



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Daniel Carter Beard School

Middle School 189

**144 - 80 Barclay Avenue
Queens
NY 11355**

Principal: Cindy Diaz- Burgos

Dates of review: January 7 - 9, 2008

Lead Reviewer: Stephen Walker

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Daniel Carter Beard is a junior high school with 754 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 58% Asian, 32% Hispanic, 6% White, and 4% Black students. The student body includes 24% English language learners and 6% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 97.6%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 86% eligibility.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal provides dynamic, empowering and inspirational leadership so that there is a very clear and shared vision for future improvement.
- The high degree of mutual respect between students and teachers leads to an exceptional atmosphere in classrooms and around the school.
- The school uses a comprehensive range of assessments to track rigorously the progress of individuals and groups of students.
- Students are set aspirational goals, in most subjects, which are based on prior attainment.
- Students who require additional help with their work receive valuable support from the academic intervention services.
- Parents and caregivers greatly appreciate the regular information about the progress of their children.
- Teachers engage and motivate students in the lessons and this encourages excellent attendance.
- Very clear procedures and supervision in the school ensures that students behave well and the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis.
- Imaginative use of the budget and grants ensures an attractive learning environment and additional enrichment activities for the students.
- An effective program of professional development enhances the very positive culture amongst the teachers to improve their practice.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop further the analysis of whole school performance and progress data with particular reference to differential achievement within gender and ethnic groups.
- Enable teachers to make full use of assessment data in differentiating instruction in classes in order to address more specifically the individual learning needs of each student.

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.

Daniel Carter Beard School is a well-developed school with a few outstanding features. The school has experienced a period of significant improvement and is now providing a high quality education for its students. The principal provides dynamic, empowering and inspirational leadership so that there is a very clear vision for the future improvement of the school. There is a very good understanding of the performance and progress of individual students in the school. The school takes note of any differential achievement of sub groups, but does not formally undertake a detailed analysis of gender and ethnic differences in performance. Academic intervention services assist students who require additional support with their work. Communication with the parents and caregivers is good and this supports student achievement. The good proportion of high quality teaching engages and motivates students in lessons and encourages excellent attendance. The high degree of mutual respect between students and teachers leads to an exceptional atmosphere in classrooms and around the school. An effective program of professional development enhances the very positive culture amongst the teachers to improve their practice. The school is continually seeking ways to improve further and it strives to improve the effectiveness of the school. The school's inquiry team has clear terms of reference and has undertaken valuable research on the identified target group.

Students are now set aspirational goals in most subjects that are based on prior attainment. The school is making considerable progress in improving instructional differentiation in classes although this is still an area for development for some teachers. Some training has been provided for teachers on the analysis and use of assessment information. Further training is required so that teachers are using assessment data fully so that they can address more specifically the individual learning needs of each student.

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.

There is a very good understanding of the performance and progress of individual students in the school. The school uses a comprehensive range of assessments and tests to track the progress of individuals and groups of students. The detailed database for each student provides performance details in English language arts and math on a

year-to-year basis. There are good systems to record the performance and progress of English language learners and special education students. The school does not fully undertake a detailed analysis of gender and ethnic differences in performance. The principal makes detailed comparisons with similar schools within the empowerment network. The school takes account of good practice in other schools to develop the practical aspects of the science courses and improve reading in the school. Teachers are increasingly using the ACUITY information after periodic assessments to highlight individual student skill-deficit areas. The assistant principals meet regularly with grade teams and individual teachers to discuss student progress and variations in progress between classes. There is open debate about comparisons with past performance, and differences between classes, subjects and grades. Teachers are developing an understanding of ARIS in order to inform instruction and continue to improve levels of student 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.

Student progress is reviewed at regular grade and departmental meetings. Each student has clear goals in English and math based on the New York assessments. Teachers are involved in setting these goals which are based on prior attainment and current progress. Students also have goals in science and social studies. Information on prior attainment is not always available in a consistent form from the previous schools.

Regular assessment by teachers quickly identifies students who are at risk and scoring below grade levels. Students who require additional help with their work are well supported by the academic intervention services. Paraprofessionals provide effective help for many students through “push in” and “pull out” strategies in literacy and math lessons. The school targets a large number of students for extra support during the ninth period and the Saturday Academy. Support in English language arts and math is on a rotation basis so students gain extra help in both subject areas. A new math program in grade 8 specifically addresses weak skill areas for students at risk.

The school works closely with parents who greatly value the work of the school. Communication with the parents and caregivers is good and this supports student achievement. There are quarterly interim reports on progress to parents that include an analysis of individual students’ skills and areas for development. Attendance at parent-teacher conferences is very good. The parent teacher association arranges a number of workshops to help parents to be more involved in the learning process. The school alerts parents quickly if their child is having learning difficulties. The intervention team arranges conferences for parents when their children are in danger of not reaching the required grades. The school has high expectations and encourages all students to experience success.

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 mandated curriculum programs meet the learning needs of the students and provide important data to track the progress of the students. New programs such as Wilson and Read 180 are effectively supporting students who require additional help with their reading. Bilingual programs in Chinese and Spanish provide successful support for the increasing number of English language learners. The school is using the State guidelines effectively for scope and sequence in the non-mandated curriculum. The curriculum is broad and engaging with good opportunities in arts for all students. The newly developed arts program provides exceptional opportunities in visual arts, chorus, dance and movement. Parents feel that more opportunities in music would be beneficial to the students. The wide range of extra-curricular activities, particularly in the sports and creative arts, supports students well and adds considerable enjoyment to their school experience. Imaginative use of the budget and grants ensures an attractive learning environment and additional enrichment activities for the students. For example, there has been considerable investment around the school including the refurbishment of the sports hall, auditorium and science laboratory. Additional funding provides a variety of electives and enrichment programs for the students during and after school.

Teaching frequently engages students actively and many teachers demonstrate very good practice. Teachers plan lessons well, with students often working in groups according to their learning needs. The high quality display and art work in classrooms and hallways provides a stimulating environment for learning. Students enjoy the lessons and really appreciate how the teachers “make the work interesting and relevant”. Teachers are developing their skills in differentiating instruction in the classroom. The school recognizes the need to continue training to improve instructional differentiation in classes so that teachers are using assessment data more fully and address more specifically the individual learning needs of each student. The high degree of mutual respect between students and teachers leads to an exceptional atmosphere in classrooms and around the school. Students speak highly of the support from teachers and enjoy coming to school. One student said that “the teachers know us well and they really help us with our weak skill areas”. The good proportion of high quality of teaching motivates students in the lessons and subsequently encourages excellent attendance.

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.

An effective program of professional development enhances the very positive culture amongst the teachers to improve their instruction. Teachers use the grade and departmental meetings to share good practice. Training programs clearly focus on the differentiation of instruction, writing across the content areas and supporting the English language learners. An additional grant supports training for many teachers in arts across the curriculum areas. New teachers receive ongoing support through coaching

and mentoring. Many experienced teachers attend the additional workshops for new teachers. The math and literacy coaches provide excellent support for teachers with planning and instruction. All teachers have a formal observation by the assistant principals with supportive and diagnostic feedback. There are regular walkthroughs by members of the cabinet and teachers are receptive to advice and support. In addition, teachers are developing inter-visitations with their colleagues in order to share good classroom practice.

The school runs very smoothly on a day-to-day basis because expectations and procedures are clear and reasonable. All teachers and support staff play their part in the supervision process and as a result students behave very well. The calm atmosphere around the school encourages student learning and progress. Parents and students support the “zero tolerance” discipline policy and appreciate the principal’s theme that “you are either part of the problem or part of the solution”. Students emphasize that “we enjoy coming to school and we want to be here”. Students are encouraged to take on responsibilities within the school such as translators at parents meetings or repairing computers as part of the Mouse Squad. Effective partnerships with a number of outside bodies and community organizations such as Beacon YMCA, Flushing Public Library and Queens Guidance Center support the school very well. The very active parents association provide valuable resources and support for the school and parents.

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 principal provides dynamic, empowering and inspirational leadership so that there is a very clear vision for the future improvement of the school. One teacher said that “the look and feel of the school has changed with the new principal and she has brought the staff together as a team”. Her enthusiasm is infectious and she encourages teachers to take on new initiatives to make the school even better. Her cabinet team is very effective and works well with the teachers in order to put the vision into practice. A rigorous process of school self-evaluation drives strategic planning and school improvements. There are clear goals and success criteria within the Comprehensive Education Plan. Analysis of assessment data guides the school plan. It is a very good working document that provides clear direction on the action points for each subject area. Monitoring and evaluation of goals takes place on a regular basis.

There is a well-defined assessment program throughout the school in order to monitor and evaluate student progress. There are regular tests in each subject and parents are alerted if grades are unsatisfactory. The school identifies and adjusts programs and intervention strategies for students who need extra support. Teachers are held clearly accountable for the performance of their students and classes. Students are given aspirational goals in most subjects that are based on prior attainment. Goals are reviewed regularly against benchmarks. The school is continually evaluating its performance and seeking new ways to improve the learning and progress of the students. For example, the Saturday Academy is presently supporting a group of grade 8 students with a supplementary program in maths, science and social studies. The school is having significant success in the academic and personal development of its students as it strives to continually improve the effectiveness of its work.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Daniel Carter Beard	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