



**NYCDOE**

**Quality Review: Final Report**

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



# **Quality Review Report**

**The Museum School**

**Public School 333**

**888 Rev. James A. Polite Avenue  
Bronx  
NY 10459**

**Principal: Sylvia Sanchez**

**Dates of review: October 25 – 26, 2006**

**Reviewer: Shan Pinna-Griffith**

## 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

Museum School caters to approximately 500 students from pre-kindergarten to Grade 3. It was newly formed in September 2003, with the current principal joining the staff as assistant principal in November 2004 and taking on the senior post in January 2005.

The school serves a community where over 82% of the students are eligible for Title 1. This is a higher proportion than is found in other similar schools in the City. The school population is made up of 40% Hispanic, 30% Black, 15% White and 15% Asian students. Currently attendance is slightly lower than most other similar and City schools. The school provides special and integrated provision for students with special needs and also specialist bilingual classes.

The school provides a vibrant and stimulating child centered education in an environment where everyone is a learner. The principal and assistant principal are both experienced staff developers and their skill in this areas is one of the main reasons why the school is so successful since the professional development of the staff is of a very high standard.

The school's philosophy of "It takes a village to raise a child" is evident in the positive learning partnership between students, staff and families.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal provides the school with vision, values and high expectations.
- Leadership is shared effectively at all levels throughout the school.
- The learning environment is highly stimulating for the students.
- Professional development is of a very high quality.
- Accountability systems and structures are very effective.
- The administration is very efficient and all school documentation is highly organized and presented at a very high level.
- Teaching is of a high quality, being well planned and demonstrating good pace and challenge and effective questioning techniques that check on all students' learning.
- It is effective in raising standards of attainment in English language arts and mathematics.
- It provides a secure environment in which students feel safe and respected, and in which they develop a love for learning.
- The culmination of the work of the school is celebrated very effectively each year at the annual Museum Night.

### What the school needs to improve

- Continue to improve attendance.
- Give greater emphasis to the learning of students when completing formal and informal lesson observations.
- Ensure that matters of gender are given due emphasis when data is being analyzed.
- Develop the use of technology so it becomes an integral part of learning and instruction in all classrooms.

## Part 3: Main findings

### Overall Evaluation

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

In the two years since she took up her post, the principal she has established a community where staff say “we are all learners”, children enthuse about their lessons and instruction and parents appreciate the education provided for their children stating “they want to attend,” “it is fun for kids to learn,” and “they are stretched beyond their grade level.”

The valuing of others, collegiality and empowerment is evident, with staff feeling ownership of and responsibility for their work. A clear example of this can be seen in the lunch time professional development, called Bloom and Consume, where the leadership provides focused training combined with high quality refreshments. Peer coaching and turnkey is used effectively to support staff, and teachers identify team effort as a key component in their success.

Students thrive in the stimulating learning environment that has been created, using, for example, real books in their structure approach to reading, or exploring school garden compost to investigate worms. Their love of learning and genuine concern for others is clearly evident in classrooms and meetings.

#### **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 data rich with information gained from formal testing and rigorous internal assessment. Data is collected on a monthly basis for reading, writing and mathematics, and is used to inform instruction and to ascertain pupil achievement. In this way it is central to decision making at the class, grade and whole school level.

The strong focus on data is one of the main reasons why standards have risen in the first year since the principal’s appointment and between 2005 and 2006 the percentage of pupils achieving levels 3 and 4 in English language arts increased by 17.6%. In mathematics the increase was by 15.1%.

The school has analyzed data to become aware that there is a gender difference to address, with boys achievement being higher than girls in both English language arts and mathematics. It effectively uses data on English language learners and special needs students to provide targeted support that successfully addresses their needs.

Students are assessed on entry to the school to ensure that instruction meets their needs from their very first day at the school. One very new admit student, seen in a special education class, was already being formally assessed to decide if he required more specialist provision to meet his specific learning needs.

This clear focus on data is supported by a uniform system for information recording, kept at both administration and class level. These assessment files are readily available in all classes and the school office. The organization and management of this documentation is of the highest standard.

**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 makes highly effective use of all available data to plan for the students’ next step in learning in reading, writing and mathematics. This is reviewed at individual class teacher level, grade meetings and in the monthly monitoring of data undertaken by the principal.

Teachers are supported in this work by the administration, senior leaders and Academic Intervention Staff. High quality case study meetings offer teachers the opportunity to review, reflect and clarify issues that aid and hinder pupils’ learning and, in collaboration with experienced colleagues, to plan the next stage of provision for the student.

The administration has clear expectations of all staff. They are provided with an agreed curriculum map, a well defined and graded stock of resources to support teaching and learning and detailed diagnostic breakdown of skills. They greatly appreciate this level of support and this is summed up in a quote from one of the new staff who stated “all you have to do is teach.”

The school has specific provision for English language learners and special education needs students. All classes are set up and organized in a way that provides a highly stimulating learning environment for all students. The school buys in additional support and expertise to support learners and staff with, for example, a mathematics consultant working at the school two days a week and an Australian literacy expert supporting the development of reading and writing.

The school’s high expectation of students is clearly communicated to parents. This begins with Open House in September, parent teacher conferences throughout the year and end of year reports. Parents are contacted as soon as a teacher has a concern about academic or social issues and home and school usually work well in partnership to address issues.

**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.**

This is an area where the school excels. It has aligned the mandated curriculum in an innovative child centered way, making it fun to learn. The curriculum map committee ensures full coverage through their planning of the overall topics. The topic map is divided into monthly teaching units and grade teachers meet weekly to agree on instruction delivery techniques and to monitor progress against previously stated goals. All instruction is differentiated according to student learning needs.

Reading is taught through real books, which are graded and colored coded for easy student access. Writing uses the workshop approach and the use of manipulatives is central to instruction in mathematics.

The principal uses the budget effectively to support and supplement students' learning, making it interesting and stimulating for the students. Academic Intervention Staff offer specific support to targeted students. Cluster teachers, many of whom are full time employees at the school, provided instruction in music, drama, art, science and social studies during the school day. This provides the class teachers with quality time for planning and meeting with colleagues to discuss the progress of students..

The principal has just been successful in gaining an \$85,000.00 award for the development of technology in the school. This is timely as technology is an area of the curriculum which needs developing and was identified by staff as a next step.

Attendance has been an issue at the school and one that the principal has been addressing. She and the Parent Coordinator have developed a successful partnership with families and on October 25th attendance was 90% compared with 73.4% for 2005. The school is not complacent and realizes that this is an ongoing problem.

The school and in particular the principal is working hard to forge partnerships with parents with some success, although there is still more work to be done with some parents and care givers not being particularly receptive.

**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 has a clear understanding of the link between the ability and potential of staff selected, the quality of their professional development and the school's ability to accelerate the learning of each student. She sees a good team "on the same page and engaged in real dialogue" as being best learning environment for children

Teachers are carefully chosen to work at the school to ensure they fully understand and subscribe to the school's ethos and instruction methodology. Many of them are new entrants to the teaching profession, are keen to learn and are ably supported.

The teachers are involved in a regular self review of their own professional development needs. The professional development team uses this information to provide whole school training, to address issues at grade level or provide staff with individual support. The learning needs and high attainment of the individual student is central to staff professional development provision.

The principal and senior teachers have a clear and embedded approach to classroom observations. The findings are used to provide staff with developmental feedback and build a whole school picture of strengths and areas for development. The school is now aware of the need to give more emphasis to learning when completing these formal and informal observations.

There is a whole school approach to weekly planning at grade level, led by senior staff within the grade. This enables staff to monitor curriculum coverage and progression and discuss instruction issues.

The school is very well run on a day-to-day basis and the principal is well respected. She has already, through the rise in standards, demonstrated her capacity to effect change during her first year at the school,.

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

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

The school has a Comprehensive Education Plan which drives its work. The principal, senior leaders and staff prioritize key issues, set interim goals and evaluate progress against these goals continuously throughout the year.

The school has a rigorous approach to target setting and tracking students' progress. It is called "structuring the data dialogue" when staff assess students on a monthly basis according to school procedure and findings are meticulously recorded at class and office level. This data is then reviewed to ensure that provision meets the individual student's learning need, within the class and across the grade.

All class teachers have an action plan for English language arts and mathematics, which is regularly reviewed to monitor progress in coverage across the grades. Attention is also focused on the progress of lower and higher ability students to ensure additional support is being given at the correct level.

Literacy is currently one of the main areas of the school's work, with this year's focus on guided reading building on previous work on shared reading. All the school's systems and structures support a constant realignment of practices and resources to impact on student attainment. Student data drives the instruction agenda and, through this, the school's commitment to provide the highest quality learning opportunities for all.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: The Museum (PS 333)</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