



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



# **Quality Review Report**

**The Salome Urena De Henriquez**

**Middle School 218**

**4600 Broadway  
New York  
NY 10040**

**Principal: June Barnett**

**Dates of review: October 9 - 10, 2007**

**Lead Reviewer: Denis Pittman**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Salome Urena is a middle school with 574 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 0.8% Black, 98.7% Hispanic, 0.2% White and 0.3% students of other ethnic groups. The student body includes 40% English language learners and 15% special education students. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 is 90.4%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 68% eligibility.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal has a clear vision for the school's development and leads by example in creating a purposeful learning environment.
- Parents are supportive and value the commitment of staff in helping their children.
- The school is particularly good at identifying students who are struggling and providing appropriate support for them.
- The school effectively collects data to monitor the progress of special education students and English language learners well.
- The school has good partnerships with an on-site community based organizations and other agencies which promote the personal development of students.
- Relationships between students and staff are positive and students feel that staff are willing to help them.
- The school uses its budget efficiently to acquire resources and support programs for promoting students achievement.
- Professional development is geared well to the objectives of the school and there are effective procedures for the support of new staff.
- The school has good administrative procedures to enable it to run smoothly and provide for the effective management of students.

### What the school needs to improve

- Create effective systems and structures to periodically measure and analyze the progress made by the different groups of students within the school.
- Set measurable goals with interim milestones for whole school, grades, classes and groups, with a clear link to teachers' professional development.
- Put in place effective systems for evaluating whether the school has successfully achieved its goals and make comparisons with similar schools.
- Extend the opportunities for mutual lesson observations to all teachers and across subject disciplines.
- Continue to develop teachers' skills in differentiating instruction in order to meet the varying needs of students more effectively.

## Part 3: Main findings

### Progress made since the last review

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

### Overall Evaluation

#### **This school is proficient.**

The school welcomes and cares for each of its students. The principal works tirelessly to use her good management and attention to individual detail to ensure that students feel secure and eager to learn in a purposeful learning environment. Parents and students are very appreciative of all the school does. One of the school's goals is to bring about even greater achievement through more effective data gathering, goal setting, and evaluation of its plans particularly for lower achieving students and identified groups. It is now better placed to bring this about and uses its budget effectively to support this and other initiatives. The school has already set up the inquiry team and has identified a sample group of students which are going to be the focus of its attention for improving achievement.

Care and guidance are strong features of the school. Staff build upon these relationships to encourage student performance and achievement. This is particularly beneficial for struggling students and is well supported through outside agencies. The identification of the learning needs of the teaching groups of students such as those based on gender is not quite so effective. In this context there is insufficient consistency in ensuring that teaching matches the different learning needs of these groups in classes. Professional development is well matched to the school's objectives. However, further opportunities to observe colleagues teach across subjects and disciplines are needed to support this process further.

The school has addressed some of the issues from the last Quality Review. It has improved the collection of individual information about English language learners and special education students. Teachers use the workshop model regularly in lessons, and expectations about performance are more clearly defined.

### 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.**

Staff work very hard to collect information on individual students, but the information that the school gathers on the progress of the different groups of students based on ethnicity and gender is more limited. The school has good conferencing procedures so that staff involve students periodically in conversations about their performance so far and the next

steps that students need to take. Students typically say, “The feedback is very helpful and it always shows you how to improve.” The focus on the individual is particularly beneficial to special education students and English language learners. Staff track the progress of these students closely and put into place the right resources and staffing to help them to improve their basic skills and competencies.

The school is continuing to focus its attention on improving the performance of the lower achieving students particularly in the area of English language arts. The work of the inquiry team is also geared to developing strategies to help in this objective. Although information on this is at an early stage, individual staff have already taken some steps in the right direction. Data about the underachievement of a number of students who are struggling is being collated. The staff recognize the importance of collecting more detailed information about students progress and are preparing themselves up to do so over the next year. The school has gathered, for comparison purposes, information about the performance, but not the progress, of students in similar schools.

**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 proficient.**

Goal setting for individual students is strong but the goal setting for some subgroups of students and interim objectives is not yet fully developed. Staff set every student’s individual goals for each core subject through the conferencing system. Staff skillfully monitor and revise the next steps required to provide further challenges through mini-lessons. This system is effective and students achieve well because of it. This is particularly the case for students who are struggling and who require additional support.

The school has a detailed case-conference approach for students who are in greatest need of improvement. Weekly meetings of senior staff and support agencies take place to discuss their concerns and to determine goals and strategies. These meetings bring about quick response because all staff are able to take a common and consistent approach.

Staff set goals annually in each subject through an education development plan. However, these goals are sometimes too broad to be easily evaluated by the administration or are stated in terms of approaches rather than outcomes for students. The school plans to put structures in place to enable it to set measurable interim goals for individual subjects and for different groups of students. Teachers recognize and value the benefits that better information will bring particularly in the development of basic skills in English.

The staff work in very effective partnership with parents. They provide full information about the progress of each student and seek helpful information from their families. The parent coordinator is successful at sustaining and promoting these relationships. Parents welcome the high expectations that the school has established for both academic and personal development. The support and guidance which students receive for transition to high school is particularly valued.

**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 school provides a focused curriculum that provides students with an appropriate range of opportunities for achievement. The programs in support of bilingual students and English language learners are particularly strong. The school's work is enhanced by the positive relationships that exist throughout the school. The school makes good use of its budget resources to enhance the achievement of students.

The curriculum offers a variety of opportunities to students, whatever their interests and aspirations. For example, there are good facilities for dance, computer work and art. Parents and students talk knowledgeably about what choices are available. The bulletin boards in the halls reflect the good quality work produced in lessons.

Teachers work hard and are successful in bringing instruction alive particularly with the use of new technology, such as interactive whiteboards, in classrooms. Science lessons are particularly productive in this respect. Students say they enjoy science because it is “interesting and fun” as they have the opportunity to do experiments. Teachers are increasing their skills in differentiating instruction to match students’ individual needs, specifically for special education students and for English language learners. However this is not a consistent practice across the school, resulting in some students making faster progress than others. Also, some teachers do not yet offer a sufficiently wide range of written materials, such as worksheets, so that every student can develop independence as a learner as quickly as possible.

Around the school, students and staff relate happily and respectfully to one another. There is little immature behavior even among the youngest students. The students say that they feel safe within the school. It is clear that the principal and her team are increasingly gaining the commitment of most staff towards shared values of trust and appreciation.

**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 proficient.**

The school’s professional development programs provide staff with good opportunities to improve their skills and understanding in relation to the needs of individual students. However, staff are not yet provided with a secure analysis of the needs of groups of students, such as those based on gender in order to plan better for instruction.

The school offers its staff good opportunities to share good practice through teacher-led “walk-through’s” of lessons. The voluntary participation in peer observations and critiques is geared to improve teaching instruction and student learning and is welcomed by teachers. However, this is not done in a formalized or systematic way across classrooms and subjects. As a result, the school misses opportunities to improve practice.

Teachers who are new to the profession or new to the school are made to feel at home very quickly. They receive good support from the administration and from their colleagues,

particularly through the assignment of “teaching buddies”. Teachers commented on how much this has helped them to improve professionally. For more experienced teachers, the administration has a supportive program of formal lesson observations. Teachers receive comprehensive feedback which they find helpful and informative.

The school has developed good partnerships with outside agencies such as local universities, which are used well to promote students’ achievement. The link with the on-site Children's Aid Society is very productive and supports students very effectively through its after-school program.

The school makes good use of an array of specialist staff who work together with the teachers to provide strong support for any student who needs it. They meet together regularly and discuss individual students who are causing concern. The principal takes an active role in these discussions and her presence ensures that there are consistent strategies applied to a common goal.

The principal is well-organized with good day-to-day administrative procedures in place. She is increasingly effective in creating a learning environment where staff commitment and student engagement is valued.

**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 principal sets out her vision clearly and is working hard to gain the commitment of the whole school community towards a common purpose. School wide development planning, although proficient, is not yet effective. The lack of precision in defining interim goals hinders the administration’s ability to monitor the plans and to drive forward with the next stage of planning improvements.

Goals do not always contain measurable success criteria particularly in the shorter term. Often, they list approaches for teachers to adopt rather than pinpointing the gains that students are expected to make. Where the criteria are measurable, they are sometimes too broad to provide adequate guidance for teachers and students. The school is aware of this and has plans to refine the criteria. Staff are about to receive training on the use of predictive assessments in response to the recent City wide changes in assessment practices.

Teachers effectively monitor and track individual students’ progress through regular conferences, and use this information well to set the next steps in learning. They do this with the students so that students themselves know how well they have done, and what challenges they need to undertake to improve their achievement. The school is reasonably effective at adjusting its practices whenever it detects individual underachievement.

The principal has worked energetically and determinedly at the task of bringing the staff together around a shared set of values. Increasing numbers of staff are committed to making things even better for the students. Parents recognize that the staff are working hard to obtain the very best for their children.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: The Salome Urena de Henriquez (MS218)</b>	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
<b>Quality Score</b>			X		

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

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

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

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

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