



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



# **Quality Review Report**

**School of the Performing Arts**

**Elementary School 315**

**2310 Glenwood Road  
Brooklyn  
NY 11210**

**Principal: Beverly Ffolkes-Bryant**

**Dates of review: September 24, 2007**

**Lead Reviewer: Bruce Berry**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

The School of the Performing Arts is an elementary school with 834 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 72% Black, 20% Hispanic, 3% White and 5% Asian students. The student body includes 11% English language learners and 7% 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 92.7%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 87% eligibility.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal provides high-quality leadership and is increasing the opportunities for teachers to take ownership of major school initiatives.
- The teachers work well in teams to provide high-quality instruction which is leading to further improvement in achievement levels.
- The school has very effective data systems to monitor student progress.
- Teachers use assessment data very well to revise plans and re-align instruction and curriculum.
- The school has introduced more opportunities for collaborative planning and goal setting which are positively impacting on raising achievement.
- The curriculum provides good levels of student engagement and interest, with the arts program providing high-quality and stimulating experiences.
- There is a well-planned program in place to support teachers in their professional development.
- The many partnerships the school has developed provide excellent support for students' academic and personal development.

### What the school needs to improve

- Further develop data systems to provide students and parents with interim goals for improving achievement levels.
- Develop the data systems to provide further insight into the achievement of different groupings of students in the school.
- Continue to develop strategic planning to include more clearly defined interim and measurable goals.

## 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 provides high-quality leadership and management and is empowering teachers to take ownership of major school initiatives. The principal and faculty continue to provide high-quality educational and enrichment opportunities for all students in the school. High-quality instruction and the effective use of periodic data are leading to higher levels of student achievement. There is a caring and nurturing culture in the school, which ensures students feel safe and enjoy learning. The school has developed many partnerships with community organizations. These partnerships provide excellent academic and social opportunities to students. The inquiry team has already begun to effectively research the impact of instruction and learning on identified groups of students. Data systems do not yet include interim and challenging goals for students or analysis of the progress of different subgroups within the school. Strategic planning is not yet consistent in the setting of interim measurable goals in order to monitor progress over time.

The principal and faculty have collaboratively and successfully addressed all the areas for improvement identified in the previous Quality Review report. The structure of data systems has improved and focused professional development is provided for teachers in the use of data. The team structures within the school are providing teachers with opportunities to share good practice and to focus on instruction and student achievement. Innovative new initiatives are leading to opportunities for greater parental involvement within the school.

### 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 has further developed its very effective data systems to monitor student progress. The introduction of the kid watch program creates an individual progress profile for each student. This provides high-quality information to inform instruction and intervention strategies where appropriate. The regular grade team meetings are providing good opportunities for teachers to review data and to plan instruction and curriculum for individual and groups of students across each grade. The school has very good systems in place for supporting special education students. The assistant principal regularly monitors, with teachers, the progress made by students in meeting the goals outlined in their individual education plans, and provides regular progress updates to parents. English language learners receive good support and make good progress as they move through the school. There is a self-contained class for English language learners in the

kindergarten. Students make very good progress and are integrated into general education classes where they are supported by push-in and pull-out sessions by the English language learning coordinator.

The school tracks the performance of different groups in the school by considering the performance of individual students and then considering the data by classrooms and grades. The school has not developed data systems to provide insight into the reasons for the different achievement levels of various ethnic or gender subgroups in the school. The school uses official data to compare its performance with that of similar schools. It also compares its performance with that of another performing arts school, and the staff has undertaken visits to that school to share good practice.

There has been a significant program of professional development since the last Quality Review to support and develop teachers' skills in the use of data at student, classroom and grade levels. The program and the data systems are now providing the teachers with tools to regularly and very effectively monitor, record and analyze assessment data through classroom logging, conferencing and kid watch programs. A whole-school achievement tracking system provides the principal and teams of staff with regularly updated information to monitor the progress of individual students, classrooms and grades.

**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 school has made very good progress in the development and implementation of plans and goals since the last Quality Review. Very good progress has been made in the consistent use of data, further improving data systems and providing high-quality professional development for teachers in the use of data. There are more opportunities for collaborative planning and goal setting which are having a positive impact on achievement. Students in greatest need of improvement are well served by the school's systems and procedures for identifying and planning appropriate interventions and support. Regular grade level meetings provide opportunities for teachers to discuss student achievement and to identify students in need of extra academic and social interventions. The inquiry team is undertaking valuable research with respect to those students at greatest risk and shares its findings to inform future practice throughout the school.

High expectations are generated through good quality relationships, respect and care of each individual student. The positive culture and order throughout the school are created by a collective consistency in the care and dedication shown to all students by the staff in support of their academic and social wellbeing. Students and parents are provided with regular updates on the progress and achievement of the students throughout the year. There is an open invitation for parents to discuss progress of their children at any time. Parents of students, with consistently low performance or in danger of being held back, are encouraged to play a part in helping their children to improve their achievement levels. The school data systems are not yet refined enough to provide students and parents with interim and challenging academic goals on a regular basis. The school is introducing new and exciting initiatives to improve parental involvement in the school. Following research in other schools, a class parent will be introduced to act as liaison with other parents of students in the particular class. All parents will be asked to pledge ten hours of participation in school activities this academic year.

**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 and the quality of instruction remain strengths of the school. This has been strengthened further by the progress made by teachers in the use of data systems to consistently review student progress. These in turn inform instruction and curriculum requirements. The curriculum provides very good levels of student engagement and interest. It includes an extensive arts program, supported by a variety of partnerships and artists in residence. This provides high-quality academic experiences for the students within and beyond the school day. Grant funding has been acquired to provide a new library, dance studio and ballet equipment. A technology coordinator is providing high-quality professional development and guidance for teachers on the integration of technology into their instructional practice.

Teachers are held accountable for the achievement of students through classroom observations, walkthroughs, reviews of their assessment data and student progress. The kid watch program is providing teachers with a high-quality individual profile of student achievement and progress. This leads to differentiated activities to improve achievement and designed to meet the identified needs of individual and groups of students. Budgeting, staffing and scheduling decisions are excellently supporting the program of change developed as an outcome of the last Quality Review. The introduction of common preparation time at grade level has provided opportunities for teachers to plan instruction and curriculum and to discuss student progress in grade teams. The hiring of a technology coordinator has provided a valuable impetus in promoting the use of technology in the classroom. Students are very appreciative of the care and respect shown to them by the teachers. The caring and nurturing atmosphere in the classrooms further evidences this. High attendance is another indicator of students enjoying school.

**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.**

The development and capacity building of staff is a strong feature in the school. The principal and senior staff undertake formal and informal observations and walkthroughs to monitor the quality of instruction across the school. Coaching and support are provided where areas for development are identified. Teachers are encouraged to undertake peer observations and are very positive about the benefits they bring to their practice. There is a strong desire to further develop systems for administrative and peer observations, internally and in visits to other schools. These will provide support to teachers in continuously improving their instruction. All professional development programs are based on the identified issues in the development plan following the previous Quality Review. They have provided excellent opportunities for teachers to focus on the use of data systems to support student achievement and the development of technology to enhance the instruction and learning experience for students.

Teachers work well in teams to provide high-quality instruction which is leading to further improvement in achievement levels. Grade team meetings, the inquiry team and other

groups operating in the school provide opportunities for teachers to discuss and plan strategies for improving the achievement of individual and groups of students. Very effective induction practices support new teachers in the school. There is a full year program of induction for new teachers who are supported by a trained mentor. Experienced teachers who are new to the school are provided with support by one of the school cabinet.

The many arts programs provide high-quality youth development within and beyond the classroom. The school has a full-time guidance counsellor to support students and parents on academic and social issues. There are clear procedures in place which lead to the school being an orderly environment with a culture of respect. This creates a very positive learning atmosphere for the students. The many partnerships the school has developed provide excellent support for students' academic and personal development. The New York City Opera, American Ballet, Brooklyn Historical Society, Manhattan New Music Project and Chinese Culture Dance Center are just a sample of the many organizations providing high-quality enrichment for the students.

**Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.**

**This area of the school's work is proficient.**

Whole school plans and goals are focused on the areas for improvement identified in the last Quality Review. They are well on the way to being achieved. One major area of development identified in the last Quality Review was improving teacher understanding of data systems to raise student achievement. Good progress is being made in this initiative. The principal and faculty monitor progress in meeting goals, but there is an absence of clearly defined interim goals to ensure that progress is being achieved over time. Strategic planning focuses on the development of major school initiatives, but it does not provide consistency in the setting of measurable achievement goals for individual classrooms and grades.

Teachers demonstrate confidence in using periodic assessment to inform instruction practice and in planning interventions for individual and groups of students. Regular grade level meetings have enabled teachers to exchange good practice and student progress information. This enables teachers to modify instruction and curriculum in light of the analysis of the outcomes of the data. The school has a collaborative approach to planning, with full staff involvement in the curriculum review and the development of curriculum maps for the following year. There is a well-structured approach to gathering and sharing benchmark data to provide continuity as students move from one grade to the next. Since the previous Quality Review the school has established a more collaborative approach in planning the vision and future direction of the school in order to further improve student achievement.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: School of the Performing Arts (PS 315)</b>	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
<b>Quality Score</b>				X	

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

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

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

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

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