



**NYCDOE**

**Quality Review: Final Report**

# **The New York City Department of Education**



# **Quality Review Report**

**School of CyberScience and Literacy**

**Elementary School 212**

**34-25 82 Street  
Queens  
NY 11372**

**Principal: Carin Ellis**

**Dates of review: May 29 – 30, 3008**

**Lead Reviewer: Yvonne Young**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

School of CyberScience and Literacy is an elementary school with 729 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 2.3% Black, 72.8% Hispanic, 9.7% White, and 15.5% Asian students. The student body includes 24.1% English language learners and 12.2% special education students. Boys account for 46.9% of the students enrolled and girls account for 53.1%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 94.9%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 74% eligibility.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The strong leadership of the newly appointed principal and her team successfully promote a clear vision for the improvement of the school.
- The school has developed strong partnerships with parents, universities, a hospital, museums, private companies and donors.
- The school is a highly data rich environment and has very well established and effective practices for its analysis and use.
- Multiple intervention strategies are used to help struggling students.
- The school sets appropriate and challenging goals for students that are continually monitored by parents, staff and students themselves.
- School wide goals are collaboratively developed and contain high expectations for student learning.
- Staff members know and respect students and respond warmly to their academic as well as personal needs that affect academic achievement.
- Effective instruction promotes high levels of challenge for student learning and increased student interest.
- Effective professional development activities are designed to assist leaders, parents and staff through self and peer assessment.
- The school embraces and celebrates the diversity of its student body and supports a completely inclusive environment.

### What the school needs to improve

- Broaden curriculum to include the use of technology through robotics.
- Expand the number of interactive white boards for student and staff use to expand technology resources.
- Provide more time for push-in teachers to collaboratively plan with classroom teachers.

## Part 3: Main Findings

### **Progress made since the last review**

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

### **Overall Evaluation**

#### **This school is well developed.**

The School of CyberScience and Literacy, effectively uses data to drive improvement across the school. The principal, her assistant principal and coaches provide inspired leadership to the staff to ensure that all are confident using data to drive instruction. Through the awarding of a grant several years ago, the school is a magnet in the District for learning through the use of technology. While there is a very strong infrastructure of technology, the school does not have sufficient interactive white boards. The school has identified its strengths and challenges at all levels and plans effectively to effect change where necessary. Teams consisting of classroom teachers, coaches and support staff work collaboratively planning curriculum, sharing best practices, sharing material, creating goals and differentiating instruction. However, not enough time is allotted for classroom teachers and push-in teachers to jointly plan. School wide data collection systems for each student are in place. These systems allow a teacher to follow a student's growth over time and help plan the next steps for each student. The school has made effective use of periodic assessments such as Acuity and Scantron. The school is a highly developed Teachers College Reading and Writing Program school.

Since the last review the school has improved teachers' implementation of differentiated instruction and using data effectively in grade level meeting to improve planning and monitoring. For the past two years the school has made dramatic strides in closing the learning gap between different sub-populations that they serve. They, however, have found that the students whose home language is Spanish have not been progressing towards English proficiency as quickly as other non-Spanish speaking English language learners. As a follow-up, the school's use of periodic assessments and tutorials has aided them in targeting the learning of Hispanic students and they are seeing encouraging results. A small number of students who are furthest away from their learning goals were identified for study and intervention by the school's inquiry team. Instructional intervention with these students showed continual improvement on periodic assessments and the New York State English Language Arts Assessment results.

The school provides a very welcoming environment for students, parents and staff. Children and their parents are greeted every morning outside the school by a member of the administration and the parent coordinator. Workshops for parents are provided in the evening, during the school day and on Saturdays at the convenience of the parents. At some workshops, parents learn alongside their children.

## **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's focus on data is extensive. Reading running records are administered by classroom teachers four times a year in grades 1 through 5. In kindergarten it is administered twice a year. Results are shared with parents and the students who are made aware of grade level goals. Results are recorded and transferred to classroom teachers as students progress through the grades. "Just Right" book levels are determined and monitored continuously throughout the school year so that progress in reading is measured on an ongoing basis. This leads to more targeted instruction for each student. Every Day Math assessments are given for each skill. Due to extensive technology resources, students and teachers in grades 2 through 5 are trained in the use of Acuity. Students use laptops to take tests and along with their teachers plan tutorials. Students who have attained greater skills help younger students or those new to the school. This results in further differentiation of instruction. Through professional development activities, teachers of grade 1 students are learning to develop assessments and tutorials in Acuity. The results of assessments such as NYSESLAT are used to improve instruction of English language learners.

Data is effectively shared with the administration and every individual teacher. Teachers bring their assessment binders to each grade-level meeting or a meeting where there is discussion about goal setting, curriculum planning or planning for individual students. Data is at the core of goal and policy planning. As a result, policy decisions meet the needs of students and staff to promote accelerated learning for all students in the school.

**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.**

All members of the school leadership team engage in the rigorous and collaborative development of the Comprehensive Education Plan. Clear goals and strategies to reach them are detailed for each subject. A detailed analysis of data is provided so that skills in need of improvement across the school are highlighted.

The school uses data very well to set measurable student goals. For each student who has not attained grade level expectation in all subject areas, a plan for improvement is developed based on individual need. To support acceleration of student learning, push-in programs are created so that every class in grades 1-5 had two or more teachers in the classrooms during reading and writing instruction. A second literacy teacher, English as a second language teacher, academic intervention teacher and a paraprofessional are assigned to classrooms, thereby providing more differentiated lessons. Instructional groups change based on the skill being taught and student learning needs.

Students play an active role in establishing next steps and monitoring achievement toward attainment. Students collaboratively develop tutorial programs in Acuity and Scantron and precisely articulate what they need to improve and how they must go about doing it. Parents are kept abreast of their children's progress. The parent coordinator as well as the principal and classroom teachers encourage parents to attend workshops that could assist them in supporting their children's continued learning.

**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's curriculum provides an effective vehicle for students to have high levels of challenge, explore new ideas and work together to improve their knowledge and skills. The school follows the mandated curriculum, with balanced literacy and Everyday Mathematics as the foundation for building the students' basic skills. There is a wide range of interesting arts subjects, which receive excellent support from resident artists. There is also a stimulating after-school enrichment program which includes activities such as choral training, cooking, photography, theater training, dance, music outreach, chess, architecture and visual arts. Workshops are provided for parents by New York Hospital and Time Warner. Daily classroom walkthroughs by the principal ensure that instruction is purposeful, challenging and providing interest for student learning. The instruction is differentiated effectively to provide all students with activities and resources to match their achievement levels.

Budgeting, staffing and scheduling are used imaginatively to support the curriculum and instruction. The school is well resourced and there has been a significant investment in technology, although there aren't sufficient interactive white boards for all students and teachers. The school has hired a fulltime technologist, who works with the students to improve their computer literacy skills and supports teachers in the use of technology to enhance their instruction. The use of technology through robotics is an area of the curriculum that has not been explored. The school has a wonderfully calm, caring and respectful culture. This is illustrated well by the high level of praise the parents give for the education and care their children receive in the school. The classrooms are alive with colorful celebrations of the students' work. The very good procedures for encouraging and monitoring attendance are leading to significant year to year improvements in 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.**

The cabinet uses data, frequent classroom visits and surveys very well to identify whole school and individual teacher development needs. Administrators use observation outcomes to drive professional development decisions, identify and share good practice and monitor closely the impact on student progress. Professional development is differentiated and as a result has increased confidence and competence in all staff to meet their own, and their students' improvement goals.

Self and peer evaluation is regular, scheduled and well embedded into whole school processes. Teachers are confident in providing reflective, professional feedback to their peers. Processes are in place to ensure regular opportunities for close collaboration and planning within grade-level teams, between grades and with support and other services. All support staff and guidance services are closely managed and monitored to ensure enhancement and full achievement of students' academic and personal goals. Although, there isn't enough joint planning time for push-in and classroom teachers.

Systems and procedures for the smooth running of the school are clear, followed by all staff and students and are well embedded into normal routines. There is a demonstrable impact on student learning. Behavior management strategies are clear, effective and consistently applied throughout the school. Excellent relationships, with a wide range of external services significantly enhance the education provided by the school. Partnerships with organizations such as New York City Center provides dance classes, LEAP provides cooking classes, Bronx Council of the Arts provides choral and theater training and a local councilwoman provides music outreach that significantly supports academic as well as personal growth of students at 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 use of data to monitor and evaluate effectiveness has driven improvements in the school. A committed and passionate principal and her team ensure a shared vision and an absolute commitment to student success. She has been very effective in developing procedures and systems that are making her vision a reality.

The Comprehensive Education Plan is used to inform actions for improvement, with specific measurable goals and timeframes. The administration utilizes grade-level and other meetings that convene weekly to monitor and evaluate the work of the school. The school also evaluates its progress through the work of the inquiry team weekly. A school-based review is conducted annually. Teachers compile data in their class data binders that show student progress over time. The school structures, guides and evaluates its progress in all curriculum areas through the use of pacing calendars, units of study assessments, projects, literacy checklist, math checklists, conference notes and running records.

Periodic assessments are used regularly to identify progress with key skill areas and inform the focused interventions for students. Data is analyzed by the inquiry team before it is disseminated to the staff. Each student in the upper grades has individual goals and remediation programs provided on line. Students are then able to work from home and share their goals with their parents. This practice has not been adopted school wide. Push-in teachers are not afforded sufficient time and or opportunities to review data when planning for their group.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: School of CyberScience and Literacy</b>	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
<b>Quality Score</b>				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.**

<b>To what extent do school leaders and faculty provide . . .</b>	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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>				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.**

<b>To what extent do school leaders and faculty . . .</b>	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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>				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.**

<b>To what extent does the school . . .</b>	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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>				X	

<b>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.</b>					
<b>To what extent does the school . . .</b>	<b>Δ</b>	<b>➤</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>◇</b>
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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>					X

<b>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.</b>					
<b>To what extent do . . .</b>	<b>Δ</b>	<b>➤</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>◇</b>
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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>					X

◇	<b>Outstanding</b>
+	<b>Well Developed</b>
✓	<b>Proficient</b>
➤	<b>Underdeveloped with Proficient Features</b>
Δ	<b>Underdeveloped</b>