



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Hale A. Woodruff School

Elementary School 224

**755 Wortman Ave
Brooklyn
NY 11208**

Principal: George Andrews

Dates of review: April 30 - May 2, 2008

Lead Reviewer: Andy McClean

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

Hale A. Woodruff is an elementary school with 833 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 6. The school population comprises 74% Black, 23% Hispanic, 0.4% White and 2.6% Asian students. The student body includes 5.4% English language learners and 6.9% special education students. Boys account for 49% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 92.1%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 100% eligibility.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal communicates a clear vision for rigorous progress supported by a committed cabinet and administration.
- A wide variety of data available in school enables teachers to modify and improve instruction on a regular basis.
- Students' attitudes to work show great positivity as a result of detailed planning and enthusiastic instruction.
- Teachers' reflection on all aspects of practice ensures both challenge and support for their students.
- The school uses data very effectively to provide targeted professional development for all staff.
- A literacy-rich environment and curriculum provides good emphasis to improve students' comprehension of their tasks.
- The school has a strong sense of community, where all students are included in a safe and secure environment.
- Positive guidance and intervention by administration and coaches result in the faculty's confidence to change and innovate practice.
- Technology usage stimulates student interest in an engaging curriculum.
- Increased use of differentiation produces greater student participation in classes.

What the school needs to improve

- Further improve students' literacy skills, particularly the ability to explain their reasoning and to inform assessment.
- Disseminate successful elements of instruction to all teachers through increased formal intervisitations.
- Improve current strategies to support the school's increasing population of English language learners and their parents/caregivers.

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 principal shows great vision and determination to raise standards for all students, including special education students and those identified as gifted. Good support, characterized by great zeal and professionalism by his cabinet and coaches, is evident in all aspects of school life. Progress since the previous Quality Review shows that data scrutiny is used to plan for differentiation of instruction across the school. Grade leaders have more opportunities to take responsibility for sharing best instruction both within their own grades and with others. Teachers too have opportunities to discuss with colleagues how to ensure students make greater progress. However, there is currently, still a lack of opportunity for teachers to participate in formal inter-visitations to learn from and share best practice.

Based on a wide variety of data, administrators show realism in their regular self-evaluation. The school has used data to identify students at greatest risk of failure and ensures that their teachers differentiate work accordingly. Grades 4 through 6 are combined in one class of high-achieving students. Special education students receive equal attention from very effective systems of early identification of their needs. The school is wholly inclusive in its work to ensure all students receive as much individual support and feedback as possible. A key feature of teacher-student interactions is the use of a wide variety of technology. The principal ensures teachers have resources available to enable them to deliver a broad and stimulating curriculum. Trips out of school enhance the core curriculum. Students talk enthusiastically about projects on the medieval era, where senior staff became “king and queen” to “knight” various members of the school community. Students enjoy their education and show exemplary behavior. This emanates from teachers’ dedication to planning a wide variety of hands-on experiences. Senior staff is aware of the need to improve students’ skills to explain how they arrive at particular answers and conclusions through the spoken word.

Parents receive regular updates on their children’s progress. However, the school’s population of English language learners has increased and strategies currently in place to address both students’ and their parents’ needs for this population, lack depth. Whole-school discussion of goals, linked to detailed data analysis, results in focused professional development, particularly to improve instruction of *Core Knowledge* and *Reading First*. Teachers show exemplary team spirit in their desire to learn from each other and innovate. School leaders encourage initiative and the acceptance of responsibility for student progress. The inquiry team has selected a group of 15 African-American males, specifically to improve their critical analysis skills. From their research, the team has communicated to staff the need to assist students in their decoding of text.

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 uses a wide variety of formal test and internally generated data to address student achievement. Since last review, the school has made very good progress in both the collection of and analysis of data. Scrutiny of data showed a need to address this aspect for all students. In many locations, a color-coded progress chart exists to assist and remind teachers and students of current levels on a grade by grade and class by class basis. This demonstrates staff awareness of the need to provide greater differentiation and challenge to specific students. It portrays an immediate and current review of student progress over measured time in a visual and easily accessible form. Data to identify, track and target special education students is profound and regularly reviewed. The school uses this data to provide carefully formatted programs of support for them. The growing number of English language learners also receives support within their classes. This is currently not to the same levels of excellence as for special education students due to staffing resources.

The school uses data very effectively to compare progress of different classes and groups. The inquiry team supports new measures to improve the performance of a group of African-American boys from grades 4, 5 and 6 in their comprehension of text. Teachers use the latest technology to collect and collate data on individuals and classes with great skill and enthusiasm. Administration ensures that both the provision of this technology, and training to use it, result in improvements and modification of instruction.

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 whole faculty shows great determination to improve the achievement of all their students. Openness to change and innovation supports effective professional development to assist teachers in understanding and using data to set goals for individuals and groups. Teachers collaborate enthusiastically, with regular formal and informal meetings about successful methods. From good leadership by the data specialist, assistant principals and coaches, teachers receive information about students to supplement their findings. This is particularly evident in progress towards better support for English language learners. Teachers use their own technological strengths to assist in differentiation of student activities. A whole-school goal, determined through analysis of past results, is to ensure students' better critical analysis skills in classes. In a grade 3 English language arts class, students work on five activities targeted according to their achievement levels. This class typifies teachers' good use of interim goals to increase discussion about conclusions drawn.

Special education students receive good support as a result of very good systems, which communicate teachers' concerns at an early stage. Teachers act together to share concerns about students at risk. Similarly, data and class observations identify

high-achieving students. The school uses data to select one class of high-achievers from grade 4 through 6 for differentiated instruction. The lessons learned by teachers through interim progress, result in high expectations for all students. Regular discussions with students and meetings with parents convey progress, what the next steps will be and how each party can make that happen. Parents have good access to their children's teachers who devote a significant amount of extra time to those students with problems. The resultant partnership of trust encourages parents to become more involved in student learning and the school has recognized that an area for improvement is to ensure parents of English language learners become a more significant part of the school community. Teachers inspire their students to make their dreams of becoming doctors, athletes and state troopers a reality.

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.

From very good data scrutiny, the school concentrates its core curriculum on improvement of basic skills. In classes there is an emphasis on students' comprehension of the written word through improved critical analysis. Displays, colorful reading material and word walls assist students in a greater understanding of the written text. Trends and patterns of improvement or regression of grades, classes and individual students lead to analysis by teachers. This results in amendments to planning and instruction. A built-in feature of the curriculum is student participation in many trips to enhance their experience of the arts, history science and music. All contribute to students' motivation to learn.

Teachers regularly update their knowledge of students' progress, and accept responsibility for both academic and social progress. Staff understands the need to foster the excellent learning environment, evident in school. Teachers make great efforts to ensure students learn in a calm environment. The majority of classes show a buzz of activity, with a good variety of differentiated activities to stimulate enjoyment. Good budgeting and staffing decisions ensure special education students and high achievers work in small, well-resourced groups including when a grade 6 special education class worked with great enthusiasm on experiments to show the effect of light on plant growth. Typical of the whole school thrust to improve understanding of vocabulary, these students talk happily about scientific terms such as photosynthesis. The principal makes astute strategic staffing decisions to carry out specific roles, such as employment of data, dance and art specialists. Students trust their teachers and respond with enthusiasm. They enthuse about their teachers' availability to talk with them about their daily concerns. Particularly, teachers who commonly acknowledge academic progress and good behavior with parental contact. Project-based learning and concentration on enjoyable reading projects in early years increases students' enthusiasm to attend school. Where attendance or tardiness is a problem, well-established systems exist to tackle it.

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.

Teachers benefit from a regular system of formal class observations carried out by administration. The faculty also enthuses about informal opportunities not only to see colleagues' instruction, but visits to appreciate practices in similar schools. The school lacks a more formal program for all teachers to visit different classes and grades within school to disseminate established elements of successful practice. Since the previous Quality Review, coaches and grade leaders now have many more opportunities to assist their peers. Discussion on instructional techniques among the faculty leads to enthusiasm to innovate and copy successful methods. The collegial and mutually supportive culture of the faculty removes isolation and fear of failure. This is particularly evident in support and mentoring of staff that are new to the profession or to the school. The use of data to plan for differentiation in classes is well established and has improved both the quality of instruction and student engagement. Professional development centers on improving students' literacy skills and increasing the use of the wealth of technology in school by students and staff.

Good systems of guidance exist in school to enable parents and students to optimize their time in school. The faculty makes great efforts to involve parents in their children's education, particularly special education students. Dedicated staff meets regularly with support services and counselors to assist parents. Effective links with outside agencies support student learning. A code of conduct results in a smooth-running school with greater emphasis placed on reward than sanction.

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.

From very good systems of communication, the school understands the principal's vision to provide literacy and academic excellence. Merely teaching to pass tests is no longer acceptable. As well as formal assessments there are regular interim measurements of the progress of grades, classes and individuals. Teachers use such data to support a whole school understanding that academic progress can also be judged from students' ability to explain their learning. Information learned from these assessments results in change to groupings as well as to instructional programs. Teachers use a wide variety of data to adjust planning to differentiate student learning.

School leaders conduct meaningful dialogues with the faculty, grades and classes to discuss areas that data has shown the need for improvement. The results from this regular measurement of progress towards whole-school goals through cabinet grade and subject meetings are used for revising plans. Teachers demonstrate a great camaraderie and mutual trust. Their dialogue about success and failure of instruction shows a concern for the progress of students, as with adjustments to teachers' plans to improve *Reading First* strategies. This is evident in the whole team's desire to improve student understanding of all written and spoken vocabulary they encounter. The principal, through challenging and supportive leadership, communicates a strong and determined message and has established procedures for further school improvement.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Hale A. Woodruff	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