



**NYCDOE**

**Quality Review: Final Report**

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



# **Quality Review Report**

**Patrolman Robert Bolden School**

**Elementary School 345**

**111 Berriman Street  
Brooklyn  
NY 11208**

**Principal: Wanda Holt**

**Dates of review: April 30 - May 1, 2008**

**Lead Reviewer: Helen Donnellan**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

The Patrolman Robert Bolden School is an elementary school with 704 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 48% Black, 46% Hispanic, 1% White, and 3% Asian students. The student body includes 14% English language learners and 8% 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 90.9%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 99% eligibility.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal and school leaders use data consistently to identify areas needing development and articulate clearly the actions needed to make improvements.
- The curriculum blends core and creative subjects successfully to provide all grades with opportunities for academic, artistic and personal development.
- Staff collaborate extensively through formal and informal meetings to plan instruction and provide professional support.
- The menu of professional development activities reflects school priorities and teachers' needs well and focuses on developing and sharpening instruction.
- Students are clear about agreed procedures for their behaviour and as a result the school runs smoothly and is a safe and orderly environment for learning.
- Students show high levels of mutual regard and concern for staff and each other.
- Data is routinely gathered and analyzed so that staff and administrators have a clear picture of the progress of students in classes, grades and subjects.
- Analyses of data are used well to identify students making less progress than anticipated and provide them with additional support.
- Administrators and teachers use data to evaluate the impact of instruction and modify plans promptly to improve student learning.
- The school works hard to build effective partnerships with parents.

### What the school needs to improve

- Establish a long-term plan setting out measurable goals with time-related actions, interim goals and monitoring processes needed to achieve those goals.
- Develop time-related plans for teachers with clear goals for instruction and their professional growth along with interim goals and monitoring processes.
- Make all staff accountable for implementing agreed procedures, delivering stimulating instruction and increasing student outcomes.
- Ensure that instruction is differentiated within all classes.
- Encourage teachers to be independent in producing, interpreting and using 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 well developed.**

The principal strongly leads the staff team in its drive to improve the school and raise learning outcomes for all students. This is reflected in the changes made following the previous Quality Review. Measurable goals for student outcomes are in place for each grade in reading, writing, math and social development. Tracking of progress against these goals is more rigorous as a result of a consistent use of assessments in all grades. Acuity tests are used to good effect to measure the progress made by higher-achieving students, with a six percent growth in their English language arts scores from November 2007 to April 2008. Teachers' needs have also been a focus. Their perceptions of their own development were sought, compared with the overall goals for the school and used to determine the professional development program for the year.

The cabinet provides staff with clearly analyzed data that shows the progress and performance of all students. Team and collaborative working allow staff to plan together and use data to identify goals for their students as a matter of routine. Goal setting is more rigorous for students than it is for teachers. Making staff accountable is unduly challenging as a result of the absence of measurable and time-related goals for teachers. School leaders are vigilant in monitoring data systematically and using this to identify where improvements are needed. All students enjoy a broad curriculum and arts activities are integral to subjects covered in every grade. Most teachers match instruction to student needs but this is not yet consistent.

The work of the inquiry team reflects the dominant culture of reflection and using data to improve learning for students. From the lowest-achieving third of students they identified a group of grade 4 students who have been at the school since grade 2, to enable them to have good longitudinal data on their progress. They use three assessments to track student progress in reading following additional intervention. Early results indicate a wide range of improvement and work is currently focused on seeking possible causes for this variation.

### **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 established effective systems for tracking students' progress which combine teachers' informal records, test scores and computer generated predictive and

diagnostic assessments. Administrators and teachers compare results of different assessments as a matter of routine to detect patterns, trends and anomalies and use their findings to consider how best to move students on. Graphical analyses give a clear picture of progress at student, class and grade level so the school has a good understanding of both progress and performance and variations between grades.

Special education teachers use item skills analyses well to record student progress towards the goals on their individual educational plan goals. Careful and systematic tracking of the progress of English language learners in bilingual and English as a second language classes has shown that students in the English as a second language classes make better progress and achieve more than their peers in the bilingual classes.

The school has started to compare academic performance with other schools. Assessment scores in the testing grades and the performance of subgroups are compared to provide some insights into strengths in the different schools. This work is limited as it does not yet compare performance that reflects the full spectrum of the school.

The data specialist provides a high level of support to teachers to make them independent in gathering and analyzing data as a useful tool in planning their instruction. Some teachers are sufficiently confident to develop and refine analyses more closely to the needs of their classes. Others are less confident and remain dependent on colleagues to enable them to make good use of data.

**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.**

Staff collaborate formally at regular grade meetings to share information, plan instruction and give each other professional support. Teachers use data to identify focused short-term goals for students but do not always share these in ways that make clear to students what they need to master next in order to achieve their longer-term goals. Some teachers promote their focus for each week through a poster outside their classrooms which provides sharp reminders for students. The school priorities are shared with staff at the start of each year and they are frequently updated by regular information on progress and changes through written updates, faculty and team meetings.

The staff and school leaders use data well to identify areas where performance is low or has decreased and plan strategies to overcome this. Currently the school is working to improve outcomes in writing and for science, especially in the higher grades. A focused range of programs and intervention is in place to support the lower-achieving students including intervention teams and the Saturday, before- and after-school programs. Academic intervention staff work closely with the teachers of English language learners to provide additional work to help students acquire and use English.

Staff work hard to develop effective partnerships with parents and families so that they can help their children in learning and to support family life. They arrange workshops to keep them informed about the life of the school and use speakers from community

organizations to share wider information. The number of parents actively involved in the school is steadily increasing as a result of effective initiatives. Teachers make strong efforts to overcome this by contacting parents regularly to give information on student progress and school life and to seek information from parents about their children.

**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 core curriculum now aligns well with assessment with computerized testing providing teachers with immediate feedback on student performance and areas in need of strengthening. It is based on core knowledge which teachers use to good effect to introduce varied and stimulating content and extend language. In a grade 2 class observed during this current Quality Review, the teacher skilfully introduced complex vocabulary to students in meaningful ways. She added the words to the class word wall so that students could become familiar with them and incorporate them into their work. The teacher varied the methods for delivering content through songs, pictures and animated reading of a short section of text. The curriculum is carefully planned so that all students have visual arts and music during the school day and enrichment programs provide opportunities for them to develop their skills and knowledge further. Pre-kindergarten students show enthusiasm for music and learn about the structures of music and different genres through animated music lessons that link auditory, visual and kinaesthetic learning styles. This gives students a solid foundation of musical knowledge which is subsequently reflected by many in the skilled performances of the school band.

Some teachers miss opportunities to adapt their instruction to meet student needs which results in lower student engagement and limits learning. The school provides extensive support to teachers to help them to differentiate their instruction so that the quality of all instruction matches that of the best. Systems for making staff accountable are based upon school leaders verifying that agreed school policies and procedures are applied during formal and informal observations. The school lacks a structure which sets out the changes that teachers need to make and the time-frame for those changes to ensure that improvements to instruction are always made promptly.

As well as receiving effective support for their academic growth, students are exceptionally well assisted in their personal development including providing them with guidance to deal with any highly complex and sensitive personal issues they might have. Some staff work with students through the care and share programs which provides sensitive and appropriate encouragement to students dealing with challenges both in and out of 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.**

Teachers learn together and from each other through a supportive professional environment. This enables teachers new to the profession and the school to quickly become effective members of the staff team. The strength of collegiality was summed by an experienced teacher in her first year at the school who said, "Coming to work at this school has given me back my passion for teaching." Administrators use a rubric as a basis for their written feedback following classroom observations which provides a consistent framework. The recommendations from observations are focused on improving instruction but are not always sufficiently precise to make clear exactly what the teacher needs to change in order to sharpen their instruction.

The school runs smoothly and students are clear about the expectations for their behaviour and the implications of falling short of those expectations. The focus is on recognizing positive behaviour with rewards of additional school supplies. This supports students in their personal growth as the rewards are meaningful without offering material inducements for unacceptable behaviour. Guidance and personal development programs provide strong support to students during their life at school and encourage them to look ahead to their adult lives. At the regular career events positive role models from a broad range of professional, commercial and government organizations come into the school and share experiences with students. This helps students to see the reasons for learning and achieving well.

**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 school aim is for every student to make at least one year's progress during each academic year. The annual plans set out the actions needed to achieve this, but there is no long-term plan defining the time-related actions and interim benchmarks needed to achieve the vision. While measurable goals are in place for students, some of the goals agreed with teachers at the start of each year lack sufficient precision to enable sharp monitoring at regular intervals.

Administrators and teachers use data routinely to evaluate the impact of instruction and modify plans promptly to maximize student learning. The inquiry team adds to the rigor of monitoring the progress of students on intervention programs through probing the data and making astute comparisons of different outcomes. This leads to consideration of variables such as student requirements, programs, curriculum strands, teaching approaches and balanced decisions with the changes needed. The review of a range of assessment results for grade 3 students showed that the goals set lacked sufficient challenge so these were promptly adjusted to increase the challenge.

Teachers use their grade meetings well to focus on test results and identify changes to instruction necessary for increased challenge for higher-achieving students and where others need additional intervention. School leaders recognize that not all teachers are as comfortable at using data as the basis for systematic monitoring, evaluation and revision of student outcomes. They are helped to gain more confidence in this through working with leaders who share data with them, explore the reasons for the results and identify changes needed to improve outcomes.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: Patrolman Robert Bolden 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 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	
<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 and tardiness?				X	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>				X	

<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, 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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>					X

<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>					X

◇	<b>Outstanding</b>
+	<b>Well Developed</b>
✓	<b>Proficient</b>
➤	<b>Underdeveloped with Proficient Features</b>
Δ	<b>Underdeveloped</b>