



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



# **Quality Review Report**

**Globe School for Environmental Research**

**Middle School 272**

**3710 Barnes  
Bronx  
NY 10467**

**Principal: Barbara Hartnett**

**Dates of review: November 3 - 6, 2006**

**Reviewer: Richard Woolf**

# Content of the report

## **Part 1: The School Context**

Information about the school

## **Part 2: Overview**

What the school does well  
What the school needs to improve

## **Part 3: Main Findings**

Overall evaluation  
How well the school meets New York City's evaluation criteria

## **Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

MS 272 was founded in 2005 as a small public middle school with an initial intake of 200 students in the 6th grade. Numbers have now increased to 420 students in grades 6 and 7 with an anticipated school population of 588 in 2007.

The school is in the Wakefield area of the Bronx. The student population in the school is made up of 63% Black, 30% Hispanic, 2% White and 5% Asian and Other. The student number splits 58%, 42% female to male with 79.1% Title 1 eligibility. Twenty percent of the students speak more than one language and 25% are identified as special education students.

The attendance rate is currently running at about 93% with the goal of reaching 95% by the end of the year. The school has a full complement of teaching and support staff.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- Exceptional strengths in leadership are leading to the development of an outstanding learning environment.
- Delegation of authority is enabling full staff involvement.
- Innovation of organizing the school into smaller groups called 'villages' to enable for more personalized learning of students to take place.
- Holistic approach for the development of the whole child.
- Development of extra curricula activities.
- Well behaved and articulate students who are very proud of their school.
- Teachers and staff have built up good inter personal relationships through mutual respect.
- There is a great sense of community and a strong desire to see the school to succeed.

### What the school needs to improve

- Build upon data to enable a more immediate and responsive action, especially to the great numbers of students in the middle range of achievers.
- Develop and put into practice a policy of writing across the curriculum.
- Professional development for the assistant principal and Village leaders to improve leadership skills and help them to further enhance the curriculum.

## Part 3: Main findings

### Overall Evaluation

#### **This is a well developed school.**

This judgment is based on a number of factors, but none more so than on the leadership and dedication of the principal. The school has only been open 14 months and her hard work and educational knowledge and understanding, along with that of the staff, has resulted in the growing success of the institution. It is a caring environment to work in and staff, students and parents are excited by the future as it prepares to take in a third grade level next September, bringing the enrollment up to around 600. This is will need careful planning as the building is confining and presents some challenges. However the staff are confident it will be another step towards making MS 272 in even more successful school.

Data is used very well to inform decision making at all levels, whether for individual improvement or whole school developments. The school is becoming even more data driven and there are examples of how data is being effectively used as a tool to aid the staff in their primary focus of educating the whole child.

Parents are appreciative of the hard work and the life opportunities their children are being offered. They are also aware of the high expectations required from the staff and are fully behind them in their efforts to make the school very successful.

### **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 is amassing an array of data on individual students as well for the whole school. Whole school data is being analyzed carefully as it becomes available and any trends that are observed are quickly acted upon. The principal has had all students assessed upon enrollment due to the disparity of some standardized data. This has given the staff an opportunity to monitor for themselves individual strengths and weaknesses during the first month and to arrange groups accordingly. This process involves using the village leaders so that information can be shared quickly and efficiently. Assessment sheets are color coded which makes identification of students easier for all staff when planning appropriate instruction.

Teacher assessments are used extensively to monitor specific student skills as well as their observations and conferencing activities. The staff have detailed data on their students which allow for an immediate response to any highlighted or perceived concerns. Some thought will now have to be given about how to appropriately identify and work with higher achieving students. Detailed data is now also being collected on behavioral issues and as a result of this staff are better informed to adapt their instruction to meet particular needs.

The principal acknowledges improvement in overall standards is being demonstrated, however, she and her staff are continuously trying to improve the results by even better use of data to inform instructional practice.

**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 principal places a great deal of professional trust in the integrity of her staff to deliver high quality education for all their students. She clearly articulates the goals for the whole school and individual grades, with percentage increases from year to year as realistic and achievable goals. This has had the effect of teachers working collaboratively to ensure progress is significant and data has informed much of their work. As a result of this collaboration, students’ groupings are altered rapidly to meet individual need, as required. The work of the leadership team in supporting both staff and students is greatly appreciated at a professional and personal level. The impact of this has been to further open academic debate and enhance educational opportunity. Students are aware of their individual progress and the impact it has in ensuring the continued success of the school and will articulate at length what is expected of them. This is a positive outcome for a new school.

Attendance at parent teacher conferences is encouraging and the principal welcomes the interest being shown, although at the same time would hope for more involvement. Parents are kept informed by the parent coordinator and an increasing number of parent conferences as to the progress of the school, especially relating to individual expectations of their children which are clearly laid out by staff at the beginning of each year.

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

**This area of the school’s work is well developed.**

The school has a sound curriculum in English language arts and mathematics which is impacting significantly upon an overall increase in test results as the school grows. The use of science as a theme to engage the students is beginning to impact on their learning and a number of outside facilities are used to support this thematic approach. This is coupled with the teaching of Latin as the schools choice of additional language and supported by the parents when the comprehensive education plan was drawn up. Title 1 money is used effectively to fund a Saturday program where an increasing number of students attend not only because they are required to but on a voluntary basis. The teachers’ high quality teaching engages and motivates students to develop positive attitudes towards learning.

The principal adapts curriculum programs to best suit the needs of her staff and students to ensure further and continued success. They play a large part in curriculum design and are appreciative of having their thoughts and ideas listened to by the leadership team. The data compiled from various assessments drives much of their work in all grades. Where specific issues arise good use of professional development is made, whether

internally or externally, and staff are required to share new found knowledge with their colleagues. There is evidence of technology being used to support learning although this area could be stronger.

The attendance rates are average (93%) compared to other schools but efforts are in place to improve this and very prompt action is taken to follow up attendance issues as they occur. Lateness is also a concern and is being handled, although the school recognizes other external factors, such as taking younger siblings to school, come into play.

**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 leadership and management of the school are very good. The principal sets high standards for herself and is very successful in communicating these to others. She is well respected by the staff, students, parents and wider community. The staff has a balance of young and more experienced staff who are highly professional and this is clearly demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life. The rate of staff absence is very low when compared to similar schools and this is another indication of the professionalism of the staff.

The principal has a detailed knowledge of what is happening in the classroom through the numerous informal classroom observations undertaken, these being over and above the required formal observations. There is also a great deal of discussion undertaken as a result of both types of observation. The staff are very appreciative of the principal's support and understanding of curriculum issues and in her ability to engage and trust them to do a first class job.

Professional development is seen as a key motivator in the school's drive to improve standards. Opportunities are provided for collaborative working in all grade levels and professional development is targeted to both school and individual goals and priorities. All staff attended a two day professional development session prior to the start of the school year to ensure the goals and priorities for the year were clearly understood.

Through the professionalism of the entire school community, progress over the last 14 months has been easily demonstrated and complacency appears not in the school's vocabulary as it is constantly challenging itself to meet new goals and further enhance the life opportunities of its students.

**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.**

MS 272 is developing into a successful school when judged against all performance indicators and criteria especially considering its newness. Monitoring plays a key role in determining what has been achieved and to determine future planning.

The comprehensive education plan is formulated as a result of extensive consultation and establishes the school's priorities based upon all available data. Interim assessments in all curriculum areas are regularly undertaken as a means of showing progress to date and plans and goals are revised accordingly. Within this planning process grade and individual student targets are set and measured toward achieving overall success. The ability of the staff to adapt their instruction, as a result of careful monitoring of the data, is becoming a real strength. The school has already made significant strides in responding to data by developing single gender and enrichment groups as a means to ensuring further progress. Both initiatives will be carefully monitored for the impact they make.

This is a successful school in the making, which is increasingly using data to monitor and respond to the individual needs of its staff and students. The principal should be commended for the impact she is making.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: GLOBE School for Environmental Research (MS 272)</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