



**NYCDOE**

**Quality Review: Final Report**

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



# **Quality Review Report**

**The Little Red School House**

**Elementary School 065**

**158 Richmond Street  
Brooklyn  
NY 11208**

**Principal: Daysi Garcia**

**Dates of review: January 17 - 18, 2008**

**Lead Reviewer: Peter Lewis**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

The Little Red Schoolhouse is an elementary school with 544 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 21% Black, 67% Hispanic, .01% White, and 10% Asian students. The student body includes 25% English language learners and 2% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 91.8%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 85% eligibility.

The school is located in two buildings about a mile apart, one housing the Early Childhood Center for grades kindergarten through 2, and the other serving grades 3 through 5. This has necessitated modifications in staffing and organization.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal's vision has been communicated with exceptional clarity throughout the school and so is fully understood and shared.
- Team building is at the heart of the school's work which has led to a very good level of consistency and high expectations in teachers' practice.
- Professional development is well planned and has been effective in securing rapid improvement.
- Data is very well used in analyzing student performance, in planning effective interventions and in tracking progress.
- Teachers involve students very effectively in setting targets for their achievement and in monitoring their achievement.
- At classroom level, teachers use data well in planning work that is suitable for all students which results in rapid progress.
- Systems established to develop subject integration through the Core Knowledge curriculum are exemplary and at the heart of the program's rapid development.
- Students' personal development and the promotion of self-esteem are well aligned with and promote academic learning.

### What the school needs to improve

- Establish learning objectives for all lessons that are clear, measurable, and which further improve teachers' and students' confidence in making assessments.
- Set goals for students' future achievement that are differentiated according to their past performance, their capability and potential.
- Continue to develop the Core Knowledge curriculum to ensure its refined application across subjects.

## 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.**

The Little Red School House is a successful school which provides a stimulating curriculum for its students. As a result, students are well motivated. There is a very strong focus on professional development and teamwork which has led to a clear sense of collaboration throughout the school. The rapid development of the Core Knowledge program, for example, has been successful because of the care with which its introduction was planned. Further developments have been identified and have the clear potential to refine curriculum planning even further.

Data is very well used at senior level and in classrooms to help the school to fully understand patterns of learning and to assist teachers in planning lessons which challenge all students. This is an improvement on the school's last review, as is the increased focus on the performance of English language learners which has accelerated their learning over the past year. While teachers' assessments of student learning are well supported by good conferencing skills and regular testing, the fact that many lesson aims are general in nature makes it difficult for teachers and students to identify when success has been achieved. All staff are involved in the regular review of student and school plans, and this results in appropriate modifications to programs and instruction. Interim markers enable the school to track progress well, although the principal recognizes that setting individual student targets that are based on their previous achievement has the potential to enable student progress to be tracked even more accurately. The school's inquiry team is firmly embedded as a group whose good understanding of assessment has improved data interpretation across the school. As well as tracking the progress of the identified target group, the team has taken a strong lead in developing data management systems at whole school and class level, and in training staff in their use. As a result, teachers make good use of a wide range of assessments and use this information well and consistently in planning lessons that take all students' needs into account.

### **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 school collates, analyzes and communicates a wide range of data very well. School leaders have ensured that the results of state tests, together with interim assessment data, are presented clearly and that the interpretations of what the data means are shared with teachers and support staff. Consequently, staff across the school have a

clear understanding of their students' achievements and of those areas where extra support is required for lower achieving students. The progress made by special education students is tracked with equal care. At the same time, students who are achieving at a high level are accurately identified which enables work to be well planned to challenge them appropriately.

The school looks carefully at patterns of achievement over time, for example of its English language learner students, in deciding whether they are learning at an appropriate rate. As a result of the analysis of the progress made by these students, modifications were introduced to the ways in which they are supported and, as a result, their progress has improved. Good comparisons are made between classes and between students' performance in different subjects. Assessments undertaken from kindergarten to grade 2 are comprehensive and accurate. Because of this, staff in subsequent grades trust and make use of them so that learning is consistently planned. This is particularly important in a split site school such as this and speaks strongly to the good levels of collaboration across the school. Teachers regularly update and annotate their assessment binders. This adds further to the overall information that the school collects to provide a clear picture of student progress as well as areas in which interventions are necessary.

**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 well developed.**

Teamwork is a well developed feature of this school, and supports very good collaboration between leaders and between leaders and staff. Consequently, student progress is discussed regularly and the school's well-developed analyses of data are used in identifying student goals. Planned developments in whole school practice, such as the next stages in the introduction of the Core Knowledge program, are communicated clearly and, as a result, are well understood by staff. Good support is provided by coaches in ensuring that close observation is maintained on the progress made by individual students. Additionally, regular meetings at senior level focus strongly on comparisons between subjects and, increasingly, between grades to assess whether students who are in the greatest need of improvement are well served. The increased emphasis on the performance of English language learners, for example, stemmed from the careful analysis of where intervention and extra support was needed for these students.

Goals are set for student achievement across subjects. These are well communicated to parents so that they are more readily able to help their children succeed, and are well aware of the school's high expectations of itself and their children. While student achievement goals are challenging, and appropriately derived from data, the school has only just begun to look at the potential for individualizing student targets in relation to their past achievement. The school recognizes the potential in this for making goal setting even more precise than at present. Students too are involved in setting goals for their own improvement. They are well supported in this by their teachers and, so, are able to articulate what they have to do to improve with considerable clarity. Conferencing is well established and allows teachers to keep a close track of their students' development.

**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 well developed.**

The school has carefully developed its curriculum so that it is stimulating and provides a strong degree of continuity from kindergarten through grade 5. A very strong emphasis on developing students' skills in English and mathematics is well supported by work in science and social studies and by a broad program in the arts. The visual arts are particularly well developed, with displays of very high quality student work enriching hallways and classrooms throughout the school. Data is well used in assessing the effectiveness of curricular programs, and in deciding where modifications are necessary, such as in the extension of resources for the after school and Saturday academies. The systems that the school has established for ensuring that teachers make use of student data, and add to it through conferencing and the recording of practice and other test results, are firmly embedded. This information is well used in regular discussion between teachers, coaches and senior leaders and makes a strong contribution to teachers' clear sense of accountability for their students' progress.

The use of data to inform different methods of teaching and learning is a consistent feature of lessons. As a result, they are interesting to students and have a very positive impact on students' motivation and their achievement. Too often, however, lesson aims are couched in general terms that are not amenable to accurate assessment. This makes it harder than it need be for teachers and students to identify when they have gained the planned skills and concepts. The school has gone a long way in developing the Core Knowledge program which has helped the school integrate reading, writing and comprehension strategies across the curriculum. This, too, has had a positive impact on student achievement and, together with the introduction of the dual language immersion program, has had a particular impact on the progress made by English language learners. The level of consistency in practice that is seen from the Early Childhood Center to the main building is directly as a result of the creative appointment and deployment of staff. The principal has successfully ensured that F-status teachers are placed through all grades to achieve consistent understanding and use of data in teachers' planning.

**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 school's strategies for monitoring the quality of instruction are well developed. Teachers value the feedback that they are given and describe examples of how they have used this to develop or improve their practice. At the same time, they value the way in which professional development supports areas that they have identified, alongside whole-school objectives. As a result, they feel like they are part of the school's development and set high expectations for themselves in their teaching. Regular common planning times have been established which are well guided by coaches and ensure that programs are followed in a consistent way. Administrators support their teachers well by modelling expected strategies. Consequently, they are

respected by staff as being “lead professionals” who, as one teacher said, “help us to make a difference.”

The fact that the school occupies two sites has posed particular challenges that the principal has worked hard to overcome. The school has developed very clear procedures for every aspect of its work. These are clearly understood by all and followed consistently. There is a good range of opportunities for staff from the two sites to meet and assessment information is shared well and effectively from one site to the other. Partnerships with the community have been used well in supporting planned curriculum developments. The recent acquisition of a considerable amount of funding to assist the school in further resourcing and developing its technology curriculum, for example, was as the result of a particularly clear bid that was made to a local councilman.

**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.**

School development planning is comprehensive and derived well from a good understanding of necessary areas for improvement. Because of this, together with the good systems that have been established for its dissemination, all staff share a common vision for the school’s development and know what must be done to make that vision a reality.

Targets for students’ achievement are based on a good understanding of what different groups can achieve. At the same time, the principal has ensured that a good range of systems has been established at class and whole school level, to track student progress towards their goals. Student performance is measured at regular interim points, using an appropriate variety of testing and interim assessments that are backed up well by teacher assessments. This information is used well to evaluate whether students are on track towards their targets. Although student targets are not yet set in relation to individual prior achievement, the school’s rigorous monitoring of student progress ensures that any shortfalls in students learning are nonetheless identified rapidly and appropriate action taken. In this way, the school ensures that not only do staff understand the patterns of students’ learning, but that progress is maintained.

The school uses a variety of information very well in tracking its progress towards strategic goals. Because of the carefully staged nature of whole school planning, the introduction of new programs or methodologies can be monitored closely and action taken should it prove necessary. The consistency that is seen, in the use of data to plan for differentiated instruction, for example, illustrates the effectiveness of this approach. In the same way, the close focus that administrators and coaches have placed on the development of the Core Knowledge program, has ensured that it is well understood and is developing according to the plans established at its inception.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: The Little Red School House</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 rigorous, 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 and tardiness?				X	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>				X	

<b>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.</b>					
<b>To what extent does the school . . .</b>	<b>Δ</b>	<b>➤</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>◇</b>
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, and effectively address discipline related incidents?				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	

<b>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.</b>					
<b>To what extent do . . .</b>	<b>Δ</b>	<b>➤</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>◇</b>
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	

◇	<b>Outstanding</b>
+	<b>Well Developed</b>
✓	<b>Proficient</b>
➤	<b>Underdeveloped with Proficient Features</b>
Δ	<b>Underdeveloped</b>