



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Winchester School

Elementary School 018

**86 - 35 235 Court
Queens
NY 11427**

Principal: Kathleen Peknic

Dates of review: September 24 - 25, 2007

Lead Reviewer: Ronnie Solow

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Public School 018, the Winchester School, is an elementary school with 500 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 8.9% Black, 15.7% Hispanic, 13.3% White and 61.6% Asian students. The student body includes 8.8% English language learners and 5.8% special education students. Boys account for 52.8% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47.2%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 98%. The school is not in receipt of Title 1 funding.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Enrichment activities and the arts support and enhance the academic program.
- The principal is respected and appreciated by students, parents and staff as a knowledgeable administrator and educator.
- Students are actively engaged and knowledgeable about their learning goals.
- Student articulation information enables targeted teaching to begin immediately.
- Professional development activities are differentiated according to experience and skills.
- Teachers are regularly held accountable for providing an interesting and safe learning environment for their students.
- Well-targeted budget and scheduling decisions support student learning.
- Staff is well-acquainted with students across classes and grades, which helps foster an environment of trust and respect.

What the school needs to improve

- Schedule regular meetings with individual teachers to examine class data and its implications for teaching and learning.
- Provide additional professional development in the analysis of data to provide information regarding sub-groups across classes, grades and the school.
- Increase the staff intervisitation schedule based upon teacher input regarding personal needs.
- Expand efforts to attract additional partners for enrichment activities and resources.

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 proficient.

The principal is in her third year at the school. Formerly a staff developer, she has instituted a program of professional development activities that encourage all staff members to further increase capacity in order to raise student outcomes. She is appreciated as an educational and personal resource by the staff and parents.

Parents and students state that the school is a good place for students to learn in a supportive and nurturing environment. Parents are regularly invited into the school to share in celebrations and to provide important information about their students. A large parent volunteer group supports the school program in a variety of ways, although partnerships with outside entities that support student growth are not as strongly developed.

While a good amount of data on student performance is gathered, teachers' use of this data to inform instruction is not consistently implemented throughout the school. The inquiry team has been formed and has started to train the school staff in the use of data to educate their students more effectively. Teachers and other school staff work in collaborative teams to support the students and provide activities that raise the academic outcomes for all students across the school. A gifted and talented magnet program provides a segment of the school population with a challenging and academically rigorous program. Other students are equally challenged through enriched learning experiences and differentiated instructional activities.

The principal, inquiry team and the teaching staff have dealt with the issues identified in the previous Quality Review. Data is examined to reveal trends for classes, grades, subject areas and sub-groups within the school. A program of teacher intervisitation has been implemented for first year teachers and teachers new to the school. The educational program is differentiated to support all groups of interest using approved and tested methodologies.

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.

Building upon the initial efforts begun in the last school year, the staff makes effective use of a variety of formative and summative data to analyze the performance outcomes for the students in their classes. Outcomes in English language arts, math, science and social

studies are examined to provide a good picture of student mastery for each sub-set of required skills in the core curriculum. Periodic assessments and State exams, teacher-made tests, conference notes and student work samples provide objective measures of each student's strengths and areas of need. They serve as the basis for flexible classroom instructional groups. Student portfolios and articulation folders travel through the grades with the students, enabling the new teacher to begin targeted instruction at the start of the school term. Analysis of results by class and by grade, over time, has provided the staff with a useful picture of the progress of students by gender and ethnicity. The performance of English language learners and special education students across classes, grades and the general school population is also analyzed.

The school has a gifted and talented magnet program with one class in each grade. Regular comparisons of progress and student outcomes are made with another local school with a similar gifted and talented program. Other comparisons of results are made with similar local schools at principal network meetings. Because of the sharing, the principal has been able to institute many new strategies. Building upon the previous activities in the analysis and use of data, extensive professional development has been planned. Training in the use of the new data and accountability systems has been scheduled for the principal and data specialist. Appropriate plans are in place for subsequent training for members of the inquiry team and all staff so that the impact on student achievement can be monitored and measured.

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.

The school analyzes the available data from a variety of sources in order to plan effectively for the students. Curriculum maps and pacing calendars are used as guidelines for the delivery of the approved curriculum. Teachers examine student work samples in grade teams, with academic intervention teachers, the reading teacher, the English as a second language teacher and the special education support teacher, in order to plan appropriate lessons. The overarching goals for the educational program emanate from the Comprehensive Education Plan, a collaboratively developed document, and the principal's goals and objectives. Defined and measurable targets are outlined for each core curriculum area. District and school priorities are included into the action plan that is designed to encourage the growth and development of every student, class and grade in the school. Data analysis underlies decisions about groups and the setting of new instructional goals.

Particular attention is given to English language learners, special education students and participants in the gifted and talented magnet classes. Students identified as having greater needs receive good quality additional instruction. This is done through the extended day program, academic intervention services, special education teacher support services or in a grade 4 collaborative team teaching class. All students hold conferencing sessions with the teacher to review their progress and to address areas in need of further work. Students know their reading and math levels, what they are working on and can explain the strategy they are mastering. Rubrics and student work samples are evident in classrooms and throughout the school.

Parents receive regular information about student progress in a variety of formal and informal ways. City-scheduled events such as report card distribution, parent-teacher

conferences and open school activities allow for structured interactions. Informal contacts occur through notes in the backpack, telephone calls, e-mail or brief conversations at dismissal. The student-parent handbook, a source of important school information, is currently out of date. Parents are given regular opportunities to attend celebrations of student achievement, performances, fairs and parties throughout the year to increase parent involvement.

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 follows the workshop model of instruction for the curriculum in literacy, math, science and social studies. The teachers work closely with a staff developer from Columbia University Teachers’ College and the school-based math coach. This is the second year the school has implemented the Everyday Mathematics program and it is seeing good success in the outcomes as evidenced by the data. Music, art, chorus, ballroom dancing, computer and robotics provide a broad range of opportunities.

Teachers are accountable for providing engaging and relevant lessons in a positive and respectful learning environment for all students in their class. Data is examined by the teachers to pinpoint areas of strength and weakness for their class as a whole and for specific students. Trends revealed by data are discussed at weekly grade meetings and strategies for success are shared. Weaknesses are addressed in an ongoing fashion through curriculum adjustments and changes in pacing. Item analysis of test questions allows the teaching staff to pinpoint areas that require additional emphasis and those that can be eliminated from reteaching. Teachers and students set goals and review progress at their conferencing sessions. Flexible classroom groups are the outcome of data analysis. All classes include the workshop model of instruction with whole group and small group instruction coupled with the incorporation of writing tasks in all the subject areas.

The budget is used wisely and well to provide resources based on student need. In order to support the extensive professional development program, the budget includes substitute teacher days, a part time coach, mentor time, art, music, science, physical education and computer staff. Smart Boards for all classes in grade 3 through 5 were purchased to include the latest technology in the program. Classrooms have extensive leveled libraries to support learning. One teacher explained, “If you need it, you get it”. Attendance procedures are a strong feature of the school and result in a low amount of absences.

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.

A comprehensive program of professional development activities is established at the school. The principal visits classrooms to observe teaching practice on a daily basis and provides formal observation reports and informal verbal feedback which assists in the evaluation of the impact of professional development. Each teacher develops and submits a professional development goal for the year that serves as the focus for personal growth and development. New, inexperienced teachers and teachers new to the school are

supported by skilled mentors. A program of classroom intervisitations is included in their staff development activities. Additional staff have requested a series of intervisitations to other classrooms. The principal is developing ways to extend this practice.

Additional professional development activities focus on the Columbia University Teachers' College training provided by the staff developer both in the school and at the college. Several skilled mentor teachers have alternatives to formal observation options that include action research projects, mentoring and leadership group training. New teachers are formally observed more frequently than other staff in order to assess progress and provide assistance where needed. The principal meets with new staff members every month to discuss issues pertaining to their induction to the faculty.

Effective student support services are provided in a variety of ways. The academic intervention services are provided in-class and in the extended day program. There is a school-based support team, a speech and language provider and a guidance counselor on a part time basis. A school nurse is present every day. In addition to these support services, clear and consistent school procedures contribute to the smooth running of the school. A self-sustaining after school enrichment program is available for a fee. Other activities that enhance the academic program include Inside Broadway, tennis and ballroom dancing. These activities serve a limited number of students. The principal recognizes the need to involve additional partners that provide enrichment so that students can expand their personal growth and development.

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 Comprehensive Education Plan and the principal's goals and objectives include measurable targets in all core curriculum areas for the school. The school focuses on strategies that move students from one academic achievement level to the next, including book clubs, group and individual projects as well as direct instructional strategies. The monitoring of the most recent performance data highlighted the need for further development of critical analysis skills and a literacy performance drop by grade 5 boys. Strategies to address these deficiencies were developed and put into practice. Systems are in place for the monitoring of results of interim assessment data to consider whether the strategies are successful and the next required steps.

The use of periodic assessments, classroom evidence and formal test data are used to determine areas of need. Pacing calendars and curriculum maps are revised to reflect these needs. Literacy and math periodic assessment data results and classroom evidence serve as diagnostic tools to measure the rate of student progress. Teachers can focus on what needs to be taught and eliminate what has been mastered. Individual students receive additional assistance through in-class mini-lessons and the extended day program. Goals for each grade are adjusted yearly to reflect the current situation for each class and student. Composite goals for the school reflect trends revealed by the data. The principal, inquiry team and teaching staff focus on the information gleaned from the data and the adjustments that need to be implemented into the academic program. As a result of using data and the other available information, the principal has made appropriate plans to revisit the Quality Review self-evaluation, the Comprehensive Education Plan and the school survey. This is in order to reassess progress and examine a set of sub-skills in each

curriculum area to assess whether they conform to the proposed guidelines and accelerate the learning process in keeping with the vision of the school community.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The Winchester School (PS 018)	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		

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 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		
Overall score for Quality Statement 5				X	