subject, and group of students whose performance or progress has been identified by the school as a particular focus area.			X
2.3 Particular attention is given to improving the performance and progress of students in greatest need of improvement.			X
2.4 High expectations are conveyed to students and parents/caregivers. Students and their parents/caregivers are regularly invited to provide information about each student's performance and how to improve. This information is central to setting challenging goals and developing, evaluating, and revising plans.			X
2.5 Goals and plans for improving student performance and progress drive the activity of all members of the school community: leaders, staff, students, parents, and other partners.			X
Overall score for Quality Statement 2			X

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