



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

George E Wibecan School

Elementary School 309

**794 Monroe Street
Brooklyn
NY 11221**

Principal: Rebecca Fonville

Dates of review: March 27 and 31, 2008

Lead Reviewer: John Hudson

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

George E Wibecan School is an elementary school with 410 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 72% Black, 20% Hispanic, 2% White, and 6% Asian students. The student body includes 6% English language learners and 8% special education students. Boys account for 54% of the students enrolled and girls account for 46%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 92.0%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 95% eligibility.

The school is undergoing a major reconstruction program. However, building work is taking place after school hours and is not having a negative effect on the school's daily operations.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Teachers and administrators use a broad range of performance data to give them a good understanding of student learning, achievement and progress.
- Effective professional development enables teachers to use data management systems to track student progress and plan instruction.
- Teachers collaborate with students and parents to set rigorous, objectively measurable interim goals at regular intervals through the school year.
- Teachers and administrators take considerable care over the performance and progress of individual students in greatest need of improvement.
- The school provides helpful workshops so that parents understand their children's next learning steps and can help them achieve their goals.
- The principal and her staff work collaboratively to provide a broad curriculum which includes art, dance, drama, music and sports.
- The leadership and staff create a positive, nurturing environment with mutual trust and respect between all members of the school community.
- Effective procedures impact positively on student attendance and punctuality.
- The principal has established clear systems and structures to support the smooth running of the school.
- The school has set ambitious goals to substantially improve the school's academic performance.

What the school needs to improve

- Formalize teachers' meeting times to ensure consistency in planning with a focus on reflection and the development of effective classroom practices.
- Ensure that classroom visits are sufficiently targeted on the impact of instruction on learning
- Ensure suitably engaging and differentiated instruction meet the learning needs of every student.
- Involve a broader section of the school community in making budgeting decisions.
- Continually review and evaluate school procedures and systems and revise them accordingly in order to raise achievement and accelerate progress.

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 principal and her team are working hard to make substantial improvements in the school's current low level of academic achievement, particularly in English language arts. However, the school has made good progress in improving student outcomes in math over the past year. Teachers and administrators make good use of a broad variety of student performance data to give teachers and administrators a thorough understanding of what students know and can do. Through continuing professional development and sharing of effective practice, school leaders and staff have developed good skills in monitoring student progress, setting goals and revising plans and procedures to improve their achievement. Professional development is directed to meet the individual needs of teachers, although inconsistencies in classroom practices remain. Teachers work collaboratively with students who know their next learning steps. The school provides workshops to enable parents to understand performance data and help their children achieve their goals.

The school is a nurturing, positive and welcoming learning environment and provides a high quality of support for all students, especially for those in need on improvement. Collaborative teams work with much effect to find solutions to individual student's academic and personal needs. However, time is not always used to best effect to reflect on current plans and systems and revise them accordingly. The curriculum is broad and engaging with a very strong arts component. Carefully considered procedures ensure attendance continues to improve and the school runs smoothly. Students enjoy school, are pleased that their work and achievement is celebrated in a number of ways and are happy to be there. A rich variety of student work and achievements adorns the walls of hallways and classrooms throughout the school. The principal makes sensible decisions on use of school resources to promote student learning and accelerate progress but not all members of staff are suitably involved in the decision making process.

Since the last review the school has made good progress in enabling teachers to collect and analyze data to monitor achievement and progress and inform their instruction. Students, parents and staff share their understanding of individual student goals and time frames and work together to enable students to achieve their goals. The inquiry team is making good use of data management systems to identify underachievement and is investigating the impact of classroom planning and interventions to promote learning.

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.

Teachers and administrators make effective use of a broad range of data to maintain a good understanding of what each student knows and can do. Teachers use data binders and frequently updated data from the school's data management system, including running records, conferencing notes, student portfolios and their own assessments, to track the progress of individual students and groups of students over time. The school takes particular care over monitoring the progress of students in need of improvement, including special education students.

The school leaders maintain a good understanding of progress and achievement across classrooms and grade levels. Overall achievement in English language arts has remained at a low level for the past three years. On the other hand, administrators are seeing what can be learnt from math where achievement at Levels 3 or 4 has nearly doubled over the past year and level 4 in this subject has increased substantially.

The principal carefully monitors the school's performance in comparison with other schools, including one higher-achieving elementary school. Teachers and administrators make regular visits to this other school to see effective classroom practices and learn from them. The school makes good use of two data management systems and all staff benefit from effective training in their use. The majority of teachers make good use of their data binders to inform their 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.

Teachers and senior staff have worked hard to implement an effective goal-setting process. They work collaboratively to set targets in all academic subjects, which are monitored in January, March and June each year. Individual students work with their teachers so that they have a clear understanding of their next learning steps. Teachers measure student progress towards these interim goals in reading, writing and math through a variety of methods based on well-established assessment programs and routines. Very frequent information from the school, regular workshops and good communications between home and school help parents to understand the goal-setting process and how they can support their children to help them achieve their goals.

This is a very nurturing school and administrators take considerable care over the performance and progress of individual students in greatest need of improvement. Teachers and senior staff frequently engage in discussions over the needs of these students, what interventions and support have been tried and what is effective. They have a very good understanding of the needs of these students, what they understand and can do, and where they need to progress. To promote the progress of all, student

and parent events are designed to encourage learning. For example, a recent family math event was enjoyable for students, parents and teachers. Parents and students reported that the event “made math fun” and that they learned a lot from it. Good quality student work and achievement is celebrated in classrooms and hallways and parents report that the school has very high expectations of what their children can achieve. To a growing extent, and through their improving knowledge of the curriculum and homework activities, parents actively support their children in achieving their goals.

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.

Teachers and leaders have worked proactively to establish a broad and interesting curriculum with a substantial arts and sports component. In addition to reading, writing, math, science and social studies, a good range of other subjects are covered in the school day and in clubs. All students benefit from the school’s resident artist and have music, dance and drama lessons. All grade 5 students take ballroom dancing classes, which they enjoy. Since September, a group of kindergarten through grade 2 students has been taking violin lessons, for which the school has provided violins so students may practice at home.

Curriculum calendars define assessment events through the school year when student progress is matched against interim goals. All students understand that these events are important and that they must progress in order to achieve end-of-year goals. Teachers are aware of their responsibilities to the students in their charge and they work hard to plan their instruction accordingly. However, not all instruction meets the needs of every student. Nevertheless, the school is a calm, inclusive, positive and safe learning environment. Students report that their teachers and the administration are friendly and approachable and “will do all they can in classrooms, during lunchtimes, and before and after school to help them”. There is a lovely atmosphere of mutual trust and respect throughout the school community.

The principal takes very great care to ensure budgeting and staffing decisions are based on the needs of students. Class sizes are suitably small, there is good arts programming, the school runs a Saturday program and intervention and other support for students are provided. However, teachers would like to see other budget demands met. These include an increase in books for classroom libraries and a greater use of technology in classrooms. Courtesy and very good student attendance and punctuality are high priorities for the school. Effective procedures are in place to discourage tardiness and absence while good attendance and punctuality at student and classroom level are rewarded. Attendance has risen consistently over the last four years.

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.

School leaders frequently visit classrooms for walkthrough observations while formal observations, with detailed feedback and conferencing, take place during the year. Classroom visits are focused on instruction and engagement but are not sufficiently targeted on the impact of instruction on learning. In consequence, teacher skills in differentiating instruction to meet the needs of every learner are not uniformly effective. Teachers work proactively to improve their planning and instructional skills. They visit each other's classrooms and this has improved teachers' understanding of what is working well and what they need to improve. However, the school does not provide dedicated time for teachers to regularly reflect upon their processes and procedures and plan refinements systematically. Support processes for teachers who are new to the school or the profession are considered carefully and are effective. The principal observes candidates giving a demonstration lesson and looks for basic teaching strategies, effective communications with children and a willingness to learn and improve. Mentors and buddies are selected according to their planning and instructional skills and alignment with the needs of the new teacher. The school runs smoothly and is a calm and orderly learning environment. Procedures are effective, discipline related incidents are dealt with sensibly and efficiently and parents are fully involved in all aspects of their children's learning. The school has developed very effective partnerships with local organizations to encourage personal development. For example, the school's arts program is substantially supported by local organizations including Music 144, American Ballroom Dance Theater, Studio in a School, City Year, City Parks Learning Gardens and Brooklyn Council of the Arts.

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 and her team have set clear and ambitious goals and plans to substantially improve the school's poor academic progress and performance, particularly in reading and writing. In this endeavor, they have gained the support of all members of the school community. For example, students, parents and school staff collaborate well and have a clear understanding of what students know and can do, and of their next learning steps. School plans for improving teacher outcomes are having a positive effect although the very good practice seen in many classrooms is not shared by all teachers. Although professional development is targeted towards improving the quality of instruction, it is not sufficiently differentiated to enable all teachers to improve their range of instructional skills. Teachers and administrators are developing processes to routinely monitor the effectiveness of all plans, processes and interventions to make necessary revisions. In this way, school procedures are becoming more effective and are beginning to accelerate student progress. The school has been successful in improving student attendance and performance in math, but has not yet identified what is holding back progress in English language arts. The principal has a vision for the future development of her school and is establishing clear plans and processes to achieve her goal.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: George E Wibecan School	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
Quality Score			X		

Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather and generate data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor the students progress over time.

To what extent do school leaders and faculty provide . . .	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
1.1 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of each student, classroom, grade level?				X	
1.2 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of special education students?				X	
1.3 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of English language learners?				X	
1.4 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of ethnic groups, gender groups and all other categories of interest to the school?				X	
1.5 a measurement of performance and progress based on the school's own past performance, and among students, classrooms, grades and subject areas?				X	
1.6 a measurement of performance and progress based on comparisons with similar schools?				X	
1.7 training, management systems and structures that support teachers in the use of school data to inform planning and instruction and to track the progress of students?			X		
Overall score for Quality Statement 1				X	

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use data to understand each student's next learning steps and to set suitably high goals for accelerating each students learning.

To what extent do school leaders and faculty . . .	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
2.1 engage in collaborative processes to set rigorous, objectively measurable goals for improvement, and to develop plans and timeframes for reaching those goals?				X	
2.2 focus on each student, classroom, grade level, academic subject and group of students whose performance or progress has been identified by the school as a particular focus area?				X	
2.3 identify and improve the performance and progress of those students in greatest need of improvement?				X	
2.4 share whole school goals with all members of the school community to rigorously improve the performance and progress of students?				X	
2.5 convey consistently high expectations to students and their parents/caregivers?				X	
2.6 regularly provide students and their parents/caregivers with information about the goals set for each student, and about each student's progress and performance, and how they can improve?				X	
2.7 invite and enable parents/caregivers to provide useful information to teachers and the school about the learning needs and capacities of their children?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 2				X	

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instructional Strategy to Goals: The school aligns its academic work, strategic decisions and resources, and effectively engages students around its plans and goals for accelerating student learning.

To what extent does the school . . .	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
3.1 select core curricular approaches that facilitate and provide meaningful interim data about progress towards goals and focus on raising the achievement of students?				X	
3.2 provide a broad and engaging curriculum, including the arts, to enhance learning both within and outside the school day?				X	
3.3 hold teachers accountable for the progress and learning of the students in their charge, for making instruction interesting and compelling, and for creating a positive safe and inclusive learning environment?			X		
3.4 ensure that teachers use school, class and student data to plan for and provide differentiated instruction that meets the specific needs of all the students in their charge?			X		
3.5 make budgeting, staffing and scheduling decisions strategically, based on data, to meet the school's academic goals for all students?			X		
3.6 ensure that there is an environment of mutual trust and respect between all staff and students to support personal and academic development?				X	
3.7 ensure that there are effective and consistently applied procedures to encourage and monitor student attendance and tardiness?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 3			X		

Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building to Goals: The development of leadership, teachers and other staff capacity is aligned to the school’s collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.					
To what extent does the school . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
4.1 use frequent observations of classroom teaching by the principal and other available information to develop a differentiated strategy for improving the quality of each teacher’s instruction?			X		
4.2 make professional development decisions strategically, based on data, to help meet the improvement goals of students and teachers?			X		
4.3 provide frequent opportunities for teachers to observe each other’s classroom instruction and to meet together in teams to plan, share effective practices, and evaluate one another’s instruction in an open and reflective professional environment?			X		
4.4 develop effective procedures for the induction and support of teachers who are new to the profession or the school?				X	
4.5 align youth development, guidance/advising and other student support services around stated academic and personal development goals?				X	
4.6 consistently implement clear procedures that enable the school to run smoothly and encourage effective student learning, and effectively address discipline related incidents?				X	
4.7 create effective partnerships with outside entities that support the academic and personal growth of the students?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 4			X		

Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for evaluating each student’s progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.					
To what extent do . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
5.1 the school’s plans for improving student outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?				X	
5.2 the school’s plans for improving teacher outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?			X		
5.3 teachers and faculty use periodic assessments and other diagnostic tools to measure the effectiveness of plans and interventions for individual and groups of students in key areas?			X		
5.4 teachers and faculty use the information generated by periodic assessments and other progress measures and comparisons to revise plans immediately in order to reach stated goals?			X		
5.5 school leaders track the outcomes of periodic assessments and other diagnostic measures and use the results to makes strategic decisions to modify practices to improve student outcomes?			X		
5.6 school leaders and staff use each plan’s interim and final outcomes to drive the next stage of goal setting and improvement planning?			X		
5.7 the principal and school community have a clear vision for the future development of the school and implement procedures and systems to effect change?			X		
Overall score for Quality Statement 5			X		

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