



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Adam Clayton Powell Jr School

Elementary School 153

**1750 Amsterdam Avenue
New York
NY 10031**

Principal: Monica George Fields

Dates of review: June 4 - 6, 2008

Lead Reviewer: Martha Madera

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Adam Clayton Powell Jr. School is an elementary school with 1,054 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 19% Black, 79% Hispanic, 1% White, and 0% Asian students. The student body includes 45% English language learners and 6% special education students. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 50%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 92.5%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 89% eligibility.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal is a highly respected leader who conveys very high expectations to all members of the school community.
- The school has developed very effective systems for gathering and analyzing data in order to assess the progress of individual students.
- Engaging instruction and well-targeted intervention contribute to the very good progress that all students, including English language learners and special education students, are making.
- The principal effectively builds the capacity of staff by identifying and meeting professional development needs exceptionally well.
- There are excellent structures in place that allow staff to learn from each other and share best practices.
- The school has developed innovative and impressive practices to involve parents in their children's education.
- The school effectively provides a varied range of enrichment activities, enhancing the curriculum and ensuring personal development alongside academic performance.
- Based on performance data, budgeting, staffing and scheduling decisions are aligned exceptionally well in order to ensure that school goals are met.
- The school has established very effective procedures that enable the school to run smoothly, contributing to an excellent school tone.
- The school uses data very effectively to monitor student progress, modify teacher practice and revise instructional plans.

What the school needs to improve

- Further develop the innovative and impressive practices that the school has implemented to involve parents in order to ensure that it reaches out to all non-English speaking immigrant families.
- Refine the established good practice of goal setting to identify measurable individual short-term goals for students, and involve them in assessing their progress in achieving them.
- Extend the existing very effective ways in which teachers use conferencing strategies with students to assess their progress.

Part 3: Main Findings

Progress made since the last review

The school has made good progress in addressing the issues identified in the previous Quality Review report

Overall Evaluation

This school is outstanding.

The Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Elementary School is an outstanding school that sets very high expectation and ambitious goals for all students. The principal provides exceptional leadership and systematically builds capacity to ensure that all members of the school community share a real sense of common purpose in raising academic achievement. The high level of commitment to school improvement has enabled the school to make robust gains in student progress and, as a result, earn the Chancellor's School of Excellence Award for ranking in the top 10% of all schools in New York City. The very effective use of the wealth of data the school collects and analyzes is at the heart of the school's success. Through a high degree of collaboration, teachers use data to plan instruction effectively, assess progress carefully and match intervention to individual students. The curriculum is delivered using an interdisciplinary approach built around annual goals. It is supported by the varied range of enrichment activities that enhance the curriculum and ensure personal development alongside academic performance. The school recognizes the need to continue sharpening its approach to goal setting at individual student level in order to ensure maximum progress in all lessons.

There are very effective, well established procedures that enable the school to run smoothly, contributing to an excellent school tone. Parents hold the school in very high regard and value the effort the school puts forth to ensure that they are integral part of the life of the school. The inquiry team identified 'at risk' second graders as their target group and has successfully identified strategies to use throughout the grade as they prepare second graders to move into the testing grades. The areas for improvement from the last quality review have been thoroughly addressed including the numerous ways in which the school communicates with parents and the funding that was secured to build an outside playground. Particularly impressive is the creation of the school's weekly public access cable show, Inside Public School 153, which made its debut this year with the intended purpose of keeping parents informed and promoting parental involvement.

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 outstanding.

The impressive use of a wealth of data allowed the school this past year to make exemplary proficiency gains in both English language arts and math. The established

effective systems for analyzing data allow the school to zero in on every grade, class and individual student. The review of data is facilitated by the use of data trend sheets and balanced score cards that allow for information to be viewed at a glance and enables the school to more effectively monitor progress over and during the year. The score cards allow teachers and administrators to monitor their students' performance relative to the goals that have been set. The cabinet scrutinizes this data in detail to ensure that no information is missed in developing a full understanding of what students know, understand and are able to do. Students are included in conversations around data gathered from their work, notebooks, and reading logs in order to provide them with information about their next learning steps. Teachers meet regularly to plan instruction; they incorporate the review of running records and conferencing notes in order to inform their next steps. The teachers are very well supported through excellent training and extremely effective management systems that assist them in using data to drive instructional practices.

English language learners and special education students are carefully tracked and support is put in place based on identified need. As a result, they have made exemplary progress. Similarly the school monitors the performance of other sub-groups of students and develops appropriate strategies to support them. Service providers are also trained in using data to inform the need for outreach to students and their families. In this school, data analysis is viewed as the backbone behind all curricular decisions. It informs the conversations as well as next steps in terms of programs and new initiatives.

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 outstanding.

The school engages in extensive collaboration and uses a "team approach" to develop its annual goals. School-wide goals are set each year in the Comprehensive Education Plan based upon the data from the previous year. Clear targets in English language arts and math have been set and benchmarks established that are indicative of the incremental but constant progress students must make during the year. Grade, classroom and individual student goals are clearly stated and communicated to the entire school community. Very effective monitoring systems are place in order to continuously re-evaluate on a consistent basis what students understand and what their next learning steps are. The school further deepens its lens by engaging in regularly scheduled learning walks, which are used as an intricate part of the process of goal setting across the building. Parents are encouraged to participate in the learning walks and are given ideas as to how they can support their children in meeting set goals.

Students receive monthly postcards with their individual goals specifically in reading, writing and math. Teachers use intermittent goal sheets to help them keep track of students' ongoing goals. Balance score cards are used to set goals for each class and then are revisited to continue to raise the level of expectation for each class over the course of the year. Teachers identify and improve the performance of students in greatest need of improvement by delivering strategy lessons that provide well-targeted intervention. Additionally, daily conferencing with students enables teachers to identify quickly whether students are on track or require additional support. The school views parents as equal partners and as such uses innovative ways in order to ensure that they

are “kept in the loop”. Parents are encouraged to log on to the school website where each classroom teacher keeps an updated web page showcasing what is taking place in each of their classes. In addition, parents participate in a total of six parent conferences during the year. The school acknowledges that it needs to continue parent outreach in order to ensure that it reaches the new non-English speaking immigrant families.

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 outstanding.

The school is strongly committed to providing a rich curriculum that is based on high expectations, engages the learner and supports the social and emotional needs of students. Following the practices of the workshop model, teachers confer with students daily and model the use of instructional strategies. Students are frequently engaged in small group work with learning objectives that are aligned to their specific learning needs. It is common practice to find teachers addressing “skill lessons” that are totally differentiated for each student. The administration is extremely astute in considering the implication of assessment data when making strategic decisions. A study of students’ writing indicated a need for a grammar and mechanics program which could complement the one currently in place. As a result, teachers gathered together to research programs and materials and choose one best suited for their students. The culture of the school has been built around meeting the individual needs of students and using data to determine precisely what those are. The cabinet regularly uses interim test data to monitor the effectiveness of the curriculum and holds teachers accountable by discussing the progress of their students.

There is a very strong arts program, including Suzuki Violin, keyboard, string program, visual arts, and drama. A strong collaboration with The Harlem School of the Arts provides students with the opportunity to work alongside professional artists. This year the principal implemented the school wide Enrichment Model which provides extensive opportunity for students to participate in a wide range of enrichment activities of their own choosing. The school puts equal emphasis on students’ personal development and so has implemented the Peace Builders program infusing the language and principles of the program in all parts of the school day. Budget and staffing decisions are based on data to make sure the resources the school needs to successfully meet its goals are available. Rigorous procedures are in place to follow up on all absences and lateness, consequently attendance has been steadily increasing.

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 outstanding.

The principal and the assistant principals provide exemplary instructional leadership. They work collaboratively with the professional development team and teachers to promote a deeply evaluative learning community. Professional development for teachers is determined by both the students’ needs as indicated in the data and self

selected to explore opportunities based upon their individual teacher needs. Frequent administrative visits to classrooms are very detailed and focus on the quality of teaching and its impact on learning. The visits are followed by constructive feedback that helps teachers reflect on their practices and raise even further the quality of their work. Learning walks are well managed and often focus on a designated relevant theme. An example of an initiative implemented following the portfolio learning walk was the desire to share a common vision and mission of portfolios throughout the school. Inter-visitation between and among teachers are embedded in the schedule. Teachers visit their peers and observe them teaching in order to inform their own best practice. The high level of collaborative discussion between teachers resulting from these practices consolidates the learning that takes place. New teachers are additionally supported by their assigned mentors who focus on assisting them to develop a repertoire of exemplary practice.

The school has very effective procedures and structures in place that ensure the smooth running of the school. Staff, students and parents understand exactly what is expected of them and support the established routines that contribute to the school's extremely safe and harmonious environment. Guidance staff work closely with teachers to ensure that appropriate additional support is in place for students. Students having difficulties interacting with their peers are recommended to participate in regular sessions with the guidance staff. In addition, the school has developed strong partnerships that support and promote a wide range of effective guidance services.

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 outstanding.

The principal has established a school culture where the ongoing monitoring of data and constant re-setting of goals, ensure that all students in the school are making continuous progress. In this environment, excellent systems and structures enable school development to be on-going, based on sharp analysis of data. The school's Comprehensive Education Plan as well as content area curriculum maps are viewed as working documents needing constant change in response to the results of interim assessments, summative assessments and anecdotal information from teachers. During weekly professional development meetings student's interim goals and benchmarks are reviewed and plans are made for revision where necessary. Grade conferences and common preparation times are also used very effectively to consider student data and to set further goals for improvement. The principal's clarity of vision and strategic planning ability has had a major impact on the school's academic successes. The entire staff are highly committed to the school's vision and work exceptionally hard to ensure that all students succeed.

Teachers learn from each other as they engage in learning walks and inter-visitations. These elements allow them the opportunity to evaluate aspects of their school in order to adapt plans for teacher support and professional development. Such practices promote the existing exemplary learning environment of harmony and dedication to professional growth and academic achievement. Parents readily affirm that the school provides an excellent learning environment for their children.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Adam Clayton Powell Jr School	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
Quality Score					X

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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