



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Public School 226

Early Childhood–High School 226

**345 East 15 Street
New York
NY 10003**

Principal: Dania Cheddie

Dates of review: March 3 - 4, 2008

Lead Reviewer: Helen Donnellan

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Public School 226 is a special education school with 271 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 12. The school population comprises 40% Black, 40% Hispanic, 11% White and 7% Asian students. The student body includes 27% English language learners and 100% special education students. Boys account for 81% of the students enrolled and girls account for 19%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 87.0%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 67% eligibility.

The main site is located within a general education high school, with six other sites in Manhattan providing education through inclusion programs and within other general education schools. The school serves students using alternate and standardized assessments. All students have some delay in their expressive and/or receptive language. Some have other disabilities including hearing impairment, autism, learning disabilities and physical disabilities.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal is a strong and quiet leader who defines procedures and systems so the school runs smoothly and provides safe learning environments.
- Extensive working partnerships with organizations and other schools extend and enhance learning opportunities for students in meaningful ways.
- Data is routinely and regularly gathered to give an updated picture of progress for standardized and alternate assessment students.
- The school uses data effectively to pinpoint aspects of learning to be strengthened.
- The curriculum meets mandated requirements, provides opportunities for students to develop social and life skills and enables them to participate in arts and sports.
- Instruction uses a variety of media to meet students' diverse needs.
- The school provides challenging learning opportunities for higher-achieving students, enabling some students to move on to university.
- Continuing professional development focuses on supporting teachers in improving their instruction to enhance student learning.
- Planning processes reflect the culture of systematic monitoring, reviewing and revising plans to achieve desired improvements.
- The school works hard to establish and sustain supportive relationships with parents and keep them involved in school life and their children's learning.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue to increase the capacity of all staff to track progress for all students.
- Extend support in the understanding and use of data so that teachers and support staff apply data to determine individualized instruction.
- Ensure that collaborative meetings take place as planned, so that staff teams plan together and set goals for students with greater consistency.
- Ensure that goals set for students are precise to allow progress against them to be monitored more accurately.
- Extend opportunities for teachers to share expertise and learn from their colleagues within the school.

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 well developed.

The principal has a quiet, powerful style of leadership and conveys high expectations for instruction and learning outcomes. She has lead changes which now mean that the school has secure processes for gathering data and analyzing the progress of all students. Data is well used to identify weaker areas and track progress, but some plans for individual students lack precision and data is under-used to monitor progress against these. Data is increasingly used to set objectives for students, but some inconsistency exists so objectives do not always align closely with the latest data available. Teachers receive good detailed analysis of data from the administration and some analyze and apply the data independently. However, others lack confidence and are reliant on administration and coaches for support in doing so. While there are good examples of collaborative work led by administrators across the school's sites, some staff meetings do not take place regularly and when they do occur, sharing and planning is limited.

The curriculum is well adapted to the diverse needs of students and engages students in meaningful ways so they make good progress. High levels of trust and respect for staff, fellow students and systems for maintaining good order are reflected in the safe learning environments. Teachers are committed to their development, and learn informally from each other but they do not seek opportunities to evaluate each other's work. The school has strong processes for using data to monitor, review and revise long and short-term plans.

The inquiry team has examined communication patterns for initiating interactions, as these limit many students' communication. Their data on verbal and non-verbal interactions is used well to identify patterns and establish ways of overcoming obstacles.

The school has made changes to deal with issues raised in the last Quality Review, relating to teachers, parents and objective setting. Teachers' personal development plans identify their goals for improvements in assessment, instruction, managing behavior and other professional development needs and the principal monitors their progress towards these through the year. Additional meetings have been held to inform and involve parents in school life, which remains a challenge as many parents live some distance from the school sites.

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.

Data is gathered routinely and regularly to give an updated picture of progress for standardized and alternate assessment students. Portfolios of student work provide samples of student work, which add to formal test results to give a balanced view of how students perform in classes and in more structured contexts. Video recordings supplement the range of assessment data and are well used to show development of communication and social skills. The school uses assessment data well to identify students who can move to less restricted environments. The portfolios and assessment data keep teachers well informed about students when they move between sites. Data is gathered in core subjects, music and practical classes so that the school has a broad understanding of the range of students' knowledge and skills.

Just over a quarter of the students are officially identified as English language learners, but this includes both students whose family language is not English and some non-verbal students, which adds to the diversity of this group. Tracking of development of language and communication for every student is a priority for the school. This means that regardless of a student's language or communication mode, their progress is carefully recorded in both receptive and expressive language.

The ratio of male to female students is 4:1 and the school has examined data in great detail to identify variations in their learning outcomes. While the data has shown no differences, this comparison is now part of regular monitoring to ensure that neither group falls behind in learning. Higher-achieving students are tracked just as carefully, to verify that instruction continues to challenge them. The administration team compares performance with nine similar schools, which has led to greater understanding of the factors in the testing structure that resulted in a decrease in the number of students achieving Level 4.

Teachers receive good detailed analyses of data from the administration team and coaches who ensure that they understand its meaning and how to apply it to their instruction. Not all staff show the confidence to analyze and apply data independently, which limits how staff use data in their planning.

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.

The administrative team and cabinet set good examples of collaborative work because they hold regularly structured meetings dealing with issues at all sites and share information at those sites. Staff cohort meetings are less effective as a forum for regular goal setting and information sharing because the absence of one person results in a cancelled meeting.

The school uses data effectively to identify subject areas that need to be strengthened at a whole school and grade level. However not all plans to raise student performance contain goals that are sufficiently specific to identify the skill or knowledge that needs to be mastered. Information about progress is vague and does not make clear the steps already achieved and what remains to be mastered. Staff use data very effectively to identify specific knowledge that standardized students need to master to achieve higher test scores in English language arts, math and living environment. The school used data to identify groups of students in early childhood classes likely to benefit from additional

intervention to develop communication through the Applied Behaviour Analysis and Verbal Behavior (ABA/VB) approach. Their development is tracked closely to evaluate the impact on communication and learning.

School goals are shared through the school leadership team and the parent newsletter, which describes goals clearly in non-professional language so they can be easily understood. The school works closely with related service providers, because the administration makes sure they know how their work contributes to school and student goals. Student portfolios show their goals using whatever communication modes the student understands: symbols, text at different levels and pictures, and this helps students to understand their next steps. Parents are well informed about their children's goals for learning and how they can support them through regular newsletters and workshops that provide them with skills and strategies to ensure that consistent approaches are used at home and school. The school seeks the views of students and their parents twice each year about what they want to learn so that staff can plan individual programs to match student needs.

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 curriculum meets mandated requirements for standardized and alternate assessment students and is delivered in ways that make it possible for students using different communication modes and approaches to understand the content. The school provides challenging learning opportunities for higher-achieving students, which has led to some students moving on to university. The curriculum provides students with good access to arts, sports, technical and practical subjects and provides effective support to students transferring to other schools or sites. Coaches provide teachers with individual programs of support to ensure they use data to plan instruction that matches student needs. The school is not yet sharing data sufficiently with support staff to enable them to evaluate the most effective ways to provide individualized support.

The administration holds teachers accountable through systematic monitoring at all sites. They examine each teacher's planning every two weeks to ensure that it aligns with school priorities and the goals in each student's individual education plan. They challenge unsatisfactory instruction with equal rigor. As a result, they provide detailed intervention plans that match teachers' specific needs, with clear actions for teachers to take, identified timescales and details of the support available.

Students and staff show high levels of mutual respect and concern. There are buddy programs at two sites which link general education students with special education students, which adds to the respect shown to special education students. Older students provide strong role models for younger students by sharing insights into particular disabilities and inspiring them to aim for college and university programs.

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 an established culture of professional learning which links recommendations from classroom observations to school-wide areas for improvement. All teachers now have personal development plans that contain goals relevant to their needs and have a clear focus on raising student outcomes through improved instruction. This is the first year these plans have been in place, so their impact on improving instruction has yet to be seen. Teachers support each other through inter-visitations, but these do not include explicit evaluation of strengths and areas to improve.

The principal has established clear procedures and systems consistently across all sites. which enable the school to run smoothly and provide a safe learning environment. As a result, students are aware of how they are expected to behave and take responsibility for their actions. Staff use their knowledge of students to avoid potential triggers for disruptive events and are sensitive in discriminating between unavoidable behaviors that arise from a student's disability and poor behavior.

The school has established a wide range of working partnerships with a diverse range of community organizations that extends and enhances programs and support for students. A particular focus is work-based programs. These support students in making the transition from school to work through enabling them to gain valuable work experience while still being supported by school staff. Strong links with other educational organizations enable higher-achieving students to make a smooth transition to university. The school also supports community organizations to help change perceptions about particular disabilities, such as autism.

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.

There are clear links between planning at whole-school level and at student levels, which reflect an effective structure for planning, monitoring, reviewing and revising plans to achieve desired improvements. Student goals are well defined and focus on their individual needs as well as linking to the areas in the school's education plan. Because the school measures student progress in small steps towards their goals, staff can make rapid adjustments to intervention and support so that delays to learning are minimized. The administration monitors teachers' plans throughout the year by the use of data and observations to ensure that changes planned are having a positive impact.

The school is carefully monitoring and evaluating the impact of the ABA/VB intervention and making changes where necessary. This includes extending professional development for groups of staff and individual teachers so that they can improve the delivery of the program. School-wide plans are evaluated each year and taken into account when determining the subsequent year's goals. The inquiry team's work on initiating communication has been successful and will feature in next year's priorities, reflecting how small-scale pieces of work are evaluated and go on to influence larger numbers of students.

The administration is clear about the school's vision for increasing the number of students entering competitive or supported employment when they leave school. The way the school plans programs and interventions makes a strong contribution towards reaching this goal.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Public School 226	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