



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Bay School

Elementary-Middle School 105

**420 Beach 51 Street
Queens
NY 11691**

Principal: Laurie Shapiro

Dates of review: January 31 – February 1, 2008

Lead Reviewer: Vivian McIver

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Bay School is an elementary-middle school with 911 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 67% Black, 28% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 7% English language learners and 15% special education students. Boys account for 49% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 91.5%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 80% eligibility.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal and assistant principals give a positive lead in the use of data in the school's efforts to improve student achievement.
- The school gathers a range of assessment data to underpin its work and gives a clear account of how well individual students are performing.
- The school targets effectively the professional development needs of individual teachers and of the school.
- The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum enriched by a wide range of after-school activities.
- New teachers receive a good level of support from the professional development program and from other members of staff.
- The youth guidance and development arrangements are driven by careful data collection and analysis and are working well.
- There are regular opportunities for teachers to work together on data and to plan collaboratively.
- Many of the teachers plan interesting ways of presenting lessons.
- Parents feel welcome in school and are encouraged to support their children's learning.
- The Virtues Education Core Knowledge program supports the school's ethos, and students feel supported and respected for their views.

Areas for improvement

- Analyze data more rigorously to ensure effective support for underachieving students, and to compare the performance of different groups.
- Extend differentiated instruction throughout the school to meet the full range of student needs especially those in most need of improvement.
- Rationalize the presentation of data, and monitor data management and data application more rigorously at classroom level.
- Establish interim goals based on periodic assessment as a means of evaluating the impact of teaching and learning on student performance and progress.

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.

The principal and her staff are using data regularly in their efforts to improve standards at all levels in the school, and have laid sound foundations for data-driven achievement. At present this is a work in progress and is evident throughout the school. Data analysis is now underpinning planning and goal setting. The senior staff regularly provide support to teachers to ensure that all staff are confident in using data.

The school's efforts across the whole spectrum of data can best be described as developing well. The professional development program is systematically equipping staff to analyze data, and to use the findings to establish benchmarks, set goals and plan student programs. The work of the inquiry team is also assisting these developments. The school makes a great effort to involve parents in their children's learning by explaining how the use of data can improve achievement, and how parents can support the school's efforts. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum delivered by good quality teaching, and supported by coaches, additional lessons and Saturday school. There is also a wide range of enriching hobby and leisure activities provided after school. Well managed staff induction, effective partnerships to support youth guidance and the high level of commitment by the principal and assistant principals all help to ensure the smooth running of the school.

The last Quality Review report drew attention to the need for staff to engage in more differentiated instruction. Not enough has been done to address this important issue which is necessary to the success of data-driven achievement. In addition, the school has not sufficiently analyzed the available data and used the findings to effect improvement in the achievement of the large number of students with low grades. This includes low achieving boys, students who have enrolled from other schools, and the differences in achievement between and within ethnic groups.

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 school is committed to gathering and using data to enhance students' learning and to raise standards within and between grades. The principal and two assistant principals give a strong lead, and have succeeded in achieving a good level of commitment from all staff in the application of data to guide learning and teaching. A range of assessment

data provides a good foundation for the work in English language arts and math. Each teacher has a folder containing up-to-date data derived from State testing, interim tests and from various forms of school-based assessments. Students' progress in English language arts and math is tracked bi-monthly, and particular attention is paid to the test results of the large and increasing number of special education students in the school. After analyzing the performance and progress of English language learners, the school has appointed a full time teacher of English as a second language, and has also introduced Saturday school classes for these students. The teachers keep records on the achievements of all students. Despite this systematic monitoring, grades generally remain low. The school has still not analyzed with sufficient rigor the performance of different groups and sub-groups, for example, among and between ethnic groups, grades, classes and subjects. Similarly, it has not used the available data to identify the reasons for the significant differences in achievement in the school between boys and girls.

Staff are receiving training in data analysis including detailed item analysis. The teachers appreciate the good level of support provided by the school to help them apply data analysis to raising standards and to tracking their students' achievements. One teacher remarked that the whole process had provided teachers with a "common language" with which to discuss data and students' progress.

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 primary goal for the school is to get more students up and beyond Level 3 standard. In this context, data analysis plays a major role in evaluating each student's current achievement level, and in setting personal goals for students which are challenging but achievable. However, the overall pattern is not consistent throughout the school especially in terms of updating data and the use of well-planned differentiated instruction. Where the focus on the data is firm, the stages to achieve the goals are clearly understood and the teaching is well differentiated, there has been significant progress. The inquiry team has focused on children who are currently under performing with the aim ultimately of providing guidance to the school on how such versatile tools as, for example, Acuity can best assist in overcoming underachievement.

Other students in need of improvement are those who have recently transferred into this school. These students' needs are identified in data derived from various tests. This data is insufficient to define accurately the current level of each of these students so that the most appropriate academic intervention services can be provided.

The school seeks an active partnership with parents in the education of their children. It has initiated a number of strategies to try to engage parents in the work of the school. For example, it arranges workshops to explain the data that underpins the students' progress reports, and to encourage parents to get involved with supervising homework. If necessary, the school provides transport for parents to come to school to discuss their children's achievements and to attend school functions. Fathers in particular are encouraged to become group tutors in school and to take part in team sports.

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 concentrates a considerable amount of effort on raising achievements in English language arts and math. To help meet individual goals in these areas, additional tutoring is provided in the early morning and at Saturday school. There is a broad curriculum across all grades. Science, art, music and computer classes broaden and enrich the curriculum, and are available to the majority of students. The introduction of the Core Knowledge program is being phased into the school curriculum. It currently forms the basis of the curriculum for students in kindergarten through grade 2 and is greatly enlivening the school work of these younger students. It was also highlighted as a welcome development by the parent group. “To listen to my five-year-old discussing Greek myths and legends at home is an eye-opener to what teachers can achieve”, one parent remarked. The Virtues Education program is supporting students’ social and emotional development, and is contributing to the environment of mutual trust and respect apparent at all levels in the school. A major strength of the school, also greatly appreciated by parents, is the safe and affirming learning environment it provides. Considerable emphasis is placed on organizing sports teams, clubs, including the Robin Hood Library Club, and other after-school activities including the school choir and ballet classes.

The main concern in this area is the absence of planning for, and implementing, differentiated teaching. Some good efforts are being made to provide differentiated teaching but it is not well established throughout the school. The potential of the full range of data analysis to inform and guide differentiated work is not yet fully appreciated by the majority of staff. Not enough of the school’s data documents are available to staff in electronic form to encourage the level of data analysis necessary for successful differentiated teaching.

The school places emphasis on seeking to improve student attendance through home visits and the introduction of telephone messenger service. Certificates are handed out monthly for 100% attendance. In spite of these efforts, the school still has a long way to go to reach its goal for the current year

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 “Individual Staff Improvement Plan” and the “Professional Development Calendar” provide practical frameworks for professional development, and are reviewed regularly to ensure that they remain aligned to perceived need in terms of achieving the school’s goals. The analysis and application of data to advance learning and to focus teaching are current priorities in the school’s professional program, but the program also provides much else of value to support and develop teaching skills. The calendar contains details of professional development programs in, for example, science, art, music, core knowledge, technology, social studies, English language learners, and special needs.

The teachers value the quality and the practical help that professional development is providing. New teachers, in particular, receive a special level of support. All teachers are encouraged to visit one another's classrooms to observe and reflect on other teaching styles and methods. However, the outcome of these visits in terms of the dissemination of approaches to differentiated teaching is not yet apparent. The Virtues Education Core Knowledge program has led to stimulating teaching and active learning which overflows into the corridors in the form of student displays of high quality.

The pupil personnel team meets weekly to share data on individual students collected by members of the team, and to plan appropriate interventions to support the students. The members are specialists from student support services who each have a detailed knowledge of the achievement and potential of the students under discussion and also of their backgrounds. The available data is used sensitively, and the discussions based on available data constructive.

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 principal is providing strong leadership and a clear vision as she strives to establish a pre-kindergarten through grade 8 school. The school is in the process of building capacity and of establishing strong structures for monitoring student progress and staff development needs. There are a number of promising developments on which to build including the rigorous monthly review by the leadership team of the school's education plan. A range of well-designed documents already exists which provide the staff with a range of data, and which assist with monitoring progress and revising programs. The data is presented in a variety of ways, and forms the basis of the school's approach to improving students' standards through regular monitoring and revision. A rationalization and streamlining of these documents are yet to be established. Some that are handwritten are not available in more accessible and flexible electronic form.

All teachers analyze the data on individual students and set achievement goals. However, there is not yet a rigorous approach to monitoring and reviewing all aspects of the school's work to measure student progress. Leaders do not make full use of teacher assessments to measure interim progress and adapt goals as necessary. Therefore, documents setting out the goals, and the plans required to accomplish them, are not always regularly updated. In addition, in some teachers' evaluation of students' assignments remarks fail to give a clear indication of how performance might be improved to achieve the required goal. Areas of good practice are evident and gradually influencing outcomes, but currently inconsistencies in the school's self-evaluation process limit leaders' full potential to drive the school forward.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The Bay School	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