



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Parkside School

Elementary School 130

**70 Ocean Parkway
Brooklyn
NY 11218**

Principal: Maria Nunziata

Dates of review: April 3 – 4, 2008

Lead Reviewer: David Wynford Jones

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Parkside is an elementary school with 437 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 18% Black, 30% Hispanic, 22% White, and 31% Asian students. The student body includes 11% English language learners and 1% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006 - 2007 was 92.9%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 94% eligibility.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal makes good use of data to gain a very strong understanding of all aspects of the school's work and to identify areas for improvement.
- The ethos of the school celebrates the range of the students' cultural backgrounds and prepares them effectively for living in today's society.
- Teachers make very good use of the opportunities to assess the students' level of understanding and to inform instruction.
- Systematic and thorough monitoring of instruction ensures lessons are delivered effectively and are well matched to the needs of the students.
- Students help raise their own expectations by negotiating their individual goals in reading, writing, math and personal growth.
- Teachers share their professional expertise and learn from each other because there is a well established collaborative culture.
- The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of activities both within and outside the school day and by links with outside entities.
- Parents support and appreciate of the work of the school because they are kept well informed about their child's progress and performance.
- Good relationships between staff and students contribute to an environment that promotes learning and good order.
- All plans and goals are closely monitored, allowing for timely revisions when needed.

What the school needs to improve

- Increase technology resources available to teachers and students to promote engagement and learning.
- Provide teachers with further professional development in the use of the latest technology to support instruction.
- Follow up students' absence with greater rigor so that the school's ambitious attendance goal is met or exceeded.

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 diverse range of the students' ethnic background is rightly viewed by staff, parents and students as being a significant strength of the school. Relationships between adults and students are good. As a result, students settle quickly and develop a positive attitude to learning. This school is well run and caters effectively for the needs of individual students. This is because the principal has a good understanding of the strengths of the school. She ensures that teachers differentiate their instruction and the curriculum is tailored to meet the different needs of the students.

The administration and staff work together well to ensure the students are happy in school, enjoy their learning and make progress. Their progress is carefully monitored both by the class teachers through on-going assessments, and by the administration who scrutinize test result data meticulously. This information is used well to set whole school and students' goals. The students contribute by negotiating their own goal for reading, writing, math and personal growth. The well-established inquiry team successfully monitors the progress of the identified students and provides good advice to the teachers to help these students continue to make progress.

Robust systems are in place to monitor the work of the school. This includes regular observations of instruction and the detailed analysis of data. The progress of groups of students, including English language learners, special education students and the different ethnic groups are monitored carefully. Intervention strategies are introduced when required. The principal has rightly introduced a computer program which speeds up this process and enables her to further refine the analysis of performance of the different groups.

Links with outside entities enrich the broad curriculum which is well matched to the needs of the students. However, provision for technology to support instruction and to promote the students independent learning is limited. Teachers have not received up-to-date training on the latest technology and do not make sufficient use of the limited resources. Good links are promoted with the local community and many parents see this as "their school" and appreciate the work of the staff. The school has set itself challenging attendance goals. However, systems for following up absences are not sufficiently rigorous.

Issues identified at the last review have been addressed well. Systems for analyzing and using data are securely established. Teachers' confidence and understanding in the use of data is evident in the differentiated lessons. Good use is made of the data, at all levels, to set goals and to monitor student's progress.

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.

Systems for assessing and recording students' performance in reading, writing and math are well established. The administration and teachers use data effectively to track the progress of the students, to inform their planning and instruction. On-going focused training led by the principal has effectively developed the teachers' competence in analyzing and interpreting the data. The administration makes good use of the data from the strategically timed standardized tests and ongoing teacher assessment to celebrate success and to target areas for improvement. They compare the students' end of year achievement to establish grade trends and also the students' progress in subsequent grades. The detailed analysis is undertaken for groupings by grade, class, gender, ethnicity, English language learners and special education students. This enables the administration to identify potential areas of underperformance and to take effective remedial action to bring about improvements.

The principal has rightly recognized that accurate analysis takes time and has recently introduced a computerized system for recording and analyzing the extensive range of data on student performance. This approach is developing well and is starting to be used for tracking students' performance and to set goals. As a result, the administration is more effective in monitoring the progress and achievement of students because access to data is quicker.

The administration meticulously analyzes and compares the school's performance against that of similar schools. This has led to the identification of strengths and also areas for development. These are being systematically addressed, particularly those relating to the students' progress in English language arts.

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.

The administration sets out its high expectations for staff and students in the detailed Comprehensive Education Plan. These expectations are shared and endorsed by staff and parents. Students contribute to these high expectations by negotiating their own realistic individual goals in reading, writing, math and personal growth. These are clearly displayed in the classrooms. Teachers make regular appropriate reference to them and in so doing, encourage students to try their best always. Stakeholders are made aware of the school's performance in relation to its goals. The school's progress report is distributed to staff and parents and a copy is clearly displayed in the main entrance. This helps ensure there is a common understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.

Coaches facilitate grade meetings well and provide teachers with good opportunities to discuss students' progress and agree lesson plans with realistic expectations for the different achievement groups. Individual student progress is carefully monitored and

tracked. Intervention strategies, if needed, for academic or personal growth are implemented well, thus ensuring the students continue to make progress. Students in greatest need of improvement are supported well through the implementation of detailed intervention plans. The support ensures the students achieve their realistic goals which are based on their individual starting points, needs and capabilities. This includes well-organized activities before, during and after the school day and on weekends.

The school provides parents with good opportunities to inform the school about the learning needs and capabilities of their children. Regular formal and informal meetings enable parents and teachers to exchange information on the progress their children are making towards meeting their goals. The school has recently recruited translators for parents who speak Bengali and Spanish. This is successfully involving more parents in their child's learning and the life of the school.

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 administration places significant emphasis on interpreting the data to identify and plan a curriculum which meets the mandated requirements and also the different needs and capabilities of the students. Grade planning meetings are well organized and focus on planning and student achievements. This includes identifying opportunities for teacher assessments, arranging more formal testing and reflecting on previous experiences, including issues of safety. As a result, teachers use the assessment data well to plan their lessons to include differentiated learning in order to capture the students' interests.

The curriculum is enhanced through a number of activities both within and outside the school day. These include opportunities for cheer leading, music, sports, art, and journalism. The activities are open to all students from grade 3 upwards. The recently impressively refurbished auditorium is already being put to good use for music instruction. There are plans in place for dance and drama activities. As a result, students have a positive attitude to learning and are eager to make full use of this new facility. However, provision for technology throughout the school is limited. Students do not get sufficient opportunities to develop their skills in the use of computers or undertake research in order to promote their knowledge. In addition, the lack of interactive electronic white boards (smart boards) restricts the teachers' options in delivering a stimulating curriculum. However, prudent use of the school budget has led to some improvements in resources, maintained advantageous staffing levels and the recent refurbishment of the science laboratory. This is contributing to higher student achievement.

Teachers and students respect each other. Students appreciate the support provided by teachers and know they can turn to them if they require academic or personal support. They enjoy school and attend school regularly. There are set procedures for notifying absence but systems are not sufficiently rigorous for the school to meet its challenging attendance goals.

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 administration adopts a robust and systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating instruction. Teachers receive written feedback which includes "glow" and "grow" statements. This is having a positive impact on improving instruction and in the promotion of differentiated instruction throughout the school. Based on these observations, together with a detailed analysis of the assessment data and teachers' requests, professional development opportunities are identified and action taken. This includes attendance at courses, inter-visitations and visits to neighboring schools. As a result, good practice in classroom instruction is shared and promoted. However, the vast majority of the teachers require substantial professional development in the use of Smart boards to enhance their instruction. Staff who are new to the school or to the profession receive good induction and appreciate the support from the administration and from colleagues. This ensures they settle quickly into the school and quickly become part of an effective team committed to accelerating the learning of each student.

The school operates calmly on a day-to-day basis. The principal and assistant principal walk the school regularly and interact with individual students. This helps the students feel safe and part of the school. The parents' handbook provides a clear overview of the philosophy of the school. Students are well behaved, polite and demonstrate good relationships with each other and with the adults. They respond well to the consistently implemented policy of rewarding good behavior. The school has a number of effective links with outside entities that support the academic and personal growth of students. These include the Brooklyn Centre for the Arts, Carnegie Hall and the Brooklyn Centre Urban Environment. The school has recently received a substantial sum of money to provide opportunities for all students to take part in activities beyond the school day. This enriches their education and strengthens the links between the school and the community.

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 cabinet meet regularly to review the work of the school and to identify areas for further development. They meticulously analyze student performance data to check progress toward the school's goals. The meetings are conducted efficiently with key personnel contributing salient points. Systems for the strategic long- and mid-term planning are well established so that there is little, if any, clash of activities.

The principal has recently introduced a computer program for recording and analyzing the students' achievements and progress. Teachers' planning is checked to ensure that suitable activities have been identified for the mini lessons and meet the needs of the students and curriculum requirements. The principals' vision of empowering staff to contribute to the development of the school and for celebrating the diverse range of cultures within the school are shared, understood and valued by staff and parents.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The Parkside School	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
Quality Score				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	
Overall score for Quality Statement 1				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	
Overall score for Quality Statement 2				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		
Overall score for Quality Statement 3				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, 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	
Overall score for Quality Statement 4					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	
Overall score for Quality Statement 5					X

◇	Outstanding
+	Well Developed
✓	Proficient
➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features
Δ	Underdeveloped