



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Nathaniel Woodhull School

Elementary School 035

**191 - 02 90th Avenue
Queens
NY 11423**

Principal: Mark Dempsey

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Nathaniel Woodhull School is an elementary school with 648 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 46.9% Black, 27.2% Hispanic, 1.5% White, and 24.5% Asian students. The student body includes 11% English language learners and 4.6% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 94.4%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 60% eligibility.

The school has had significant principal turnover. There have been three principals over the past three years. The current principal was hired in May 2006.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal and the school community are developing a clear vision for the future of the school.
- The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis, procedures are followed and there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere.
- There is a very good relationship with the parents that has been engendered through communication and involvement.
- Collaboration underpins professional development, planning and the induction of new teachers to the profession.
- The support for special education students English language learners is well targeted and delivered.
- The school effectively identifies students at risk and provides timely interventions to meet their academic and personal needs.

What the school needs to improve

- At the classroom level, introduce data binders for staff to record all data.
- Use data strategically to monitor the effectiveness of ethnic groups, boys and girls, high achieving and other groups identified by the school.
- Develop the effectiveness of differentiated instruction.
- Raise levels of attendance further by developing incentive-led competitive structures.
- Further develop behavior management strategies by introducing home/school behavior agreements.

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.

Nathaniel Woodhull School is a collaborative and well-organized learning community. The principal and his cabinet provide a clear vision for the future development of the school. The school's climate is positive, caring and purposeful as it fervently strives to meet the personal and academic needs of its students and the professional requirements of its staff. The various school-based support teams and academic coaches and staff developers work effectively to support the students and teachers. A good relationship has been established between the school and parents to further enhance learning. There is an open dialogue between the teachers and the home which focuses upon individual student progress and personal development. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis and the atmosphere within the hallways and classrooms is conducive to learning.

The school is working hard to raise levels of attendance, improve aspects of classroom practice and to ensure that the strategic use of data is used more effectively.

The school has made some progress in addressing the objectives contained within the last Quality Review report. Notable improvements are in the areas of professional development and in-class monitoring. The school is well placed to deliver in-house and externally sourced professional development and there is a developing culture of intervisitation and frequent monitoring of classroom practice. There is increased collaboration among the faculty and this has resulted in rigorous conversations about student learning and progress. Further work is still required to ensure that all teachers differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all students.

An inquiry team has been established and a data analyst has been appointed from within the current faculty. The school is now in the process of receiving professional development and it is determining the focus cohort.

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.

The principal and his cabinet gather and interpret data from a mixture of formal and informal sources derived from State assessments and the classroom. State English language arts, math, NYSESLAT and ECLAS data is strategically stored and analyzed and individualized goals are set for all students. In addition, the Bel Mondo Beliefs and

Understandings are assessed in every early childhood classroom (grades K through 3). These significantly affect the school's culture, learning environment, curriculum and instructional practices. Results from running records, RSAs (Recognizing Student Achievement) and other interim assessments supplement data from summative, diagnostic and formative assessments undertaken by the teachers. The needs of special education students are interpreted and met through the detailed analysis of data. The academic intervention and school-based support teams determine timely and well-targeted programs for special needs students within collaboratively team-taught classes and self-contained contexts. Pull-out and push-in support is effective. The school proficiently analyzes data for the English language learner cohort to create focused and timely interventions for its Spanish, Haitian Creole and Hindi speaking students. It does not disaggregate its whole school data to focus upon the needs of other ethnic groups, boys and girls and high achieving students. However, the school has identified its own sub-group of "promotion in doubt" or at risk students, who are to be assigned to the inquiry team target population.

The school challenges complacency by effectively analyzing the past performance of the whole school, grades and content areas. The appointment of a data analyst has considerably enhanced this process. The school is now undertaking an analysis of comparative data of its peer horizon and similar schools. The school has considerably raised the awareness of the faculty in relation to data storage and analysis. Accountability based upon data is improving and the school looks forward to the onset of the city's new data systems and periodic assessments.

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 engages in a collaborative process to set individualized learning goals for each student. These are continually adjusted based upon the data. The pupil personnel and professional learning teams effectively manage the goal setting process. Teachers are developing their understanding of the data and goals are articulated successfully with the students and with their parents and caregivers. The academic intervention services team frequently uses the data to review and modify goals in order to provide timely programs, such as reading recovery, extra science classes and summer school placements. Pull-out and push-in support is well targeted. Teachers work together to determine challenging goals for students in need of immediate improvement. English language learners are monitored carefully and goals are assigned to the SIFE cohort (students with an interrupted formal education). As a consequence of this rigor, significant gains can be demonstrated through an analysis of the data. The school is also adept at tracking the relative performance of its special education students. Students receive timely and well-targeted extended day provision following conversations with the parents. The school recognizes the need to assign challenging and focused goals for groups of students, such as boys and girls and high achieving students.

The principal and the data analyst are raising expectations amongst the faculty in the use of data. Data and goals are very well communicated amongst the staff and there is an on-going articulation with parents and caregivers regarding achievement and progress. Teachers conduct conferences with students and they hold on-going conversations with parents by telephone, by post and during formal and informal consultations in school. Frequent communication with the parents has enabled a two-way dialogue to share

information about the personal and academic development of the students. Parents are encouraged to share information about the learning needs of their children.

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’s curriculum has been selected to provide firm foundations for literacy and mathematics. For early childhood classes, students follow the Bel Mondo literacy program. The Teachers’ College balanced literacy program is followed by the older children and alongside Everyday Math. The school successfully augments this core curriculum with science, social studies, the arts, physical education and economics. Economics promotes saving, sensible spending and investments for both students and their parents, through evening workshops. Other programs significantly enhance the learning of the students. Chorus, dancing, cheerleading, basketball, chess and track are offered to students during the year.

Instruction is delivered within consistently engaging learning environments. Some teaching is particularly compelling and the students respond very well to this creative approach and level of commitment. Students spoke about the “amazing science”, and that “teachers make the work fun”. The teachers use data to group students according to their level of achievement. However, differentiation is not effectively used to include resources and other pedagogic approaches to meet the needs of all students. The teachers are held accountable to use data to determine the progress of their students and they regularly meet with coaches and the cabinet to discuss the performance of their classes. The teachers do not collate classroom data effectively and the school does not yet have a consistent approach to the recording and analysis of informal data.

Budgeting and scheduling decisions are based upon the available data. The targeted use of the coaches, the use of a reading recovery specialist, the provision for economics and reductions in class sizes are good examples of this flexibility.

There is a good relationship between the students and the teachers. There is a culture of mutual respect and the personal and academic guidance provided by the staff is good. The pupil personnel team and the behavior modification teacher build good relationships with the children, who state that, “everyone is here to help”. Student attendance is monitored appropriately and challenging targets have been set. The school understands the need to work harder in this respect and it is considering introducing competitions and incentives to reduce absenteeism.

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 principal and his assistant principal work closely with the data analyst, the coaches and the professional learning team to determine differentiated professional development for the teachers. Data is carefully scrutinized to determine the level and scope of the provision. Collaboratively, the teams meet with the teachers during grade conferences to

adjust the curriculum, discuss pedagogic methodology and data. The teachers are eager to develop their "craft" and there is a culture of peer support and collaboration. The principal and the cabinet frequently observe classroom practice and give regular feedback. There is a developing culture of inter-visitations and the teachers are openly encouraged to be reflective and evaluative. Support for teachers who are new to the profession is effective. The induction program is rigorous. Characteristically, there are frequent observations, regular feedback, 'buddy mentoring', opportunities to visit model classes and time to prepare.

Personal guidance is provided by a part-time guidance counselor and the behavior modification teacher. These key staff work in collaboration with the teachers, the pupil-personnel and academic intervention services teams and other school based support staff to ensure that the needs of all children are being met. This is an effective group.

The school runs efficiently and procedures are followed consistently. The classroom and hallways are organized and are purposeful learning environments. The students respect each other and clearly enjoy being at school. Systems for managing challenging behavior are in place although the school does not yet make use of home/school agreements to ensure further compliance. The school enjoys many links with external agencies to enhance the learning of the students. Examples include; links with the 103rd Police Precinct, the Community Mediation Services and arts organizations that collectively raise awareness and understanding and provide practical support for the students.

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.

Goals and plans are regularly reviewed in light of the current data. The monthly school leadership team meetings are effectively informed through the use of interim assessments and other school data. The newly appointed data analyst is crucial in the development of this process. The Comprehensive Education Plan sets out clear plans for each grade and content area within a precise time framework. The document is not fully embedded however, and requires constant up-dating. Regular meetings of the various teams ensure that the data is reviewed regularly and goals are amended or adjusted. The school has previously used the Princeton Review data and it is eagerly waiting to use the new periodic assessment tools. The teachers have effectively used summative, diagnostic and formative assessments in addition to the State test data to inform this process. Running records to track math and literacy provide further evidence to support goal realignment. Well informed interventions meet the needs of individual students and these can be modified immediately. Accelerated learning can be seen in the English language learner cohort as a result of the careful monitoring of the data.

The school effectively uses interim assessments to inform individual student and other school goals. The Bel Mondo assessments in early childhood literacy and the Recognizing Student Assessment running records in math are good examples. The professional learning team and the cabinet meet frequently to review the data and the goals. There is a developing culture of school self-review involving all stakeholders within the learning community. There is a clear vision for the future, a collaborative culture of school improvement and the structures are in place to ensure sustained growth.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Nathaniel Woodhull (PS 035)	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		