



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



# **Quality Review Report**

**The Parkway School  
Elementary School 167  
1025 Eastern Parkway  
Brooklyn  
NY 11213**

**Principal: Joan Palmer**

**Dates of review: March 10 - 11, 2008**

**Lead Reviewer: Clive Parsons**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

The Parkway is an elementary school with 550 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 83.7% Black, 11.2% Hispanic, 0.5% White, and 4.6% Asian students. The student body includes 8% English language learners and 10% 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 90.6%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 92.1% eligibility.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal uses her good understanding of the school's strengths and development needs strategically to improve the quality of learning across the school.
- Many special education students are making good progress in class as a result of improved support and instruction.
- The introduction of assessment binders and "at a glance sheets" help teachers to understand student achievement and progress quickly and more effectively.
- There is a growing sense of collaboration and collegiality among teachers who have access to effective, targeted professional development.
- Teachers and students point to improved student attitudes and behavior in response to the school's positive behavior system and increased expectations.
- Good progress has been made in setting goals with students, who are eager to work hard to achieve them.
- Students value the wide range of learning opportunities available to them, especially in music.
- Productive relationships with external partners are providing students with additional support and guidance, as well as extended opportunities for learning.
- The focusing of resources and expertise on the lower grades is having a positive impact on addressing the learning needs of students in these grades and preparing them more effectively for later work.

### What the school needs to improve

- Extend the work with teachers to ensure that they all effectively use data to plan and deliver differentiated instruction.
- Continue to support teachers in delivering lessons that actively engage all students.
- Further develop the monitoring and evaluation skills of the assistant principals to maximize the consistency and impact of their work on the quality of instruction and student achievement in each classroom.
- Build upon the positive trend in student attendance to more closely match that achieved by the school's peer horizon.
- Continue to reach out to parents, involve more of them more extensively in supporting their child's education and provide them with the knowledge and skills to do so.
- Build on the work of the school's inquiry and academic intervention teams to increase the range of interventions available and the timeliness of their use, as well as spreading them more widely throughout the staff.

## 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 proficient.**

The school remains on a positive trajectory and continues to improve. The principal is strategically improving the capacity of the school to sustain the improvements made to date and is building upon the secure base she has established. There is good coherence between the goals contained within all of the development plans that the school is required to produce. Staff have willingly undertaken much work since the previous Quality Review, positively implementing new developments. The newly introduced initiatives are spring from the principal's secure evaluation of the school's strengths and development needs. She has skillfully targeted resources to where they are most needed and where they will have the greatest impact. The changes made have resulted in improvements to the school's climate, as well as in the quality of instruction and student progress in class. The school has also made improvements to the facilities, enabling a brighter cleaner environment, as well as more electrical outlets for computers, for example.

An improved use of data is at the heart of these developments. Systems introduced enable teachers to take a better overview of student achievement and progress. They also enable the school to monitor more effectively the performance and progress of key student groups. The task ahead is to ensure that the changes made are firmly embedded school-wide and that all staff act consistently in their implementation. There is good involvement of some parents in supporting the school and their child's education and the principal is determined to increase this further. The school's inquiry team has made significant strides in developing systems and strategies to understand better the learning needs of individual students and to develop and evaluate additional interventions to meet those needs. The work of the team points the way to implementing the most successful strategies more broadly across the school and in ensuring that interventions are in place as early as possible, so as to maximize their impact.

### **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 proficient.**

The school gathers a wide range of data about each student's performance. Standardized mechanisms and strategies are used to ensure that a consistent view is established between classes and grades. Benchmarks and periodic assessments enable the school to gauge the progress that students make and the security of their learning. The introduction of various systems, including "at a glance" sheets and digital handheld devices, enable teachers to more easily manage this overview for each student and for the

class as a whole. Assessment binders then support teachers in keeping comprehensive records and samples of student work to demonstrate achievement and progress. The school takes care to gather as much information as possible about students that is likely to impact upon their capacity to learn. Students are known very well as a direct consequence. This broader knowledge about students and their learning needs is then successfully used to ensure that they receive the most suitable support and interventions and that they work in the most appropriate settings.

Aggregation of key data enables the administration to monitor the achievement and progress of each class, subject and grade, as well as that of each student group. In this way, comparisons are drawn, raising questions and issues for further exploration and discussion. Special education students and English language learners are monitored closely. The principal is also concerned to monitor any variation in the achievement of boys and girls. The principal is aware of the school's performance compared with that of both its peers and the City as a whole. The school's own previous performance is also considered when drawing conclusions about improvement and trends.

**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 proficient.**

The use of diagnostic assessments and item analysis enables the school to be clear about the specific academic needs of individual students and groups. Monitoring of student progress is enabling the further identification of those students that are not progressing at an adequate rate. This use of data is also enabling the school to target academic intervention and other resources more effectively and to be specific about student goals. As a result, the school has made good progress in setting goals with students. Students talk about what reading level they are on and what level they should be on by the end of the year, and older students talk about what they need to do to improve their writing. Students are generally eager to work hard to achieve the goals established. While the school is concerned to improve the performance and progress of all students, the principal has a secure understanding of those individuals and groups that have most impact on the school's overall performance.

The school targets academic intervention services appropriately, with the same raised expectations about monitoring their progress leading to improved outcomes. The principal has also ensured that additional resources have been provided in the early grades, so that problems and difficulties are being picked up sooner and that students generally have a more secure foundation for their later studies. Similarly, the principal has ensured that special education students are increasingly well taught, which is resulting in them making good progress in class. The school's inquiry team is introducing and evaluating new intervention programs and strategies. This is providing an effective mechanism for then in spreading the most effective strategies more broadly across the school.

The school works very hard to try to involve parents in supporting their child's education, especially those who are not making good progress. More generally, the school is welcoming of parents and especially those that volunteer their services as learning leaders, for example. However, parental involvement and response is not always at a sufficiently high level for the principal, and some parents remain hard to reach. There is a determination to improve this further, so that more parents are involved more extensively

in supporting their child's education. There is also a commitment to provide them with the knowledge and skills to do so.

**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 proficient.**

The principal has identified the relatively low background knowledge and limited experiences of many students as barriers to their achievement and progress. This drives the school's commitment to providing as broad a range of experiences as possible, especially in the arts. Visits and visitors are effectively utilized to supplement the work of cluster teachers. Students value the wide range of opportunities that the school makes available to them, especially in music. The school has also introduced a core knowledge program, to provide contexts and connections for students and hence to make learning more concrete and secure.

Teachers are held accountable for the quality and impact of their work. Support and professional development have been provided to assist teachers in using data more extensively and in implementing engaging and motivating lessons. These two factors have improved across the school, and there are examples of effective practice securing good learning and student progress. However, this is not yet universal or uniform. Generally, the level of trust and mutual respect between staff and students is good and teachers generate a climate that is inclusive for all learners. They provide a safe and secure learning environment.

The principal works hard to maximize the resources available, especially through extending partnerships with external organizations. She also targets resources to where they are most needed and will have most impact. This is having a significant impact on the quality of learning for special education students and improving the performance and progress in earlier grades. The school can demonstrate some improvement in student attendance as a result of secure systems and practice. However, attendance remains below that of other schools in its peer group and well below that of City schools.

**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 proficient.**

The principal and assistant principals make regular visits to classrooms to build an on-going picture of the quality and impact of instruction in each. This is supporting focused and targeted support and guidance for individual teachers. However, variations in quality remain. The principal continues to develop the monitoring and evaluation skills of the assistant principals to maximize the consistency and impact of their work on the quality of instruction and student achievement in each classroom. Teachers highlight a growing sense of collaboration and collegiality. This is a result of the increased common planning time that is scheduled, as well as the importance placed on this by the principal. In addition, teachers welcome the support available through the school's Aussie consultants, "fishbowl" demonstrations and classroom inter-visitations. The school has also

established a UFT teacher center resource program to support staff further. Effective mentor programs are in place to support new teachers.

The school is more successfully aligning support services with the needs of the students. Teachers and students point to improved student attitudes and behavior in response to the school's positive behavior support system, together with the increased expectations of students. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis.

Productive relationships with external partners are providing students with additional support and guidance, as well as extended opportunities for learning. For example, a leadership program is supporting grade 4 students in developing key skills and in taking greater responsibility for their own learning and behavior. Consultants are also working with grade 1 teachers to develop approaches and strategies to address the social and emotional needs of their students.

**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 proficient.**

The principal has a good understanding of the school's strengths and development needs which is based on a secure evaluation of the data, as well as direct observations. She is using this knowledge strategically and systematically to improve the quality and impact of learning across the school. This is exemplified by the coherence between the goals contained within all of the development plans that the school is required to produce. Goals are measurable where appropriate and represent a challenging but achievable aspiration. Each stage of the school's development and improvement is being established on the firm base of what has gone before.

Teachers are using the outcomes and analysis of periodic assessments to focus and target their instruction, as well as to provide support and intervention to students. The principal is using aggregated data to monitor and evaluate the performance and progress of classes, grades and groups of students. She is developing the skills of the assistant principals to respond rigorously to these outcomes to make strategic decisions and to modify and adapt practices as a result.

The principal's determination to maximize each student's personal and academic progress is increasingly shared by the whole staff. The school is moving forward on many fronts, and the positive attitude and response of the staff to the principal's commitment is making this possible.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: The Parkway 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.**

<b>To what extent do school leaders and faculty provide . . .</b>	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.**

<b>To what extent do school leaders and faculty . . .</b>	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.**

<b>To what extent does the school . . .</b>	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		

<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?			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>