



**NYCDOE**

**Quality Review: Final Report**

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



# **Quality Review Report**

**Surfside**

**Elementary School 329**

**2929 West 30th Street**

**Brooklyn**

**NY 11224**

**Principal: Anita Garcia**

**Dates of review: November 1 - 2, 2007**

**Lead Reviewer: Melanie Spears**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Surfside is an elementary school with 612 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population is comprised of 62% Black, 24% Hispanic, 8% White, and 6% Asian students. The student body includes 12% English language learners and 13% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006 -2007 was 89.8%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 76% eligibility.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The relationships between the administration, teachers, and parents are positive and support student learning.
- The school's attention to collegiate events and team building provides a strong foundation for a professional learning community.
- The school leaders' management of budgets, schedules and academic goals are providing teachers with effective personnel and resources to align the curriculum.
- The school is taking a strategic approach to data gathering and analysis, which is having a positive impact on student progress.
- Parents, students, and teachers have a sense of pride around the multiple community partnerships that support student-learning goals.
- The celebration of student work provides everyone in the building with an atmosphere conducive to learning.
- The new school website and hipschool.com are providing an effective bridge between home and school.
- The school has effectively increased attendance with the strong support of the parent coordinator.
- Activities supporting school goals and the needs of individual teachers make the professional development efforts successful.

### What the school needs to improve

- Enable members of staff to use disaggregated data effectively to understand what individuals and subgroups within the school know and can do.
- Develop staff skills in the use of data to inform effective differentiation of instruction in order to meet students' varying learning needs.
- Develop a differentiated strategy for improving individual teacher's instruction.
- Increase teachers' confidence in using technology to gather and analyze data.

## 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 works strategically to shape the school culture. The principal and the two assistant principals are instrumental in establishing high expectations among students, staff, and parents. The administration models best practices by disseminating good instructional strategies throughout the school. The school leaders work diligently to promote team building. School leaders have established a supportive learning environment.

There is mutual trust and respect among the students, teachers, and administration. Students report that, “kids are what the school is about”. Students have opportunities to voice their opinions. Students were surveyed about uniform design ideas and created the school uniforms with a distinct logo that holds New York Knicks player Stephon Marbury’s name. Parents report, “It’s like a family”. Parents feel they can talk with the parent coordinator about any problem and get support. Teachers are energetic about learning new curriculum approaches and work well together. There is a sense of pride among students, teachers, and parents about the school’s mission.

Teachers’ use of data to plan lessons is developing. Students are assessed constantly through individual teacher assessments and with curricular program assessments. The school collects a lot of student assessment data and provides regularly scheduled time for teachers to discuss and analyze this data. At present, teachers are not using specific group data to meet the needs of all students.

School leaders rigorously addressed the previous Quality Review improvement bullets. The school has made good progress with on-site data gathering, goal setting, and differentiation. The inquiry team is in place and is receiving data training. Plans are in place for using ARIS, New York City Department of Education’s new data system. However, teachers are not yet fully utilizing ARIS until the inquiry team has completed more training. This is a strong school, with a few key areas for fine tuning.

## **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.**

The newly implemented Treasures Diagnostic Assessment and Developmental Reading Assessment 2 (DRA2) has increased the faculty's ability to examine areas where students are not achieving. Teachers write skills analysis sheets after each assessment and create monthly differentiation plans. There is clear improvement in the school's ability to gather and analyze student work in grades pre-kindergarten to five. The administration effectively monitors progress towards grade level goals and sets challenging targets to ensure continuous improvement for all grades.

Plans to have teachers disaggregate all data available to the school are still developing. The administration examines group data to gain insights that guide their curriculum focus and instructional decision-making. However, the school is not yet comparing progress of regular education students in collaborative team teaching classes to that of regular education students' growth in the general education classes. Teachers are currently focusing on curriculum assessments. Upper grade teachers are disaggregating some student data. Plans are in place to increase teacher analysis of specific group progress after the administration and inquiry team has a better understanding of ARIS. Classroom data from ARIS, coupled with good quality data from the new assessment programs, provides teachers with sufficient information to plan instruction and interventions for all students. All adults in the school understand how their work contributes to the improvement of student learning. Teachers gather data biweekly and monthly to monitor class progress.

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

**This area of the school's work is well developed.**

The school has established a range of very effective collaborative processes to support staff planning and goal setting to accelerate student learning. Teachers and school leaders together develop plans and set timelines to raise student achievement. Opportunities for discussion include grade level meetings, supervisor lead goal setting meetings, and inquiry team meetings. Support teachers take the newly formulated ideas and plans from the collaborative meetings and work alongside teachers to target at risk students. Students receive focused support from specialty staff in the areas of math, literacy, science, and social studies. The assistant principals are very actively involved in setting the goals for interim and long-term improvement. This is a strength of the school.

The principal sends regular information about goals to parents using several effective methods. These include messages on the new website, new hipschool.com, telephone calls, and notes. The parent coordinator reviews attendance data, holds conversations with teachers, makes home visits, and calls parents to ensure they understand how their support contributes to student learning. Parents received grade level goals and demonstrations of grade specific skills required for students to accelerate learning at the

beginning of the year orientation. Designated staff members track the hits to the website and hipschool.com to identify communication patterns. School leaders' examination of preferred parent communication methods enables the school to enhance their future communication plans. School leaders consistently seek to engage parents in active support of their children's education and the school programs.

**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 administration successfully aligns curricular approaches to the needs of the whole school. New curriculum resources such as Treasures, DRA, Good Habits Good Readers, and Teacher's College Writing to link assessment practices across grade levels support students' interest in learning. Students are developing well as writers.

Teachers have begun to differentiate their teaching styles in response to the school wide focus on differentiation. Students benefit from the prioritized instruction within the school day such as guided reading and small group essential skill building with the teacher. Collaborative team teaching is effectively serving students with special needs. Special education and general education teachers co-teaching in these classes provide seamless learning experiences for these students, who experience special programs but follow the same curriculum as the rest of the school. Currently, students are seeing more gains in math than English Language Arts throughout the school.

The principal's strategic budgeting, staffing and scheduling decisions based on student data are strong features of the school. The administration effectively brings consistency across grade levels by hiring additional support staff. Additional strategies include mini lessons, skills analysis, and monthly differentiation plans. These documents are maintained by teachers in assessment binders to track progress towards student and grade level goals. There is good progress across all grade levels in the development of problem-solving skills for students.

**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.**

Surfside has a stable staff so routines and procedures are well known and consistently implemented, allowing the school to run smoothly on a daily basis. Support for new and experienced teachers is well developed. It includes a designated advisor for new teachers, collaborative meetings, and focused administrative walk-throughs with targeted feedback. The principal has specifically hired qualified cluster teachers for literacy, English as a second language, math, science, and social studies in order to better meet the academic needs of students.

The principal takes proactive measures to create positive relationships that influence student learning and teacher collaboration. The school enhances teacher and student opportunities through partnerships with major organizations such as The New York Knicks, Cablevision, The Brooklyn Arts Council, and the YMCA. Surfside also has a

wide range of events in place to promote leadership and self-esteem and celebrate literacy. Students and teachers participate in events such as poetry contests, ballroom dancing, art lessons, chess mate program, and clubs. Staff bonds have grown with a variety of collegial events such as breakfasts and fashion shows. The result is mutual trust among teachers and students as well as enjoyment and learning opportunities for students.

The school effectively engages parents to help meet students' learning needs. The parent coordinator uses data to target families that need support from the school and community. More parents now bring their children to school on time and are utilizing school resources to improve the family outlook. The school supports a range of parents' personal needs to assist them in helping their children learn. The parent coordinator is a key stakeholder at the school, making home visits and holding crucial conversations with parents. Parents' understanding of school goals, procedures, and resources are improving the academic and personal growth of 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 well developed.**

School leaders and faculty continuously review student data and modify plans to improve student learning. Teachers use a wide range of assessment and diagnostic tools to review student progress. From their findings, they have revised the curriculum map to include planning for differentiated lessons to suit the learning needs of all their students. The new map is proving to be a valuable guide for improving instruction and learning across all grades.

The school continually engages in meaningful improvement planning as it strives to achieve its interim- and long-term goals. The school sets realistic goals based on ongoing analysis of the school's performance. Students are encouraged to set goals and journal action steps for success as a teaching strategy. Teachers maintain assessment binders targeting the weakest skills and are quick to modify practice in response to assessment outcomes. School leaders monitor quarterly goals with teachers and hold weekly grade level meetings to target school-wide instructional focuses. The administration uses notes from ongoing data meetings to revise mid-year and end-of-year plans. The drive to improve student outcomes is very effectively supported by the school's thoughtful and well-informed approach to monitoring individual, grade, and school goals.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: Surfside School</b>	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
<b>Quality Score</b>			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		
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>			X		

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

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

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

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

**Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building to Goals: The development of leadership, teachers and other staff capacity is aligned to the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.**

To what extent does the school . . .	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
4.1 use frequent observations of classroom teaching by the principal and other available information to develop a differentiated strategy for improving the quality of each teacher's instruction?			X		
4.2 make professional development decisions strategically, based on data, to help meet the improvement goals of students and teachers?				X	
4.3 provide frequent opportunities for teachers to observe each other's classroom instruction and to meet together in teams to plan, share effective practices, and evaluate one another's instruction in an open and reflective professional environment?				X	
4.4 develop effective procedures for the induction and support of teachers who are new to the profession or the school?				X	
4.5 align youth development, guidance/advising and other student support services around stated academic and personal development goals?				X	
4.6 consistently implement clear procedures that enable the school to run smoothly and encourage effective student learning?				X	
4.7 create effective partnerships with outside entities that support the academic and personal growth of the students?				X	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>				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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>				X	