



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Sunnyside School

Elementary School 150

**40-01 43rd Avenue
Queens
NY 11104**

Principal: Carmen Parache

Dates of review: May 29 - 30, 2008

Lead Reviewer: Timothy Behr

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Sunnyside School is an elementary school with 1,229 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 6. The school population comprises 2.9% Black, 46% Hispanic, 15.3% White, 0.3% American Indian, 35.2% Asian and 0.3% students of other backgrounds. The student body includes 26% English language learners and 11% special education students. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 50%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 94.4%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 99.7% eligibility.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal communicates high expectations to faculty, staff, students and parents.
- The school has effective systems in place to track student and school performance and progress to good effect.
- Support for students in greatest need of additional help is exemplary.
- The pupil personnel team works across the academic disciplines to provide effective intervention for at-risk students.
- Music and the arts are strong features of the school and successfully support the development of student confidence and self-esteem.
- Professional development aligns to address the instructional needs of teachers and students.
- Students clearly enjoy coming to school and engage well in interesting instruction and a positive learning environment.
- The school is a safe, orderly, calm and respectful learning community.
- The school has made very good progress in using summative and formative data, along with teacher assessments, to accelerate learning.
- The school effectively uses outside agencies to enhance the curriculum and improve the academic and social growth of students.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that all teachers plan differentiated instruction that addresses each student's needs.
- Identify peer schools with higher levels of progress and examine what instructional strategies are helping them to succeed.
- Expand the use of technology in galaxy to support teaching and learning.

Part 3: Main Findings

Progress made since the last review

The school has made good progress in addressing the issues identified in the previous Quality Review report

Overall Evaluation

This school is well developed.

Sunnyside is a large and highly regarded elementary school. The administration and staff work diligently to ensure a quality education for all students. The school has made good progress since the previous Quality Review. The collection of data has been formally established, and the faculty and staff use it to drive instruction and for grouping students. Not all teachers suitably differentiate instruction to meet each student's needs to maximize learning. Teachers use periodic assessment data skillfully to drive instruction. Teachers in the early childhood grades supplement informal classroom observations and assessments with ECLAS and other data, to establish basis of comparisons for students. Teaching and learning are not yet consistently and effectively supported by good computer technology. English language learners and special education students have made exceptional progress due to targeted intervention and small group lessons. The pupil progress and inquiry teams support this work, as evidenced by improved standardized test scores. These teams are precise in the review of data that aligns with the goals of the school. The inquiry team designs strategic learning experiences to accelerate the learning of targeted students. The school is formulating plans to expand this practice next year. Parents are involved in the academic development of their children and they volunteer their services as tutors to support the curriculum. They also attend literacy and math nights to foster learning. The principal has monthly conversations with parents to share data and information on how the school is monitoring student performance. The school emphasized informing the community of whole school goals to improve the performance and progress of each child. The school's course of study is to develop life-long learners. It includes the required classes and concentrates on the interests of the children. The performing arts, especially drama and chorus, are a strength as is the visual arts program. The school runs smoothly and tracks student attendance daily. As a result, the present attendance rate is 96.6%. Student behavior is excellent. The faculty is using summative and formative assessments to drive instruction. The school does not routinely analyze performance of similar schools to identify and incorporate best practices.

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 systematized its gathering and interpretation of data. The principal employs a learning support organization to disaggregate data, and then uses this

information to monitor school and student progress in a very organized way that drives instruction. A needs analysis identifies both high and low achievers in order to ensure they receive planned interventions to meet their needs. Project-based activities provide enrichment to the higher performing students.

The pupil progress and inquiry teams have given the faculty a wide range of data that enriches the knowledge teachers have from classroom assessments. The school uses this data to implement interventions for English language learners and special education students. Exemplary proficiency gains for high-need students have supported the choice to provide targeted intervention programs.

Teachers receive ongoing professional development so that they may understand all the new initiatives. The principal allows coverage for teachers to enable them to review data, and to visit classrooms to identify best practices. Teachers are utilizing the periodic assessment program to identify instructional implications. This keeps them in line with the school curriculum which is evolving in order to meet the learning needs of students. Coaches are instrumental in this process. The school does not, however, routinely compare its practices and results with similar schools to enhance its own performance.

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 school has effective procedures for establishing measurable goals for each student and for enhancing the course of study and delivery of instruction. This process is collaborative, involving the entire school community. It sets high whole-school objectives that highlight improved levels of performance leading to increased rates of progress in English language arts, math, science and social studies. English language learners and special education students receive superior support through individually prepared academic programs and classroom instruction that addresses their specific learning targets. Support and counseling for English language learners and special education students is thorough in that it recognizes and addresses the difficulties these students have.

Enrichment activities enable students performing above grade level to maintain their high level of performance. The excellent work of the inquiry team effectively identifies factors that affect the lowest performing students’ learning. As a result of stakeholder input and data review, the team knows students well and establishes effective interventions. It shares its findings and good practice with faculty.

The principal shares school goals and curriculum implementations with parents during monthly meetings. The parent/teacher association and school leadership team have a strong and organized voice. Monthly calendars keep parents well informed of upcoming events. Parents contribute to the life of the school in classrooms, trips and celebrations. Morning announcements regularly emphasize the importance of reading and writing. Students express a love for learning and understand how they can make progress through conferencing with their teacher.

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 offers a quality course of study that acknowledges and celebrates the many talents of all students. Curriculum maps provide consistency in English language arts, and outline specific focus skills pertinent to each grade. Everyday Math provides uniform instruction and reliable data from built-in unit pre and post assessments. Teaching and learning in science utilizing the Foss program, is practical, project-based and very motivating. Students take the social studies test in grade five, having received instruction that is aligned to English language arts and enhances their knowledge concepts and abilities. The combined efforts of the school band, chorus, and drama programs results in an annual production. This year, they presented the musical “Annie.” The art program highlights the cultural richness of students. As yet, learning and teaching are not consistently supported by good computer technology to enhance quality.

Teachers use data binders to record assessments in every class. These are carefully monitored by the administrative team. This information drives instruction and serves as a reference for the next academic year. Additional monitoring involves a review of work samples, and classroom walkthroughs to determine if learning is occurring. The administration has established a schedule for grade conferences to discuss student work and to plan for effective interventions. The assistant principals and coaches provide additional support at these meetings. The high quality of instruction reflects the administrations attention to instructional support.

Throughout these activities, students clearly explain their learning and improve their skills. It is obvious that students are confident and take responsibility for their learning. Not all lessons differentiate instruction adequately to address students’ needs and offer suitable challenge. A school bulletin board, which highlights students with 100% attendance, certificates and pizza parties reward students for excellent attendance. The school has robust protocols to deal with children who are regularly absent or late. This results in excellent attendance rates.

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 has a thorough understanding of the strength in instruction. The administration observes informally and formally, providing feedback to teachers with an understanding on the use of data to inform instruction. Professional development activities have a significant impact on continually improving the quality of instruction and student learning. The school uses its coaches well to support both veteran and recently hired teachers. New teachers receive support from the school’s support organization and experienced colleagues who share best practices. Study groups and inter-visitations enable teachers to share best practices and to develop plans. Support for students is

good. The school's focus on the whole child establishes that they are not only concerned with academic issues, but in addition, the social and emotional concerns that effect learning. Art, for instance, enables a child to experience success that positively transfers to academics. Students feel safe in the school. Guidance counsellors and a social worker provide additional support for the few students who have conduct issues.

The school's association with community-based organizations is comprehensive. In celebration of Public School Art Week, the band and chorus students performed at the New Victory Theatre in Manhattan to support the academic and personal growth of students. Teachers and students expressed their excitement in participating in this activity.

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's protocol establishes formal checkpoints to review student progress and to make revisions throughout the year. The school adjusts plans and instructional practices when there is evidence that students' progress is not taking place. The academic intervention team meets weekly to discuss and monitor those students that are at-risk of not meeting grade-level standards. The pupil personnel team meets weekly to discuss those students who are having academic or behavior issues that may place them at-risk. The goal is to maintain the students in the least restrictive environment. Reviews of intervention programs determine impact on student learning. Adjustments are made to establish goals that are more challenging. The administrative team meets with grades on a monthly basis to review any areas of concerns arising from this regular analysis. Teachers continually revise their plans in response to assessment outcomes. The staff uses periodic assessments adeptly to refine instruction in order to improve student performance. The inquiry team illustrates these best practices. Faculty conferences also address whole school concerns. The school leadership team meets monthly to discuss the Comprehensive Educational Plan and to evaluate the alignment of goals to the budget. These meetings enable the principal to target instructional areas, teachers or particular groups of students in need of assistance.

The teachers and administration use data effectively at grade and classroom level and the protocols for reviewing progress and aligning instruction is routine. Student performance has increased. Students make at least one year's progress in English language arts and mathematics are above the city average.

The principal and her team are determined to have the school continually develop as a learning environment. Plans include further investment in technology to enhance the quality of instruction. The focus of the school is to educate children in a student-centered environment.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The Sunnyside 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