



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Public School 43

Elementary- Middle 043

**160 Beach 29 Street
Queens
NY 11691**

Principal: John Quattrocchi

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Lead Reviewer: Richard Woolf

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Public School 43 is an elementary-middle school with 1380 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 68% Black, 26% Hispanic, 2% White, and 3% Asian students. The student body includes 8% English language learners and 8% 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 91.7%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 77% eligibility.

The school shares the building with a District 75 middle school. Shared facilities include gymnasium, auditorium and cafeteria. Public School 43 houses its lower school classes in other buildings and transportable units covering three blocks, requiring movement between the sites for both staff and students.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school is led by an experienced, well-respected principal who is determined to develop the students as lifelong learners.
- The staff are supportive of the administration in developing the school.
- The school uses data effectively in improving all groups, especially English language learners.
- An excellent arts program complements a wide-ranging curriculum.
- The principal is an effective resource manager with a clear focus on developing student-learning opportunities.
- The staff work well together in teams, as they seek to challenge their students to improve their academic levels.
- The professional development program is proactive in meeting the individual needs of both staff and students.
- The school has very strong partnerships with outside organizations.
- The parents are supportive of the school in its efforts to improve their children's learning.
- The lower grade-level students receive an excellent academic start to their school careers.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure data is used more effectively to establish challenging targets for individual teachers and students across all grade levels.
- Ensure all targets use benchmark data to demonstrate progress is being made throughout the year.
- Ensure that good practice in differentiating instruction is spread throughout the school.
- Ensure teachers adopt a consistency of approach when dealing with student expectations and discipline.

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 well developed.

The increase in the school's performance over the last four years is significant. Much of this growth and success is attributable to a forward thinking principal who is challenging staff and students to fulfill their individual potential. Staff and parents support the principal well in this. The introduction of programs, like Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), to challenge the more able students, in the upper-grade levels and Dolphin classes in the lower grades, is proving very beneficial. The principal is currently exploring further ways of challenging the majority of the general education population by setting each of them individual targets. Special education students and English language learners make good progress through the setting of challenging targets. Another positive way forward is the introduction of advanced Regents programs.

The joint teaching program with the District 75 school is proving very valuable to the students from both schools. The school's arts program is exceptionally good and the entire faculty acknowledges this. The program enhances the school's mission of creating lifelong learners. This is in response to data showing limited student progress in comparison to an overall high school performance. The setting of consistently high student expectations, in the upper grades, is an avenue the school is addressing as it tackles concerns over discipline. Students in the lower grades are making an excellent start to their learning.

Since the last Quality Review, the school is making progress in a number of areas. Examples of this are student self-assessing using Acuity, improvements in special education student outcomes, and teacher intervisitations. There is progress in differentiated teaching, but it remains an area for further improvement. The inquiry team is making substantial in-roads into the identification of its target group and discussing the strategies for meeting their individual needs.

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.

Using an array of data the school demonstrates it is progressing well in developing student outcomes. The principal is aware of trends and patterns occurring over time as a result of

tracking cohorts both longitudinally and horizontally. This analysis proves to be a very effective approach when looking at overall school improvement. There is evidence to show growth over the last four years in English language arts, but more particularly in math. The principal appreciates the school does not yet use the data to set more challenging individual student targets. In analyzing data, this aspect of the school's work is not as rigorous as looking at whole school performance. The progress special education students and English language learners are making is a positive aspect of the school's work. Using data in a more specific manner highlighted the need to challenge these groups. The resultant outcome is a significant progress in their performance. The school looks very carefully at the performance of its ethnic groups and by gender. On both accounts, the data shows insignificant differences in their performance.

The school is developing a more systematic approach to using comparative data. By using Acuity and other assessment programs, the school is better equipped to chart its performance over time. Likewise, the benefits of looking at similar schools' performance enables the school to set its own benchmark data to demonstrate progress. The teachers are now using the computer-generated data systems with growing confidence to inform their instruction. One reason for this is the training that staff receives and the ability they have to include students in the assessment of their own work. This approach is making everybody feel part of a continuous improvement process.

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 Comprehensive Education Plan is the effective focal point of the school's goal-setting process. It is a document formulated from a wide constituency, including parents. The principal uses the document to derive measurable targets to progress the school's overall performance well. However, the principal acknowledges that the establishment of more clearly defined timeframes is required to determine on-going success. This is particularly the case as the school sets targets that are more challenging for individual students. Specific target setting assists special education students and English language learners to make good progress.

The school has exciting programs for those students considered the highest achieving. These programs are in each grade and, as such, have their own challenging targets. These programs are providing a real impetus for students to meet their targets and increase their overall levels of performance. The school does not yet use the planning process to set every student the same level of challenge as for these sub groups.

The dissemination of goals spreads across the entire school community. Parents, teachers and students all understand the importance of the goals. A variety of measures including newsletters, calendars and parent-teacher meetings assist in this process. Parents appreciate the importance of the school sharing information with them. They are particularly supportive of the school's efforts in setting higher academic expectations. Teachers appreciate the high numbers who attend parent-teacher conferences. The meetings provide an occasion to cast a critical eye over student progress and give parents the opportunity to understand more fully the goals set for the children. This is in addition to the very good channels of daily communication the school and parents share, particularly at the lower grade levels.

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 uses the mandated curriculum, but supplements it with materials more suited to student needs. Identification of curriculum weakness, through a close analysis of data, prompts a response from the principal. An example is the re-introduction of anthologies in English language arts as a more appropriate method of engaging older students in their work. A new approach for raising the phonic awareness of younger students is another example. All classes receive science and at least one lesson per week is of a practical nature, to the enjoyment of the students. An exceptional arts program supports all of this work. Staff, parents and in particular students acknowledge the importance of the arts program in their overall development. Exposure to the visual arts, music, dance and theater both during the school day and after school is immense.

Teachers use lesson plans effectively in the setting of learning objectives and, for the most part, lessons follow a timed pattern. Students say teachers make their lessons fun and interesting which helps them understand. However, the principal and administrators acknowledge the school does not yet have consistency of approach across all grade levels, especially in the upper grades. Many teachers are very adept in the use of differentiation, particularly with the AVID groups and their lower school equivalent Dolphin. This results in instruction being well matched to learning. The school appreciates this and is currently seeking ways of sharing this very good practice throughout the entire faculty.

The principal is a most effective and skilful resource manager. He is able to support the development of new curriculum initiatives by careful financial management. Likewise, to schedule a program for a school spread over three blocks is a challenge in itself. The outcome is minimum disruption to student learning. Students and teachers show each other a great deal of respect and parents acknowledge this as a pleasing aspect of school life. The school recognizes the part it plays in divorcing the school from street culture. A number of programs assist staff to undertake this role with mutually beneficial outcomes. The “How could you do better?” challenge, which students positively respond to, is a good example. The school’s attendance systems are effective in ensuring improving attendance rates. It is pleasing to note how attention has turned to reducing tardiness. Data shows a significant decrease in tardiness with the resultant outcome of fewer students missing whole or parts of their first lesson.

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 administration constantly assesses teachers through the channels of both formal and informal observations. The data informs decisions to adjust the school’s professional development program to align with teacher need. Where areas of instruction warrant swift intervention, the principal reacts positively to ensure appropriate professional development becomes available. The school has a very good meetings structure. The bi-weekly meeting of the professional learning teams, which include staff from the District 75 school,

means planning is collaborative with a clear focus on raising student achievement. In support of this are the grade level meetings, enabling staff to share ideas and data for both grade and whole-school improvement. Intervisitation is a growing strength as the approach is non-threatening. This affords staff time to meet colleagues and learn from each other. Within such a supportive structure, new staff learn the school's "rules and rituals" quickly. This is an organization, which cares and values its staff.

The school is very aware of the need to support its students academically and emotionally. The principal is conscious of this and constantly works with the staff to ensure the application of the school's high behavioral expectations are consistent across all grade levels. The school recognizes the need to be more proactive, especially over issues relating to discipline. However, where positive action takes place a reduction in disciplinary issues is very clear. This is the case for upper-grade students who remain in their own classrooms with staff traveling to them. As a result, there is evidence of improving learning opportunities for the majority of students. The introduction of girl- and boy-only support groups run by counselors and the after-school program are proving popular in tackling issues of self-esteem. In conjunction with an outside organization, the school runs an exceptionally supportive after-school program. A high number of students attend and benefit from the opportunities to take part in both academic and social activities. Many of the teachers participate in the program as well as members of the wider school community, as for example, the school-crossing patrolwoman who takes a reading class.

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 school has processes in place for ensuring it meets its goals. These include using a variety of diagnostic tests at appropriate times during the year. The school is making use of the Acuity system to identify areas of student knowledge and understanding resulting from work undertaken in the class. The school sets targets with the emphasis on improving grade-level performance rather than individual student progress. Similarly, teachers have targets they are to achieve in terms of moving their class forward. The principal recognizes the need for more rigorous monitoring of the process.

Teachers use periodic and diagnostic assessments to better effect. This is particularly the case with lower-grade classes. Students undertake beginning- and end-of-year assessments, with periodic assessments throughout the year to support teacher instruction. The professional learning team meetings allow discussions to take place that enable staff to evaluate the effectiveness of their strategies and revise and address any perceived weaknesses. The administration tracks the data generated by the assessments. This allows prompt changes to take place in overall goal setting.

The school reflects on its work of the entire faculty before making future plans and new school goals. The school does not yet consider the importance of charting each student's individual rate of progress and how this process positively impacts on raising overall school-performance levels. The principal is clear in his vision for the school. By his own acknowledgement, he realizes the need to re-emphasize his priorities and vision as he, his staff, students and parents strive to make their students lifelong learners.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Public School 043	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