



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Shirley Tanyhill School

Elementary-Middle School 288

**2950 West 25th Street
Brooklyn
NY 11224**

Principal: Joelene-Lynette Kinard

Dates of review: December 6 - 7, 2007

Lead Reviewer: Denis Pittman

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Shirley Tanyhill School is an elementary/middle school with 558 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 47.6 % Black, 45% Hispanic, 4.5% White, and 2.9% Asian students. The student body includes 11% English language learners and 14% special education students. Boys account for 48% of the students enrolled and girls account for 52 %. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 89%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 95% eligibility.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal has a clear vision for the school's development and leads by example in creating a purposeful learning environment.
- Parents value the commitment of staff in helping their children develop and keep them informed of their progress.
- The school effectively collects data to monitor the progress of English language learners well.
- The school has good partnerships with the community and other agencies to enhance its instructional program and provide support for students.
- Relationships between students and staff are positive and students feel that staff are willing to help them with their personal and academic development.
- Monitoring procedures and the emphasis given to improving attendance are very effective.
- The school uses its budget very efficiently to acquire resources and support programs for promoting students' achievement.
- Professional development is geared well to the objectives of the school and there are effective procedures for the support of new staff.
- The school has good administrative procedures to enable it to run smoothly and provide for the effective management of students.

What the school needs to improve

- Identify interim goals with specific timeframes for the evaluation of school plans and learning outcomes.
- Develop strategies for promoting the consistent implementation of differentiated instruction in classrooms.
- Monitor more systematically the progress of specific subgroups of students such as ethnic groups and the relative performance of boys and girls.
- Continue to provide support and training in the use of data for staff, to build confidence and competence in its application to improve instruction.

Part 3: Main Findings

Progress made since the last review

The school has made some progress in addressing the issues identified in the previous Quality Review report.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

The school is a focal point for its community. It is a resource and facility for its local families late into the evening during the week and into the weekend. The school supports and cares for each of its students. It is a safe, well-ordered environment for students. The principal and staff work strenuously to ensure that students feel secure and eager to learn. The effective use of the budget to create small classes helps to promote this objective. Parents and students are very appreciative of all the school does. One of the school's goals is to bring about even greater achievement through more effective use of data to improve instruction. A particular focus is raising the achievement of students with special educational need and monitoring the support given to "holdover" students. The school has established an inquiry team to identify a representative sample of this group of students to monitor their progress and suggest appropriate interventions. Support and guidance are strongly entrenched features of the school. Staff build upon these relationships to encourage student attendance, engagement and achievement. This is particularly beneficial for under performing students. The school is competently managed which is reflected in the productive learning environment which exists in most lessons. The budget is well used to provide a range of resources to match the needs of the students. However the identification of the learning needs of different groups of students, such as ethnicity and gender, is not quite so effective. In some lessons there is insufficient consistency in ensuring that teaching matches the different learning needs of these groups. The process of reviewing whole school objectives does not have sufficient interim "signposts" to see how things are progressing. The school has addressed issues from the last Quality Review, although some continue to be work in progress. The school has improved the monitoring of support services and encouraged the sharing of good teaching practice between staff. The appointment of a new parent coordinator is addressing the need to encourage and develop greater parental involvement in the work of a school. The use of data and its application to differentiate instruction are continuing issues for further development.

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.

Staff work very effectively to collect information on individual students. The information that the school gathers on the progress of the different groups of students such as those

based on ethnicity and gender is more limited. The focus on the progress of the individual is particularly beneficial to the collection of data in relation to special education students and English language learners. Staff track the progress of these students closely and put into place the right intervention programs and staffing to help them to improve their basic skills and competencies.

The school is continuing to focus its attention on improving the performance of students with special educational needs and those students who have not been promoted into the expected grade. The work of the inquiry team is geared to developing strategies to help in this objective. The school has systematically collated its performance data and is able to identify trends in the performance of specific students and the outcomes of academic subjects. The data in relation to similar schools has not been interrogated sufficiently to identify what might be comparative issues. The staff recognize the importance of utilizing the emergent predictive test data from new assessment procedures and are proactive in seeking training to improve their understanding of these processes.

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.

Goal setting for individual students is regularly addressed but the goal setting for some subgroups of students and interim objectives is not yet adequately developed. Staff set every student’s individual goals for each core subject using a conferencing system. These procedures enable students to be periodically involved in conversations about their current performance and the next steps that they need to take. Students typically say that staff are very helpful and give them clear guidance about how they can improve their work. Staff skillfully monitor and revise the next steps required to provide further challenges through mini-lessons. This system is effective and most students make incremental progress, albeit in small steps. This process is particularly helpful for students who are experiencing problems and who require additional support.

The school has a detailed case-conference approach for students who are in greatest need of improvement. Weekly meetings of senior staff and support agencies take place to discuss their concerns and to determine goals and strategies. These meetings bring about quick response because all staff are able to adopt a common and consistent approach. Staff set goals annually in each subject through curriculum planning documents. These goals are arrived at as a result of collaborative discussion amongst the staff. The ongoing evaluation of these goals is problematic as they are expressed in terms of approaches rather than outcomes for students.

The staff make consistent efforts to reach out to parents to involve them in their child’s education. They provide full information about the performance of each student and instigate an informal progress report to parents if there is an issue of concern so that action can be taken immediately. The school actively seeks helpful information from families but there is a great deal of reticence in the community. The new parent coordinator is endeavoring to promote these relationships. Parents welcome the emphasis which has been placed upon standards of behavior, attendance and having high expectations of achievement for their children. The support and guidance which

students receive about after school programs is valued, particularly the information about standards in high 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 proficient.

The school offers a focused curriculum that provides students with an appropriate range of opportunities for achievement. The programs to support lower achieving students such as Great Leaps and Wilson are particularly effective. Curriculum planning in English language arts provides a clear structure for providing meaningful data about the skills and competences of students. The school makes good use of its budget resources to enhance the achievement and development of students. This is reflected in an extensive art program, well resourced scientific laboratories and a music program which includes learning to play the violin.

Teachers work hard to bring instruction alive particularly with the use of new technology, such as interactive whiteboards, in classrooms. Science lessons are particularly productive in this respect. Students say they enjoy science because it is “interesting and fun” as they have the opportunity to do experiments. The bulletin boards in the halls reflect the good quality work produced in these lessons. Teachers are increasing their skills in differentiating instruction to match students’ individual needs, specifically for special education students and for English language learners. However this is not a consistent practice across the school.

Students and staff relate well and demonstrate respect to one another. There is little immature behavior even among the youngest students. The students say that they feel safe within the school and if they have a problem there is always someone they can turn to. It is clear that the principal and her team are increasingly gaining the commitment of most staff towards shared values of trust and appreciation. This position is also reflected in the attitude of students who are now more willing to come to school and in consequence, attendance rates have improved significantly.

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 administration regularly reviews instruction through informal lesson observations. Staff appreciate and value the quality of the feedback which ensues. Where it is relevant, staff are given good opportunities to improve their skills and understanding in relation to the needs of individual students. The school recognizes a continuing need to assist staff in the development of data handling competencies. Staff support each other well. The sharing of good practice is enabled through class visitations and through the modeling of instructional techniques by the math and literacy coaches.

Teachers who are new to the school are made to feel at home very quickly. They receive good support from the administration and from their colleagues, particularly through an effective mentoring program. New staff endorse the helpfulness of this program and reflect that it is enabling them to improve professionally. The school makes good use of an array of specialist staff who work together with the teachers to provide strong support for any students who need it. They meet together regularly and discuss individual students who are causing concern. The principal takes an active role in these discussions and her presence ensures that there are consistent strategies applied to a common goal.

The school is a well-ordered community. The atmosphere in classrooms is calm and disciplined providing an environment where learning can take place. Day-to-day procedures are clearly understood and adhered to by students. Expectations about conduct are clearly displayed around the school. The cleanliness and quality of the presentation of the school provides a working environment which is appreciated and valued by students, staff and parents.

The school has developed good partnerships with community based organizations such as Beacon Heartshare. They run the after school programs to give academic support for students. The school is a substantial resource for its local 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 underdeveloped with proficient features.

The principal sets out her vision for the school clearly and is working hard to gain the commitment of the whole community towards this common purpose. School wide development planning has elements of proficiency but is not yet fully effective. The lack of precision in defining interim goals hinders the administration's ability to drive forward with the next stage of planning improvements.

Teachers effectively monitor and track individual students' progress through regular conferences, and use this information well to set the next steps in learning. They do this with the students so that students themselves know how well they have done, and what challenges they need to undertake to improve their achievement. Predictive assessments help to detect individual under achievement and the school is improving its effectiveness of adjusting practices to address this as it occurs.

At a wider school level, however, goals do not always contain measurable success criteria particularly in the shorter term. Often, they list approaches for teachers to adopt rather than pinpointing the gains that students are expected to make. Where the criteria are measurable, they are sometimes too broad to provide adequate guidance for teachers and students. The principal has worked energetically and determinedly at the task of bringing the staff together around a shared set of values and expectations for students. Increasing numbers of staff are committed to making things even better for the students. Parents recognize that the staff are working hard to obtain the very best for their children..

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME:	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