



**NYCDOE**

**Quality Review: Final Report**

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



# **Quality Review Report**

**The Bergen School**

**Elementary School 001**

**309 47 Street  
Brooklyn  
NY 11220**

**Principal: Zaida Vega**

**Dates of review: December 5 - 7, 2007**

**Lead Reviewer: Frank Jones**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

The Bergen is an elementary school with 984 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 2% Black, 90.5% Hispanic, 2% White, and 5.5% Asian students. The student body includes 28% English language learners and 6% special education students. Boys account for 48% of the students enrolled and girls account for 52%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 92.9%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 86% eligibility.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal has a clear vision for the school that focuses on each student achieving at the highest level.
- The quality of data analysis of the whole school and the subgroups within that is outstanding.
- Periodic assessment is used exceptionally well to identify goals and the incremental learning steps required to achieve them.
- Students are highly engaged by instruction, and benefit from the opportunities that the rich and diverse curriculum affords.
- The newly formed administration has made a significant and positive impact on the development of the school.
- The consultative leadership style of the principal has empowered the staff to be part of the decision making process.
- Staff are extremely committed, mutually supportive and work conscientiously to improve student performance.
- Relationships between staff and those they have with the children are extremely good.
- The good quality professional development provided for staff, at a personal and professional level, impacts directly on instruction and therefore student learning.
- Parents and students speak highly of the principal, staff and school, they are enthusiastic in their praise for the education it offers and the care for the whole child it provides.

### What the school needs to improve

- Evaluate the impact the various data streams have on learning to refine those that are most useful and set long-term goals to further raise student achievement.
- Further develop data fields that are user friendly and provide the most positive impact on students learning.
- Explore strategies to align the core curriculum with the needs of English language learners more closely.

## Part 3: Main Findings

### **Progress made since the last review**

The school has made good progress in addressing the issues identified in the previous Quality Review report.

### **Overall Evaluation**

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

Since its inception at the beginning of the year, the newly formed administration has made a significant and positive impact on the development of the school. This is reflected in the good progress they have made to address the areas for development raised in the last review. The consultative leadership style of the principal has empowered the staff to be part of the decision making process. Staff feel comfortable to raise their suggestions knowing they will be listened to.

The school directs the very good quality professional development at identified teacher need. The impact of this is the continued improvement in instruction and student engagement which is already high. The staff are mutually supportive and form part of a positive learning community which has the welfare and progress of all students at its heart.

The school is data rich and analyzes the information it collects exceptionally well to provide additional support for students. Intervention strategies are effective and the principal purchases programs or hires staff to meet identified need, enabling students to make good progress. Available data from periodic assessments is used well by staff to set short-term goals and identify the incremental learning steps required for students to achieve them. The school is now in a position to refine the data streams they have and intends to make informed decisions about the roles of staff in its dissemination and use in future planning. The inquiry team is undertaking detailed research into the performance of students achieving Level 3 and is well placed to make a significant impact on student learning across the school.

The core curriculum is extremely effective in providing data which clearly illustrates what each student knows and can do. However, the school has identified that additional scaffolding is required for it to fully meet the needs of the English language learners and improve their achievement. The wider curriculum provides a good range of opportunities which are enjoyed by, and greatly enrich, the experiences of students.

An aura of purpose and calm is prevalent throughout the school and is enhanced by the very good relationships between all concerned. The parents are effusive in their praise for the school and especially welcome the support they receive to enable them to take an active part in the education process. The principal is a very effective leader, well respected and has a clear view for the future development of learning in the school. She has a clear vision which is understood and supported by the school and wider community.

## **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 the student's progress over time.**

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

The range of data collected by the school at all levels is particularly good throughout the school giving a very accurate picture of what each student knows and can do. Teacher assessments take place in September and these are supplemented by periodic assessments which are used effectively to monitor student's progress at the end of each unit of study. Additional data from sources such as Early Childhood Literacy Assessment System (ECLAS), practice tests in English language arts, math and the state tests provide a comprehensive and accurate picture of progress made by student, class, grade and the school. The leadership team analyses this information carefully and intelligent diagnoses are made which it uses to further support and improve learning.

The school carefully analyzes the progress of all subgroups and gender to explore any differences in performance. This highly detailed analysis enabled the school to identify those girls, who were English language learners and out performed boys in math and English language arts but performed less well in Science. The reasons for this were investigated, identified and procedures put in place to raise performance successfully. The school examines the scores underpinning the levels given to students to ascertain the security of the level and the proximity to the next. In this way, the school is able to target support to retain a particular level or move up. Similarly, the school analyzes performance data to ascertain which students are achieving at the correct levels and those that need additional support.

The principal has quite rightly decided that teachers should understand the purpose and use of data. She believes that ownership of the data and analysis will not only help them to understand student need better but also empower them to employ the most effective strategies required to meet it. However, she appreciates the fine balance that must be struck between that data which is essential and that which puts undue pressure on staff. The data analyst is providing well-received professional development so all teachers can access and understand the available data.

**Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use data to understand each student's next learning steps and to set suitably high goals for accelerating each student's learning.**

**This area of the school's work is outstanding.**

The wealth of data that the school holds enables the administration to carefully set specific goals for students which focus on individual learning to build on prior achievement. They monitor student performance carefully to make certain that progress is being maintained. Teachers use periodic assessments exceptionally well to identify goals and the incremental learning steps required to achieve them. The school's cycle of assessment, identification, teaching and re-assessment enables teachers to accurately track student improvement and carefully modify or adapt teaching strategies to target identified need. Students are able to articulate their goals confidently and this gives them meaning and

purpose. Close scrutiny of development provides very accurate information which is used to instigate effective strategies such as the modification of the pacing calendar for English language learners or the introduction of programs for groups of students resulting in improved learning. The school consequently has a constantly updated picture of student performance and progress towards achieving goals. As one teacher said, "We focus on what are the standards they need to get and how will we get them there?" The same detailed attention is given to meeting the needs of all groups of students who benefit as a result.

Parents and students are well aware of the high expectations the school has for each child and speak effusively and enthusiastically about the principal, staff and school. They are wholehearted in their praise for the education it offers and the care for the whole child it provides. During curriculum week in September, the school tells parents what will be taught and the expectations for the year. Parents welcome this involvement and many take advantage of the monthly "Fabulous Friday" when they are invited in to the class to share the learning experience their child receives. This facility coupled with workshops ensures that communication and, importantly, understanding of the learning process is exceptional.

**Quality Statement 3 – Align Instructional Strategy to Goals: The school aligns its academic work, strategic decisions and resources, and effectively engages students around its plans and goals for accelerating student learning.**

**This area of the school's work is outstanding.**

The school uses the Teachers College curriculum as its core which provides very good interim performance data following assessment at the end of each unit. Teachers use this particularly well to modify instruction and track progress. The school scaffolds the curriculum to meet the specific needs of their students but appreciates that further adjustments to the program are required to match it closely to the specific needs of English language learners. Additional personalization of the curriculum has accelerated learning and made it more pertinent to the students. Art, music, physical education and dance further enrich the curriculum and provide opportunities for students to broaden their education. Students benefit highly from the experiences that the rich and diverse curriculum affords and speak animatedly about the activities. The prominent display of student work throughout the school reflects the extensive breadth of the curriculum and greatly enhances the learning environment.

The assistant principals meet with teachers on a regular basis to discuss and identify students who are underperforming. The principal has an in depth conversation with individual teachers to hold them to account and identify which strategies have been used and which have been successful in improving learning. The staff welcome this highly developed scrutiny of student progress because it reinforces confidence in their own abilities and improves their instruction. Data is very well used to inform budgetary decisions. The school effectively targets support for student learning in the form of hiring additional teachers to provide intervention and to purchase programs designed to satisfy learning needs. Students are highly engaged by very good instruction which is well matched to student learning. Relationships between staff and those they have with the children are extremely good. Students report they very much enjoy coming to school as, "it is a community".

**Quality Statement 4 - Align Capacity Building to Goals: The development of leadership, teachers and other staff capacity is aligned to 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 is well aware of the capabilities of each teacher. She regularly monitors their performance by scrutinizing student work to measure the impact of learning and through discussion. The assistant principals observe teaching on a regular basis. They make good judgments and provide effective support. Teachers welcome this guidance as they strive to improve their instruction. The exceptionally good development opportunities provided for staff following an in depth needs analysis, impacts directly on instruction and greatly improves student learning. Each member of staff has individual goals which support their own developmental needs. They are keen to improve and this reflects the high quality learning community that the school is. Staff are extremely committed, mutually supportive and work conscientiously and successfully to enhance student performance. Joint planning meetings bring coherence and direction to the curriculum. A mentoring system is in place which supports the induction of those new to the school.

The school is very concerned that they meet the needs of the whole child and effective use is made of the accomplished support services to ensure that this occurs. There is a calm but purposeful atmosphere in the school which runs very smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Students are exceptionally well behaved and the student peer mediators do a good job and welcome the responsibility this provides.

**Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.**

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

The principal has a clear vision for the school that is embraced enthusiastically by the school community. The administrators are becoming increasingly reflective and, as a result of their undoubted expertise, commitment and enthusiasm, have made a significant impact since they were formed in September. Effective and detailed analysis of data enables them to modify and adjust strategies to provide support for teaching and the ability to achieve curriculum goals. They focus heavily on student learning and the impact of actions taken to monitor the development of the school. In this way, they are able to identify and quickly address issues that arise. This pro-active approach enables teachers to focus their instruction on learning requirements.

The focused periodic assessments that take place enable the school to maintain an accurate picture of student and subject progress. The school uses this information to modify objectives in individual education plans for special needs students and provide intervention activities before and after the school day for those children who are under performing. The curriculum is constantly adjusted after teacher, student conferencing to ensure there is a match between the learning tasks and specific needs identified. The cabinet meets on a regular basis and is an effective strategy forum for further developing the school. There is a recognition that they are in danger of data overload in their enthusiasm to support the students. The cabinet has therefore decided to appraise their present systems and develop those data areas which are user friendly and have the most impact on student learning. As yet, the school has not used the available data to set long-term, time-scaled student goals to monitor progress.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: The Bergen School</b>	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
<b>Quality Score</b>				X	

### Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather and generate data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor the students progress over time.

To what extent do school leaders and faculty provide . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
1.1 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of each student, classroom, grade level?					X
1.2 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of special education students?					X
1.3 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of English language learners?					X
1.4 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of ethnic groups, gender groups and all other categories of interest to the school?					X
1.5 a measurement of performance and progress based on the school's own past performance, and among students, classrooms, grades and subject areas?				X	
1.6 a measurement of performance and progress based on comparisons with similar schools?				X	
1.7 training, management systems and structures that support teachers in the use of school data to inform planning and instruction and to track the progress of students?				X	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>				X	

### Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use data to understand each student's next learning steps and to set suitably high goals for accelerating each students learning.

To what extent do school leaders and faculty . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
2.1 engage in collaborative processes to set demanding, objectively measurable goals for improvement, and to develop plans and timeframes for reaching those goals?				X	
2.2 focus 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 identify and improve the performance and progress of those students in greatest need of improvement?					X
2.4 share whole school goals with all members of the school community to rigorously improve the performance and progress of students?					X
2.5 convey consistently high expectations to students and their parents/caregivers?					X
2.6 regularly provide students and their parents/caregivers with information about the goals set for each student, and about each student's progress and performance, and how they can improve?					X
2.7 invite and enable parents/caregivers to provide useful information to teachers and the school about the learning needs and capacities of their children?					X
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>					X

**Quality Statement 3 – Align Instructional Strategy to Goals: The school aligns its academic work, strategic decisions and resources, and effectively engages students around its plans and goals for accelerating student learning.**

To what extent does the school . . .	Δ	►	✓	+	◇
3.1 select core curricular approaches that facilitate and provide meaningful interim data about progress towards goals and focus on raising the achievement of students?				X	
3.2 provide a broad and engaging curriculum, including the arts, to enhance learning both within and outside the school day?					X
3.3 hold teachers accountable for the progress and learning of the students in their charge, for making instruction interesting and compelling, and for creating a positive safe and inclusive learning environment?					X
3.4 ensure that teachers use school, class and student data to plan for and provide differentiated instruction that meets the specific needs of all the students in their charge?					X
3.5 make budgeting, staffing and scheduling decisions strategically, based on data, to meet the school's academic goals for all students?					X
3.6 ensure that there is an environment of mutual trust and respect between all staff and students to support personal and academic development?					X
3.7 ensure that there are effective and consistently applied procedures to encourage and monitor student attendance?				X	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>					X

**Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building to Goals: The development of leadership, teachers and other staff capacity is aligned to the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.**

To what extent does the school . . .	Δ	►	✓	+	◇
4.1 use frequent observations of classroom teaching by the principal and other available information to develop a differentiated strategy for improving the quality of each teacher's instruction?				X	
4.2 make professional development decisions strategically, based on data, to help meet the improvement goals of students and teachers?					X
4.3 provide frequent opportunities for teachers to observe each other's classroom instruction and to meet together in teams to plan, share effective practices, and evaluate one another's instruction in an open and reflective professional environment?				X	
4.4 develop effective procedures for the induction and support of teachers who are new to the profession or the school?				X	
4.5 align youth development, guidance/advising and other student support services around stated academic and personal development goals?				X	
4.6 consistently implement clear procedures that enable the school to run smoothly and encourage effective student learning?				X	
4.7 create effective partnerships with outside entities that support the academic and personal growth of the students?			X		
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>				X	

**Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.**

To what extent do . . .	Δ	►	✓	+	◇
5.1 the school's plans for improving student outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?				X	
5.2 the school's plans for improving teacher outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?				X	
5.3 teachers and faculty use periodic assessments and other diagnostic tools to measure the effectiveness of plans and interventions for individual and groups of students in key areas?					X
5.4 teachers and faculty use the information generated by periodic assessments and other progress measures and comparisons to revise plans immediately in order to reach stated goals?				X	
5.5 school leaders track the outcomes of periodic assessments and other diagnostic measures and use the results to makes strategic decisions to modify practices to improve student outcomes?				X	
5.6 school leaders and staff use each plan's interim and final outcomes to drive the next stage of goal setting and improvement planning?				X	
5.7 the principal and school community have a clear vision for the future development of the school and implement procedures and systems to effect change?				X	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>				X	