



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Woodhaven School

Elementary School 060

**91-02 88 Avenue
Queens
NY 11421**

Principal: Frank DeSario

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Lead Reviewer: Peter Lewis

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Woodhaven School is an elementary school with 1129 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 7% Black, 79% Hispanic, 5% White, and 17% Asian students. The student body includes 16.5% English language learners and 9.6% special education students. Boys account for 47% of the students enrolled and girls account for 53%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 93.4%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 71% eligibility.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Data is used well at senior level and by teachers in planning work and in identifying interventions that help students to make good progress.
- The principal's clear vision and high expectations have been well articulated and communicated so that they are fully shared across the school.
- Relationships between students and between students and adults are exceptionally well developed and have a positive impact on learning.
- Students' attitudes are very positive as a result of the good systems that have been developed to promote their self esteem and enjoyment in learning.
- Very good organizational and monitoring strategies have been established and support the smooth running of the school and teachers' professional development.
- Teachers feel fully accountable for their students' learning and are eager to embrace strategies planned to secure further development.
- Parents are fully involved in their children's education, and know that any problems will be identified, communicated, discussed and solved readily.

What the school needs to improve

- Use the very good knowledge of student achievement at the end of each year to set projections for their expected performance by the end of the subsequent year.
- Ensure that teachers consistently set objectives for lessons that define what will be learned so that teachers and students will know when success has been achieved.
- Use the strengths that have grown out of the introduction of the Core Knowledge program in identifying sequential steps to inform its modification and further development.

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.

In the four years since his appointment, the principal has brought about changes to the school's organization which have been effective in improving teaching and learning. Teamwork is a strong feature of the school and is reinforced by the positive relationships that exist between staff and between adults and students. The curriculum is broad, well taught and interesting and consequently, students are well motivated and eager to learn. The development of strategies to provide better planned integration of aspects of the curriculum has been well staged and the school has begun to consider ways in which this might be accelerated.

The school has made good progress since its last Quality Review. All the areas for improvement identified at that time have been addressed. The school has been particularly successful in improving teachers' confidence in using data in planning work which matches different students' needs. Student-driven reflection and goal-setting are well supported by teachers' confidence in conferencing. The school acknowledges that this aspect of its work has the potential to be enhanced through the setting of more precise and measurable objectives for student learning.

The school collates and analyzes data well at both senior and class level. This enables it to identify areas of learning that require improvement and to take rapid and appropriate action. The inquiry team has identified its target group of students and has collected appropriate data. It is now well advanced in analyzing data to investigate successful practice relating to its lower achieving English language learner students. Data and very good techniques of evaluation are well used in identifying strategic aspects of the school's work that require improvement, and to track progress towards their achievement.

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 has built a broad portfolio of readily accessible data which gives it a clear understanding of the progress of all students. Kindergarten assessments provide a baseline against which student progress can be compared, while data from preparatory tests assists in measuring standards-based progress. This strategy builds students' confidence in test-taking strategies which has helped in aligning their performance more closely to teachers' assessments. A good range of information is collated that compares student performance across grades and subjects, which enables the school to identify

strengths and weaknesses in student learning. At the same time, any areas of teachers' performance which require improvement are readily picked up. Analysis of the performance of English language learners and special education students is comprehensive and accurate. The examination of regular testing results, for example, enables a close track to be kept of the rate at which special education students are achieving their individualized targets. English language learners' progress is carefully tracked at beginner, advanced, and intermediate levels, which allows the school to analyze students' progress between each level to ascertain whether it is sufficient.

Teachers keep track of student performance through the consistent use of class and student records, which provide information that is well used in identifying more or less successfully learned strands, particularly in reading and mathematics. Good use has been made of interpretations of the State mathematics test provided by the regional mathematics team. This reinforces the school's own analyses in providing assurance that the school's data interpretation is accurate.

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.

Good use is made of the analyses of student performance in setting goals for their achievement. The school has developed good collaboration between mainstream and English as a second language teachers, which provides a good focus on the achievement and needs of students of all capabilities. Additionally, the school has been able to respond well in planning for the increasing numbers of English language learner students. Administrators and, coaches have a clear view of the aspects of their areas of responsibility that require modification or development. Because of regular discussion at senior level that is well communicated to all staff, across the school there is a good understanding of student goals.

Goals for student achievement are set at the start of each year from the analysis of the previous years' results. This provides the school with clear information from which interventions are planned and goals set for individual teachers, alongside whole school goals. Regular meetings between senior staff allow decisions to be reached based on the careful analysis of data. The school's strategies of pre-testing students provide good information about strengths and weaknesses in student learning. At the same time, the development of teachers' skills in conferencing with students means that they know how much is expected of them. The school recognizes the potential for looking at the different achievements of students at the start of the year in order to set individualized goals for their achievement at the end of the year but is at a very early stage of implementation. Although parents are pleased with the high quality of information they receive through each year, they are not always certain of whether their child is working to their potential. Teachers and leaders share a good level of understanding of planned stages in whole school development, such as the Core Knowledge program.

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

This area of the school's work is well developed.

The curriculum is broad and stimulating. The development of the Core Knowledge program has begun to improve this further by enabling a considered focus to be placed upon the development of links across the curriculum, with reading and comprehension as a driving force. Data is used well to understand student achievement. This is particularly the case in English language arts and mathematics because of work led by the English and mathematics coaches in developing pacing guides for their subjects. These are well used, in conjunction with pre- and interim-testing to identify the progress that students are making. As a result, interventions are planned in a timely manner and are effective in raising student achievement. Teachers make good use of school-wide records, such as the “pink and blue” sheets, in accurately recording individual student achievement by strand, which provides a clear picture of patterns of progress. Consequently, teachers are confident in identifying the different needs of their students and in planning instruction that supports students’ development from their different starting points. Additionally, regular reviews of their assessments promote their accountability to a high degree. Teachers are consistent in classroom organization, in response to guidance prepared by the principal. Although objectives are set for lessons, they are not sufficiently precise to enable success to be measured. This is an omission which limits the potential for using the summary at the end of many lessons as an assessment opportunity. The very good range of regularly updated whole school and class based information provides a mechanism by which teachers are held to account for their students’ learning.

The school has analyzed data well in ensuring that curricular objectives can be reached. The increase in the numbers of English language learner students, for example, prompted a review of the deployment of specialist staff who, in common with academic intervention staff, are now assigned to individual grades. This has enabled a more direct collaboration between teachers and support staff. School based data suggests that this is having a positive impact on student learning.

The principal and other leaders model positive and professional relationships very well. Consequently, there is a strong sense of warmth and openness throughout the school which is well communicated to students who feel secure, and know that adults are strongly committed to their development. As one said, “Even the principal cares about how well we’re doing.” Because of consistently established behavior management systems, students say that their teachers are fair, and are full of praise for their support.

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 developed comprehensive strategies of monitoring teaching and student work to ensure it has a good understanding of strengths, of how well planned initiatives are being implemented, and areas for further development. The principal receives very good support from his assistant principals in undertaking regular observations of lessons. Information from these is analyzed well so that there is a good understanding of how effective individual teachers are, as well as the development and impact of whole school initiatives. From these analyses, professional development is targeted accurately to areas of need, such as in modifications to the reading program, for example, to create specific interest levels.

There is a high degree of professional respect and commitment to achieving the best for students throughout the school. The principal, assistant principals and coaches are seen

by teachers as experienced and supportive professionals. Consequently, advice is readily accepted. This atmosphere is strongly supported by very clear organizational systems which ensure that the school not only runs smoothly, but that staff share a very well developed understanding of expectations, procedures and developments.

Regular opportunities are provided for collaborative planning that are well supported by coaches and administrators. These meetings focus on specific elements of practice, the need for which is revealed by data. At the same time, coaches have helped teachers to develop a good understanding of rubrics, which have significantly strengthened their ongoing assessment of student work and achievement. A major consequence of this level of discussion is the high degree of consistency that is seen in teachers' planning, preparation and classroom organization across the school.

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 school has established a good set of systems for monitoring and evaluating its effectiveness, and has demonstrated a clear commitment to training staff at different levels in their use. The use of data has developed rapidly. Teachers and support staff use interim assessments and good quality tracking to establish where students require extra help. Targets are set for student achievement and, through formal and informal means, such as interim assessments, are carefully tracked. Nonetheless, the school acknowledges that there remains further work to refine this process. In reading, in particular, the school has a good understanding of what one years' progress looks like. At the same time, the use of longitudinal data has provided a clear picture of students' different starting points. The school has begun to look at ways in which this information can be used in setting and tracking year end targets that are based on students' different achievements at the beginning of each year.

Goals for strategic improvement are clearly set. Regular and focused monitoring ensures that the school has a good understanding of what is working and, as a result, of the progress it is making. Because of this, it is able to identify when program or scheduling modifications are required at an early stage. Improvements in English language learner achievement, for example, resulted from the decision to deploy specialist staff to work alongside teachers in each grade. Although the development of the Core Knowledge program is at a comparatively early stage, the school has a very clear awareness of the changes that will be required as implementation progresses. Consequently, although the development of the program is not formally recorded, the school is nonetheless able to follow development closely and has already identified potential modifications to the timescale for implementation in response to successes identified from its careful monitoring.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The Woodhaven School (Q060)	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 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