



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Public School 029

Elementary School 029

**125-10 23 Avenue
Queens
NY 11356**

Principal: Jamie Adams

Dates of review: October 25 - 26, 2007

Lead Reviewer: John Collings

Content of the report

Part 1: The School Context

Information about the school

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

What the school needs to improve

Part 3: Main Findings

Progress made since the last review

Overall evaluation

How well the school meets New York City's evaluation criteria

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Public School 029 is an elementary school with 605 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 2.5% Black, 45% Hispanic, 19% White and 33.5% Asian students. The student body includes 20% English language learners and 2% 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 94.8%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 62.8% eligibility.

Because of reorganization the school no longer has grade 6 students.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school has a strong community based on mutual respect, which creates a strong climate for learning where students make good progress overall.
- The principal demonstrates very good leadership and sets a clear vision and direction for the school which is understood and supported by staff.
- The instructional team and staff are collegial and are continually reflecting on how best to improve students' performance and progress.
- The school uses data very well to identify which students are in need of support to be challenged and extended.
- Students behave very well, are fully engaged in learning, enjoy coming to school and want to do well.
- There is a good system of peer classroom observations and intervisitations to support teachers in making their teaching as effective as possible.
- Staff know students very well and as a result, students are well supported both academically and personally.
- Good school procedures enable the school to run smoothly.
- The principal conducts effective classroom observation of teacher instruction and student work.
- The budget is used strategically to effectively meet the needs of all students.

What the school needs to improve

- Focus on improving English language learners language skills so all become fluent and confident users of English.
- Use best practices that already exist in the school to support teachers in making greater use of data to inform differentiated teaching.
- Ensure higher-performing students are fully challenged so that they make good progress.
- Make greater use of technology to support teaching and learning.

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 has a very clear vision for the future of the school. She has successfully motivated teachers to improve student performance and has created a school with a strong sense of community and mutual respect, which creates a strong climate for learning. The school uses data very well to identify which students are in need of support, or who need to be challenged and extended. As a results students make good progress overall. However, teachers do not always use data to ensure that lessons are differentiated sufficiently in class, not only to support lower-achieving students but also to ensure that higher-achieving students are sufficiently challenged.

Teachers work well together, support each other, and are continually reflecting on how best to improve students' performance and progress. They are increasingly held accountable for the progress of students in their classrooms. There is a good system of classroom observations, intervisitations and professional development to support teachers in making their instruction as effective as possible. Staff know students very well and as result, they are well supported both academically and personally and are very well behaved. They are fully engaged in learning, enjoy coming to school and want to do well. As a result, attendance is high.

The school uses its budget strategically to provide a broad and stimulating curriculum that includes art, music and physical education. However, the school has identified that the curriculum does not always support students who, while deemed proficient users of English, are not yet confident with their fluency and thus hindered in their progress. The school is also aware that it could make more effective use of technology to support teaching and learning.

Since the last review students are making improved progress in science due to the new curriculum and the instructional leadership of the science cluster teacher. Data is being used more effectively and as a result there is greater emphasis on improving students writing skills. The inquiry team has met and is in the process of analyzing data and consulting teachers in order to select students. The nature of the inquiry has not yet been finalized.

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.

The school collects a significant amount of data regarding student progress using State assessments and its own ongoing assessments to identify whether students are on track to meet their goals. The school also integrates other diagnostic assessments, where appropriate, to identify whether specific interventions are improving student performance.

Assessment data is continually reviewed within each grade level to identify any anomalies that may indicate a need to reconsider changes to the curriculum, including the order in which skills are taught, teaching methods used or the need to support individual students. Data is also used very well to identify students who are in need of support, and also those who need to be challenged and extended. Through its detailed analysis of data, the school is very aware that some English language learners, although proficient in English, do not progress as quickly as some other students. In order to improve the school's overall performance, it is particularly focused on improving the progress of these students.

The school is very aware of its own past performance. It also knows how well its performance compares within its group of similar schools. Data is used well to identify the performance of individual students and also of subjects, grades and classes. Data is very carefully reviewed at grade-level meetings. Staff know their students very well and are continually considering strategies to enable best possible progress.

The school's effective analysis and use of data is largely a result of good professional development, which has increased awareness of the ways that data analysis can improve teaching. Further professional development is being undertaken to allow teachers to use data more effectively to differentiate their teaching to meet the needs of students.

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 has made a very good start in using data to set individual targets for students, firmly based on their prior achievement. However, this is not yet fully embedded throughout the school. There is a good system in place to review the targets on a regular basis, but this has not yet been established long enough to determine its impact. However, data has been used effectively to identify a number of trends, including the fact that boys do not progress as quickly as girls in literacy. This was addressed by the purchase of more "boy friendly" literature, which has improved boys' performance.

The school has also identified that many English language learners are tested as proficient in English and are therefore expected to take the State grade tests, but are not yet confident in their English fluency. This negatively impacts their test performance. Improving the performance of this group of students has become a particular focus for the school.

Parents are invited to the school regularly to have "coffee and conversation" with the principal to enable her to hear their concerns and to discuss the expectations of the school. Parents believe that expectations are high and that the school supports their children very well. However, the sharing of individual student and whole school goals with parents is not yet consistent across all grades because it is in the early stages of development.

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.

There is a good curriculum in the school, which includes a significant amount of art and music. The curriculum provides the school with good ongoing data for math and English and also increasingly for science and social studies. Increased use of integrated planning, based on data available across subjects, is being used to gain a "full picture" of each student showing their strengths and areas for improvement. Progress toward established goals is clearly identified.

The curriculum is broad and stimulating. There are cluster teachers for science, music, art, technology, library and physical education, who provide students with work that is both challenging and motivating. There are opportunities outside the school day not only for academic and English language learners' support, but also for ballroom dancing, playing the recorder, basketball, art and African dance. Staff are held increasingly accountable for the learning of their students. There has been significant professional development in the school to help teachers become aware that improving students' growth from one year to the next is the challenge and expectation for all parties. Although technology is used to support learning, the school is very aware that it is underused. It is currently reviewing integrated curriculum planning to use more cross-curricular technology opportunities to involve students and support their learning.

There are examples of good practice in the school of teachers making increased use of differentiation to meet the widely varying needs of the students in their classes. They are aware that while many students make good progress, higher achieving students, though they perform well, do not always make the best possible progress. Teachers also have a growing awareness that greater differentiation is needed for students who, though proficient in English, are not yet fluent and confident. Staff know students very well overall and as result, support them well both academically and personally.

Scheduling has been effective to enable staff to discuss student progress and to observe other classrooms as examples of good practice. There is also effective use of common planning time and scheduling to accommodate academic intervention services and enrichment opportunities.

The school has a strong sense of community based on mutual respect, which creates a strong climate for learning and enables students to make good overall progress. Students behave very well, are fully engaged in learning, enjoy coming to school. This results in high levels of attendance.

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.

The school has good systems in place for classroom observations and for reviewing student work. Reviews are frequent with a particular focus on engaging students using, for example, effective questioning and differentiated group work. Intervisitations to each other's classrooms are also used very well within and across grades. This enables teachers to gain a greater appreciation of the progression of knowledge, understanding and skills in each subject to enable more effective differentiation. Teachers value these opportunities, and the resulting common planning time discussion as these provide opportunities to reflect on their own teaching and to adopt new ideas and practices.

Professional development has been well targeted in math and English language arts to support teachers in data analysis and applying differentiation to plan well-supported and challenging lessons. Although there is more work to do in this area. The instructional team

and staff are collegial and support each other by continually reflecting on how best to improve students' performance.

Teachers new to the school and to the profession are effectively supported through mentors and have additional non-teaching time in order to visit other classes and to review planning and other school procedures. Students are very well supported with a very broad and effective range of services. Students take on a number of responsibilities to enhance their own and others' personal development. Some are peer mediators, acting as the initial reference if there are disputes between students. Others run a bookstore and some older students help with lunchtime supervision of younger students. The students in the school also support a wide range of charities such as Penny Harvest.

The school runs very well because of the principal's clear vision. Since she came to the school a year ago, she has created very clear procedures and expectations to encourage effective student learning. There are very good partnerships with outside entities to support student learning directly, such as the YMCA which supports students with homework, character building and academics. There is after school support for English language learners and their parents. There are other classes for joint parent and student participation in art and literacy both during and after school. The school also has good links with the Brooklyn Conservatory of Music.

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.

The principal's very good leadership sets a clear vision and direction for the school. In the year she has been in her position, she has created a uniformity of purpose which is understood and supported by staff.

The school has long-term goals, which are systematically reviewed by the instructional team. Short-term goals are reviewed, not only by the instructional team, but also by the staff during common planning time. Instructional leaders in math, English and science also attend these grade meetings to ensure that, where appropriate, progress towards common goals and areas of good practice are shared by all staff. As a result, staff are well aware of expectations and their responsibility for the progress students make. Due to the school's highly supportive environment, teachers reflect, revise and modify their practice to meet whole school goals in order to best address student needs.

The school is well aware that there is still room for improvement, but there are very clear goals and well-defined strategies in place to meet them. Data and professional development are being used well to implement the goals and vision, though these initiatives have not been in place long enough to become fully embedded in the school.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Public School 029	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
Quality Score			X		

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

To what extent do . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
5.1 the school's plans for improving student outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?				X	
5.2 the school's plans for improving teacher outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?				X	
5.3 teachers and faculty use periodic assessments and other diagnostic tools to measure the effectiveness of plans and interventions for individual and groups of students in key areas?				X	
5.4 teachers and faculty use the information generated by periodic assessments and other progress measures and comparisons to revise plans immediately in order to reach stated goals?			X		
5.5 school leaders track the outcomes of periodic assessments and other diagnostic measures and use the results to 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	