



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Coy L Cox School

Elementary-Middle School 369

**383 State Street
Brooklyn
NY 11217**

Principal: Rudy Giuliani

Dates of review: January 22 - 23, 2008

Lead Reviewer: Ronnie Young

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Coy L Cox is a special education school with 472 students from kindergarten through grade 9. The school population comprises 66% Black, 26% Hispanic, 4% White, 2% Asian and 2% other students. The student body includes .02% English language learners and 100% special education students. Boys account for 85% of the students enrolled and girls account for 15%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 84.6%. The school is not in receipt of Title 1 funding.

The school consists of one self-contained building and eight sites where there are self-contained classes in community elementary and junior high schools, and one high school. The school delivers two programs of specialist education. One is for students with emotional difficulties and one is for students with autism.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal and his assistant principals provide strong leadership for a team of highly committed staff.
- Staff have good knowledge of the needs and performance of every individual student and consistently strive to provide the most appropriate programs and strategies to ensure student progress and success.
- High levels of collaboration across the school and its sites and very good relationships with host schools ensure sharing of good practice and rapid response to problems.
- Students' performances generally compare well with similar schools and there are high rates of movement to less restricted environments.
- The school has extremely clear structures, procedures and policies which are understood and followed by all.
- There is a sense of optimism and positivity throughout the school that reinforces mutually high expectations.
- Excellent guidance and related services raise students' self-esteem and help prepare them for life outside this school.
- The staff and administration are very flexible and are able to respond quickly if practices or programs need to be revised.
- All members of the school community share the vision of promoting as many students as possible into general education.

What the school needs to improve

- Break down school data into ethnic groups, especially for students with autism, to identify possible trends and explore the impact of cultural attitudes.
- Track English language learners separately to identify possible differences, especially in the autistic population.
- Continue with efforts to involve more parents in their children's education
- Find ways of team building with students to improve trust and respect between them.

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 and his administration provide strong leadership for a team of highly committed staff. Responsibility has been devolved to empower all staff to make decisions and seek solutions which will benefit every student. The school runs on a behavior system called "Power of Choice" which awards points for all activities from attendance and punctuality through to class participation and diligence. If a student receives the maximum level three for six weeks continuously, he or she can be assessed for moving to a less restricted environment, which is the aim of all students in the school. This has given a structure to all activities in the school and handed responsibility for learning and conduct to the students, with the main staff responsibility being to facilitate and support students' success. All activity is driven by data which is being collected and used continuously, forming the basis for program selection, academic and behavioral intervention and professional development. Parents are included in plans and goals wherever possible and parental involvement is increasing, albeit slowly.

Throughout the school there is an atmosphere of optimism and positivity which can be ascertained from students' rising self-esteem and maturity levels. The inquiry team has selected a group of students in grades 3 and 6 who are ready for inclusion, as its primary focus and is examining strategies used to aid full integration. Good progress has been made since the last report. Cabinet members now have specific roles and a variety of assessments and forms for tracking student performance is in use. Super Saturdays have been inaugurated to improve parental involvement, although more still needs to be done, and related service providers meet monthly to improve communications. The school does not break its data down into ethnic groupings, however.

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.

Staff have an excellent knowledge of the performance and progress of all the students in the school. Students are formally assessed both academically and behaviorally four times per year and records are reviewed every six weeks. Students are assessed at the grade level that they are in and also their age-appropriate grade level to ascertain their skills deficiency profiles. Standardized assessment includes, for example, Brigance Inventories and Acuity. Other assessments used throughout the school include the New York State

Alternate Assessment Datafolios and SWIS behavior data. These are supplemented with formal and informal administrative observations, reviews of student work, running records and conferencing notes and pupil personnel and interdisciplinary team reviews.

Data is broken down into individual students, classes, grades and subjects. Cohorts are tracked throughout their time in the school and year-on-year data is examined. There are many more male than female students and the school helps to address this imbalance by providing girls' activities such as ballet, cheerleading and manicuring. There are very few English language learners and they are all non-verbal, although they are supported by specialized English as a second language teacher. Students are not currently tracked according to ethnicity. This limits the school's ability to fully grasp cultural attitudes towards disability and behavior, especially with its autistic students. The school always thoroughly compares itself to general education schools in its geographical District, and students following the standardized curriculum compare well. It also compares itself to similar schools regarding the number of students it promotes out of the school into less restricted environments. There are well-established structures for the collection and use of data, and outside each classroom are charts for each student showing weekly graphs for behavior, attendance and academic progress. These are completed daily by the students and effectively show how behavior and attendance correlates with achievement.

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.

All teachers in the school work totally collaboratively in a variety of teams which include paraprofessionals, coaches, therapists and managers. The administration has an open door policy and has devolved responsibility as much as possible so staff are and feel empowered. Each site is managed by an assistant principal or senior coordinator and this team meets twice monthly to aid communications and continuity. There are regular unit planning and weekly common grade meetings, the latter including planning and professional development. Staff from host schools are involved regularly in professional development with the school.

Students needing specific intervention or support are identified during lesson and lunch duty observations and from data folders which are closely monitored by the administration, although all students are deemed to be in great need, in one way or another. Crisis intervention staff are available at all times, including guidance counselors, social workers and therapists. Host schools are considered to be part of the school community and all philosophies and expectations of the school are shared with them as well as with parents, students and all staff. The school has now initiated successful "Super Saturdays" which take place every four weeks and are run by the parent coordinator. These are opportunities for parents to meet staff and take part in useful workshops. As a result, parents are involved more, although there is still a significant number who play little part in their children's education. Other outreach work with parents includes family trips and a well attended curriculum evening in September at which the school provides dinner.

"Points sheets" go home daily as do communication notebooks for autistic children in which information can be exchanged between school and home. The school has its own E-chalk website with pages for individual teachers' comments. This has proved to be another useful communication tool for both parents and students. Expectations for students are very high and students have equally high expectations of the school. The whole school buzzes with an air of optimism and positivity that reinforces these

expectations. The achievement of student goals and benchmarks, together with celebrations of those achievements raise students' self-esteem and behavior levels.

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 school works hard to select a varied curriculum that meets the needs of all its students, while providing meaningful interim data and fulfilling State requirements. Balanced Literacy, Leap Frog and the Autism Core Curriculum are among successful core programs which provide data while adapting to the needs of the students. To supplement and broaden the curriculum, there are a number of exciting extra-curricular programs, including art, carpentry, music, performance, band, yoga, information technology and photography. Friday afternoon is Clubs Afternoon for those students who have earned the right to be there with an appropriate points score. Every other week, school teams play basketball, football or softball against other schools. Autistic students have a daily period of any two of yoga, gym, music, movement or art. Overriding everything, however, is behavior management and counseling, anger management and therapy which are included in all student programs. The points system is pivotal in the school and gives an extremely structured framework which both sets parameters for students and provides security for them. This has encouraged consistency and trust and there are high levels of mutual respect and regard between staff and students. The administration and staff continually model appropriate behavior which is emphasized at all times. However, students acknowledge that they are not always tolerant of each other – as one student put it “other kids bring their hurt to school and we are easy targets for their anger” and this occasionally leads to flashpoints, especially out of the classroom.

Units of study are always modified and adapted to suit each individual student and teaching staff are totally accountable for ensuring that all instruction fits each student exactly. Lesson plans are checked regularly by assistant principals to track individualized instruction. Differentiated activity is the norm in classrooms, by level, by task and, by some teachers, by learning style. All budgeting, staffing and scheduling decisions are based on student need as identified in data. An example of this is the improvement in scores seen in those grade 8 students whose instruction included the use of a SMART board. All grade 8 classrooms have now been provided with SMART boards and this has raised achievement across the grade by increasing student motivation. Attendance is taken extremely seriously and home is telephoned each day of a student's absence. This emphasis has greatly improved student attendance. Lateness is taken equally seriously and the only allowed excuses for either absence or lateness are doctor's notes or letters from the court.

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.

There is a plethora of support in the school, including counselors, therapists, psychologists, social workers and behavior intervention and crisis teachers, which support

students emotionally and psychologically so they can access learning, and help autistic students with communication and social skills. These staff meet students in groups and individually throughout the week and push into classrooms. They are also available before and after school for extra academic or emotional support. The administration has a visible presence in classrooms daily, monitoring individualization, differentiation, groupings and behavior management as well as effective teaching and learning to ensure high quality teaching and learning. Staff are encouraged to visit both each other's classrooms and the other school sites and many enjoy doing so. Professional development is continuous. The administration regularly chooses a focus from available data and invites staff from host schools as well as this school to monthly training sessions. Currently, there is an emphasis on emotional intelligence which is being delivered by an external consultant. New teachers are supported by the school teacher-trainer and they benefit from a teaching buddy in the school and extra support from the grade co-ordinator, as well as extensive professional development.

The school has made extensive relationships with outside bodies, including Columbia and Syracuse Universities, Museum of Contemporary African Diaspora Arts and NYC Outbound. These partnerships enrich students' experiences and offer new opportunities.

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.

All school plans contain both academic and behavioral benchmarks and measurable interim goals. These are at the most six-weekly but may be at shorter intervals if needed. Students' points scores are thoroughly checked weekly. Teachers' goals are carefully articulated in pacing calendars and charts which are monitored by senior staff. Sensible time frames and benchmarks are always included. A number of rigorous periodic and diagnostic assessments are used, including SCANTRON, Acuity and WRAP. Personal intervention plans are thoroughly updated six-weekly and individual education plans are under constant scrutiny. Staff are extremely flexible and are quick to revise plans and practices if necessary. For example, when the grade 6 reading program was found to be too non-user friendly, the Jamestown Reading Navigator, which was being used with a few children, was quickly introduced across the grade to see if it would improve reading. It is now being used successfully across grade 6.

The school has a very clear vision, which is to put itself out of business by promoting all its students to a less restrictive environment. This is a mantra which is repeated by all staff, students and parents and which pervades all school activities.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Coy L Cox School (K369)	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 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	
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?				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?				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