



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Michael E. Berdy

Elementary School 188

**3314 Neptune Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11224**

Principal: Frederick M. Tudda

Dates of review: October 29 - 30, 2007

Lead Reviewer: John Collings

Content of the report

Part 1: The School Context

Information about the school

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well
What the school needs to improve

Part 3: Main Findings

Progress made since the last review
Overall evaluation
How well the school meets New York City's evaluation criteria

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Michael E. Berdy is an elementary school with 662 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 52% Black, 22.8% Hispanic, 14.2% White and 11% Asian students. The student body includes 4.5% English language learners and 12.5% special education students. Boys account for 47% of the students enrolled and girls account for 53%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 91.8%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 100% eligibility.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school uses data very well to monitor students' performance and progress and to create a curriculum suited to their needs.
- Students enjoy school, want to achieve well, are very involved in mutually supportive learning and understand their next steps in learning.
- The school has built a very strong partnership between families, students, teachers and the wider community.
- The principal's very clear vision for the school is shared with the school community and creates a stimulating and challenging learning environment.
- The school invests strategically in a relevant science curriculum with a strong emphasis on practical investigations.
- The dedicated staff work very collaboratively to develop an interesting, compelling and inclusive learning environment.
- There are very good systems to support students who need academic intervention and other services.
- There is good professional development, which supports staff in the use of data to inform instruction and improve students' performance and progress.
- Whole school planning, both long and short-term, incorporates clear goals and time lines for implementation and evaluation.

What the school needs to improve

- Further develop the integrated planning so that knowledge, understanding and skills learnt in one subject are applied and consolidated in another.
- Support staff in the consistent implementation of differentiated instruction.
- Ensure higher achieving students are consistently challenged in all classes.

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.

Data is used very well to identify the performance and progress of students, classes, grades and groups of students. The school then uses the information gained effectively to create a curriculum suited to students' needs and where they understand their next steps in learning in order to make progress. As a result, students enjoy school, have high aspirations and want to do well. However, higher achieving students are not consistently challenged sufficiently in all classes. The school has been very successful in building strong partnerships between families, students, teachers and the wider community in order to improve student learning. Students are also mutually supportive and consider the school an extension of their family with very good systems to support their academic and personal development through academic intervention and other services.

The principal has very clear vision, which is shared with the school community and creates a stimulating and challenging learning environment with a strong emphasis on the arts that permeates all areas of school and its work. Whole school planning, both long and short-term, incorporates clear goals and time lines for their implementation and evaluation. There is significant investment in the development of its science curriculum, which emphasizes practical investigations that are relevant to students' experiences. This continues to be a priority. A strong emphasis in the arts permeates all areas of the school.

Staff work very collaboratively and effectively to deliver a stimulating curriculum, which is increasingly being planned so that knowledge, understanding and skills learnt in one subject are applied and consolidated in another. This initiative is still in the early stages of development. However, there is good professional development, which is increasing the ability of staff to use data effectively to inform instruction and improve students' performance and progress by increasing the use of differentiated instruction. The inquiry team has met on a number of occasions. They have chosen the cohort of students they are going to study and are in the process of identifying the interventions they wish to implement and monitor. Since the last quality review there have been significant improvements in the partnerships with parents, which is now well developed. Professional development has improved, and teachers are increasingly confident in their use of data to inform differentiated instruction.

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.

A significant amount of data is collected and analyzed to monitor the performance and progress of students. This begins in the pre-kindergarten so that any concerns about a

students' progress are identified as early as possible and action taken. In the classroom, data is reviewed for all students through personal intervention plans that identify a student's current performance and expectations for their progress. Common planning time and student review meetings are systematically used to ensure individual students, or groups of students with similar personal intervention plans, are making the progress expected. Whole school data is carefully analyzed to identify the performance of individual students and also trends in classes and grades.

The progress of special education students is a particular focus for the school. Data is used very systematically to place students in academic intervention services, 12:1 and 12:1:1 classes. Constant reviews determine whether the students are appropriately placed, need extra support or can be accommodated in general education classes for some or all of the time. Data is also reviewed very systematically to monitor the performance and progress of ethnic groups and gender. Data on the performance and progress of English language learners is gathered to enable the school to monitor progress methodically. Analysis of data is used to monitor the performance and progress of other groups in the school, for example, English language learners who, "test out" as proficient but are not yet fluent, confident users of English.

The school systematically monitors its own performance and progress from year to year in comparison with other similar schools. Data is then used to compare the progress of classes, grades, English language arts, mathematics and, increasingly, science. Good professional development in the collection, interpretation and use of data is enabling teachers to ensure student work is based on their prior achievement and to create a curriculum best suited to student needs.

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 common planning time is used very well to review student data and to identify student goals. As a result, students are very clear about their next steps and what they need to do in order to improve. This is significantly enhanced through students' understanding of assessment rubrics and older students constructively peer assessing each other's work.

Over the past year, the school has adopted a new science curriculum and is focusing on students' performance and progress in science to evaluate its effectiveness. The school has also identified, through good use of data, a need to ensure the highest achieving students in each class are fully challenged. To implement this it is supporting teachers through good professional development to identify these students and to plan work that assists them in reaching their full potential. Other groups of students whose performance and progress is a particular focus include special education students and English language learners as cited above. This results in very good systems to support children who need academic intervention and other services.

Overall there are high expectations in the school. The school has a gifted and talented class in each grade and a number of enrichment programs that students enjoy. Through strenuous efforts, parents are becoming increasingly involved in the school and this is enabling it to convey increasingly high expectations to these parents, yet this is still not consistently done with all parents. Where parents are involved, the school is providing advice for homework and support they can give to their children at home. These positive contacts also enable the school to gain information from some parents that inform the school about the learning needs of their children. There are good systems, through

meetings, report cards and discussions with parents to inform them of the performance and progress of their children and how they can improve.

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 curriculum in the school gives a significant number of opportunities to collect data to inform each student’s personal intervention plan. The personal intervention plan includes not only English language arts and math but also science. It is a very clear record of performance and progress but also of goals and expectation and progress towards them.

Because the curriculum is broadly engaging and stimulating, students enjoy school, want to achieve well and are very involved in mutually supportive learning. They particularly enjoy the very strong emphasis on the arts that permeates all areas of school, including working in the purpose built “state of the art” dance studio. The school has also invested strategically in a science curriculum with a strong emphasis on practical investigations, which has stimulated students’ interest in the subject. Students also enjoy the enrichment activities and feel very well supported by after school academic programs. During curriculum planning, dedicated staff work very collaboratively and effectively to make increasing use of opportunities for integrating subjects. However, this integrated planning is not fully developed so that knowledge, understanding and skills learnt in one subject are systematically applied and consolidated in another.

Teachers are being held accountable for the progress and academic growth of the students in their classes. Teachers understand how data is being used to identify students’ performance and progress and good professional development is in place to enable them to plan work to assist all students in making the best possible progress. Teachers are increasingly planning differentiated lessons to ensure all students are fully challenged but this is not yet consistent across all classes. Good professional development is supporting teachers in making increasing use of this technique. The school has used the budget well to ensure academic goals are met. The school has full time literacy and writing coaches and a full time science cluster teacher. The school has also invested in a significant amount of books and materials to support the investigative science curriculum. There is also a considerable investment in staff to create good staff to student ratios, collaborative team teaching and academic intervention services.

The school has built a very strong partnership between families, students, teachers and the wider community. As a result this is a collaborative school where all work together and there is mutual respect between staff and students, and between students. This is demonstrated through detailed conferencing, students’ enthusiasm for the school and in students’ abilities to peer evaluate each other’s work constructively. The new parent coordinator has made strenuous efforts to improve attendance and as a result, it is now improving.

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.

Frequent lesson observations are undertaken by the principal and vice principals. Apart from the general focus of differentiated planning and teaching, other foci are shared with staff during the year. For example, in the teaching of science, writing, and evaluation of integrated planning. There is good professional development, which supports staff in the use data to inform instruction to improve students' performance and progress. This is done in conjunction with the United Federation of Teachers teachers' center in the school, which enables significant additional resources, expertise, and professional development in the school. The principal has discussions with individual staff up to three times a year to establish professional development needs.

The school has created many opportunities for teachers to make intervisitations between each other's classes and between different schools where best practice can be seen. Teachers are given opportunities to moderate student work to gain increasing appreciation of the expectations of the different levels within a grade and across grades higher and lower than the one they are teaching.

Due to increasing staff stability there are only two teachers new to the school. They are well supported by colleagues, coaches and additional planning time. There are very good systems for supporting children who need academic intervention and other services. There is a significant amount of support from within the school through, for example, a counselor, psychologist and academic intervention services as well as a system of peer mediation enabling students to support each other. There are after school classes for academic support as well as enrichment program opportunities allowing more able students to extend their learning. There is a well-attended YMCA after school program that also extends students academic and personal development.

A good number of outside entities support the academic and personal development of students. These include a career day for grade 5 students, the New York Aquarium, the Alvin Alley Dance Company, New York public library, Penny Harvest and the American Ballet Theatre.

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 shares his very clear vision for the school with the school community, which is to establish a stimulating and challenging learning environment in which students enjoy coming to school and want to do well. A major goal is to improve the involvement of parents, which has been very successful. As a result, the parents think it is, "not so much a school but a little family". Parents also consider the principal to be a, "great guy", "he's there for you and gets back", "he's the man".

The school goals are clear and well articulated. Long and short-term whole school planning incorporates clear goals and time lines for implementation and evaluation. The school is using good data analysis to monitor its progress towards appropriate and well considered goals for promoting improved student performance and progress. Study groups monitor the progress towards particular goals, which are reviewed monthly, and modified in the light of additional data, student need or change of circumstance. Staff are kept informed through the instructional teams represented in all common planning time meetings. Changes to goals and expectations are implemented promptly and staff understand the reasons and expectations for changes.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Michael E Berdy	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 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		
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?				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?				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 make 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	