



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Dr. Roland N. Patterson School

Public School 230

275 Harlem River Park Bridge

Bronx

NY 10453

Principal: Drema Brown

Dates of review: May 24 - 29, 2007

Reviewer: Peter Williman

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Dr. Roland N. Patterson School is an elementary school that serves 491 students in grades kindergarten through 4. The student population comprises 52.7% Black students, 42.8% Hispanic students, 3.1% Asian and other students and 1.2% White students and. Special education students represent 15% of the total school population and 20.6% of students are English language learners. Attendance statistics for 2006 indicate that the school's average attendance of 88.5% was well below that of similar schools and City schools.

The school receives Title 1 funding for 79% of its students. This figure is below that of similar schools but just above the average for City schools. The school is open plan in design, which leads to potential noise disturbance between classes and less secure settings for students who find it difficult to concentrate.

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

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal is knowledgeable and skilled in the analysis and use of data to inform planning.
- The school uses data well to set objective, measureable and achievable targets.
- The administration has a good understanding of progress at student, grade and school wide level because of the wide range of data it collects.
- The portfolio record of student progress is well structured.
- English language learners have been very effectively targeted to improve achievement.
- After school activity is well targeted to assist students in most need.
- Professional development is matched to meet teachers' and students' needs.
- Effective use is made of resources to support instruction.
- The work of teams is very well integrated across the school to promote continuity of learning.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue to develop the behavioral management policy to be effective for all students.
- Increase the consistency of good practice in instruction across subjects and classrooms in order to raise levels of student engagement.
- Increase the consistency and quality of teacher records to develop differentiated learning.
- Increase levels of parent involvement in supporting their child's learning and in the work of the school.
- Refine planning to include more precise schedules of implementation in goal setting.
- Build on established strategies to improve attendance.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school.

The principal of the Dr. Roland N. Patterson School uses her very good skills in data management and analysis to lead the school. As a result, the school has become a more secure place of learning year by year during her period of time in office and the increasing consistency of the policies she has implemented. Data is well used by the leadership to track student progress, to identify next directions and to help understand the challenging issues of behavior and learning which the school faces. There are clear policies to improve the climate of relationships and the culture of school. The principal has created well focused teams to address the specific needs of planning, curriculum, counseling and the support for special education students. The work of the assistant principals effectively complements that of the principal. Student achievements are generally rising and where this is not so there are well-founded explanations. The school is implementing its chosen periodic assessments in clear and consistent way. However, although data is well used by the leadership and there are some good structures for data management at classroom level, some practices are not sufficiently consistent and some teachers are not effective in translating data into well-differentiated lessons in all subjects. As a result, the learning and behavior in some classes does not always benefit all students.

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.

The administration uses a wide range of assessments including State assessments, program and commercial assessments, together with self-generated assessments, to build up a clear picture of student progress across the school. The principal has a very good knowledge of data usage and as result there is high quality analysis and comparison of results. She sets her school's work against a similar school for reference. Student, class and grade performance are effectively tracked and compared. Consequently, strengths in performance and, equally, students and groups who require further investigation or teachers needing support are identified. In a school, which has a number of students whose attitudes to learning and behavior are very challenging, this is significant in developing a close understanding of students' needs. The differences in performance by ethnicity or gender are kept effectively under review.

Baseline assessment identifies the performance of each class at the beginning of the year. The principal monitors progress with the teacher at appropriate intervals through the year. She illustrates comparative grade and class progress graphically year-to-year to demonstrate clearly to staff the issues that need to be addressed. Members of the administration monitor their areas of responsibility for grades and subjects closely. They have good knowledge of comparative progress.

At class level the school has well arranged portfolios of students' work, which give clear records of progress. In the best practice these are well maintained with accurate summaries of progress and annotation of successes and next steps. However, this practice is not sufficiently consistent. In a similar way, teachers' conferencing notes are of variable quality and often do not indicate when an identified next step is achieved.

Special education students are closely monitored as they often have multiple needs. As a result, they make relatively good progress towards the goals in their individual education plans. The school has identified English language learners as a particularly special group for intensive research. This is because services are changing from bilingual to monolingual classes and these students are tested alongside mainstream peers. These students are showing improving progress in consequence.

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, development and intervention teams integrate effectively to plan school goals. The principal's review sets out clearly defined, measurable and achievable objectives based upon student data alongside the strategies to achieve those goals. However, the plans in this document, as well as those in the Comprehensive Education Plan, do not have sufficiently specific timeframes that identify a schedule for monitoring and evaluating progress. Weekly common planning periods and the work of cluster teachers and the administration assist grade and teacher planning. Teachers generally use their curriculum maps, observation, portfolio records and conference records to plan next learning steps effectively. Some teachers and some grade teams accomplish this more efficiently than others, and this inconsistency is a weakness. As a result some students are not effectively challenged.

The school does make every effort to support students in greatest need of improvement who often have behavioral as well as learning difficulties. As a result, management strategies are being developed alongside resource inputs to assist these students' learning. This is a work in progress but a few teachers currently struggle to manage their classes successfully.

Students' awareness of their progress through monthly reviews of their portfolio raises expectations and knowledge of their next steps generally well. This relies upon the quality of teacher records. Information displays such as attendance, reading progress 'mountains', clear explanations of good work on bulletin boards, certificates for work and behavior and rewards all encourage students' aspirations and are valued by them. For example, in a trial initiative, special education students especially like to contract to win points to purchase items from the school 'store'. The school's hard work to engage students has not extended its impact to parents. As a result, there is little parent involvement in the school, despite the continuous efforts of the parent coordinator, and no overall concerted determination to help the school to move forward.

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 undeveloped.

The school’s curriculum maps for English language arts and mathematics are effectively structured to meet both the mandated curriculum and to provide pacing calendars to track the progress of instruction. Teacher and student surveys are carried out and cross-referenced well with assessment and other observational data to guide planning decisions. The curriculum for some other subjects, such as social studies, does not ensure students are fully engaged. The school selects programs in, for example, reading and mathematics, which provide the administration and teachers with ongoing benchmarks of student progress and equally, provide suitable challenge.

The principal knows her teachers well and holds them to account through the well-timed reviews of student progress. As a result she knows where instruction needs to improve and where there is good practice, and she takes appropriate actions. Teachers generally plan using the workshop model but there is variable quality to the way in which they differentiate learning to meet the needs of students working at different levels. Consequently, the impact of programs is variable. This is also because in some classes the teacher’s effectiveness and the level of students’ independence are compromised by the lack of detail in planning and ineffective management of behavior, resulting in some students not being fully engaged. There is, however, good practice in classes where work is well matched to students’ achievement, suitably paced or planned to be active through the use of manipulatives or subject centers.

The principal uses resources effectively to support school goals to raise achievement. She matches staff in teams to strengthen instruction and deploys staff to reduce teaching group size and this assists learning. Investment in reading libraries has been accompanied by kits to enable teachers to maintain effective assessments.

Teachers generally work hard for their students’ academic and personal development. Students believe this to be the case and have confidence in their teachers. A small number of teachers struggle to maintain the school’s established respect agenda. Good strategies are in place to improve attendance, but although there are signs of a slight improvement, it remains very low relative to City and similar school figures.

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 her leadership team around the policy of developing data-driven instruction. This principle is extended to the hiring of faculty. Hiring procedures are thorough, although the school does not always have a wide field of candidates. New teachers are well supported by the principal through weekly professional development. They have opportunities to observe other teachers, for example, to learn how to use conferencing strategies. Members of the administration observe all teachers effectively to maintain a close overview and understanding of next steps for teacher development. Whole faculty training has focused on the use of small group work and the use of the portfolio record in line with school plans. The impact of this is seen in the developing uniformity in portfolio quality and their use to inform workshop practice. Online teacher

surveys encourage the use of technology and provide a flexible means to monitor teachers' needs and response to school practices.

The team structures are well developed in this school. They provide the network to link student needs, intervention, faculty and the administration. As a result, there is clear understanding of the ongoing academic and social goals for school improvement. Flexibility is a necessity and this is used to review and revise practice. This aspect of the school's work is developing well, but has yet to achieve the level of consistency in the use of data to evaluate impact the at the principal would wish. The school does not always run smoothly for all students, but plans for improved counseling services are now in place. The principal has demonstrated that despite the challenges of some students' inability to conform to expectations, she has implemented strategies that have resulted in clear improvement and has put in place a firm foundation for further development. Teachers are carefully selected to work with the after school program to support lower achieving students. Community based organizations provide student advocacy, clubs and further academic and homework support.

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.

Because school plans have clearly defined and measurable outcomes, ongoing assessment provides clear indications of progress towards their achievement. However, currently, there are no interim goals set or clear criteria to determine the degree of progress. Assessment is, therefore, used retrospectively to gauge progress over the year. Comparative data across and within classes is a part of the school's current means of reviewing progress relative to the goals. The school does not have a contact school with whom to share data mid-year, but the principal is beginning to establish working relations with other empowerment schools for comparison.

Review of achievement has led to immediate revisions, for example, to reading instruction through rescheduling of a teacher to create small groups and this has resulted in accelerated progress. The Comprehensive Education Plan is based upon a very detailed review of the previous year's progress. The challenging nature of students' needs necessarily requires flexible planning month-to-month and year-to-year. The principal has maintained a balance with her cabinet of remaining true to her educational principles but of taking practical decisions for school Improvement, as and when necessary.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The Dr. Roland N. Patterson School (PS 230)	∅	✓	+
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	