



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Firefighter Christopher A Santora School

Early Childhood School 222

**86-15 37 Avenue
Queens
NY 11372**

Principal: Yvonne Marrero

**Dates of review: April 29-30, 2008
Lead Reviewer: Dr Philip A Composto**

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Firefighter Christopher A Santora School is an early childhood school with 312 students from kindergarten through grade 2. The school population comprises 1.3% Black, 75% Hispanic, 13.5% White, and 10.1 Asian students. The student body includes 23.8% English language learners and 8.3% 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 92%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 75% eligibility.

Public School 222 is located in the rich multi-ethnic community of Jackson Heights, Queens. They opened in 2002. The official name is Firefighter Christopher A Santora School, named after a firefighter who perished on September 11, 2001.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal is greatly respected by parents, staff and students for her strong leadership and focused vision for the school.
- Curriculum decisions and scheduling reflect the learning needs of the students and the high expectations articulated by the teachers.
- Professional development activities are based very effectively on need, skill and interest in order to promote professional growth and development.
- School leaders track the outcomes of diagnostic measures and use the results to modify practices to improve student outcomes.
- Students are treated with full respect and are effectively encouraged to reach their highest potential.
- There is an engaging dual language program that highly motivates students to learn.
- Parents appreciate the information shared about their children's learning goals.
- Teachers are committed to providing instruction that is compelling and actively involves students in their own learning.
- The students and staff benefit from the school's partnerships with outside agencies that support the development of social and academic growth.

What the school needs to improve

- Enable teachers and paraprofessionals to plan together to use school, class and student data to provide differentiated instruction.
- Develop a seamless school-wide data plan to improve student and teacher outcomes that include measurable interim goals with suitable time frames.
- Promote the use of technology in instruction and in managing data efficiently.
- Establish benchmarks and update the performance and progress of each student, classroom, and grade level, particularly students in greatest need.
- Examine data to monitor the progress of ethnic groups, gender groups and other categories of interest.

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 focus of the Firefighter Christopher A Santora School is early childhood education with grades pre-kindergarten to 2. The school is proud of their Spanish dual language program spanning pre-kindergarten to grade 1. This highly engaging program has been successful in motivating students to learn two languages. This year, they have expanded the school-wide enrichment model program. The program includes all general education classes, the self-contained special education class and District 75 children.

As a first year principal, the school leader has been able to bring the school community together to work collaboratively to support each child. The school has made some progress in addressing issues raised in the last Quality Review. The appointment of the new principal, who shows clear ability in implementing data-driven decisions, has supported this process. The instructional cabinet has made progress in the areas and specific indicators where the school received an “underdeveloped” by quality statement. For example, this year the school is using data wisely to provide quality programs and modify practices to improve student outcomes. While the school uses data very effectively to promote individual achievement, it does not thoroughly examine the performance of different groups, such as students from different ethnic origins or boys and girls. Teachers and paraprofessionals do not yet plan together in how to use school, class and student data to provide differentiated instruction that meets the needs of each student. Various professional development structures address the needs, skills and interests of teachers to promote their professional growth and development. The school has not yet developed objectively measurable interim benchmarks and specific timeframes to evaluate student and teacher outcomes and revise goals as needed.

The inquiry team has developed a way of reconfiguring the student groups on a weekly basis in order to meet individual students’ needs. This work is paramount in setting the pace and tone for the goal setting and improvement planning that will take place next year for each individual 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 proficient.

The principal and staff have gathered a suitable range of data to provide an academic and enrichment program for each student. Some of the tools to gather data are new this year in response to last year’s Quality Review findings. Reading 3D introduced this

year, is an assessment solution that integrates the DIBELS and Reading Records as a way of providing comprehensive holistic information to screen, diagnose, instruct and track all students at every stage of reading development. The school plans to incorporate new systems of data collections such as Headsprout. As of yet, the school does not use technology consistently to access and manage their data. The Reading 3D data supports benchmark assessments three times per year. Students' results on both assessment components are compared to research-based benchmark proficiency cut points to provide a clear indication of risk and a prediction of literacy outcomes. The Reading 3D enables teachers to efficiently monitor students with the greatest needs on the foundational literacy skills of phonological awareness and phonics with adaptive deeper diagnostic tools available for these students who are at risk.

Ongoing professional development in math has allowed teachers to gain a deeper understanding of all of the assessments that are built into the Everyday Math program. Conversations have begun around the creation of rubrics and checklist areas such as social studies, science and the arts to measure student outcomes. The school also collects data from conferencing notes, student work and reading logs. However, the school has not yet developed individual student data books to track student progress. The school does not regularly update the performance and progress of each student, classroom, and grade level. In addition, the school does not look carefully at data to monitor the progress of ethnic groups, gender groups and all other categories of interest. Presently, the school looks closely at the performance and progress of special education students and English language learners. In addition, the school has begun to look at its performance compared with similar schools.

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 school uses information from the progress monitoring component of the Reading 3D to flag students with weaknesses in phonics and reading. Teachers use the information to plan and set goals. Conferencing notes, student work and reading logs provide evidence that teachers use to set goals for and with students and to plan instruction. Formative and summative data are used to determine appropriate support services for students, such as academic intervention services and extended day instruction. The math coach's schedule provides evidence that she meets regularly with selected teachers to revise plans and set goals based on student achievement. However, the school does not yet engage in collaborative processes to develop plans and goals that include benchmark timeframes. The principal, coach and teachers meet together to devise prompt intervention strategies for students in greatest need of improvement. The academic intervention teacher works with students in greatest need through push-in programs, Wilson and Great Leaps interventions, and small group instruction.

Communication with parents this year has been increased to establish a strong home-school connection. Teachers are responsible for designing and sending home a monthly newsletter to parents. The school consistently conveys high expectations so that students perform their very best. Parents stated they truly appreciate the newsletter and planned efforts, which helps them support their children at home. Individual education plan conferences, report card distribution, parent association meetings and school

events keep parents well informed about student progress. These structures provide good opportunities for parents to share information with the school. Parents stated, "We can always talk to the principal and get an immediate response. Her door is always open." The parents are very happy with the parent room, which was opened this year. The room is used for parent workshops. In addition, a resource library and a computer with internet access are available for their use.

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.

Curriculum decisions and scheduling are aligned to meet the learning needs of the students. The dual language study group has been formed to align instruction with student goals and to keep up to date in support of this program. The school recognizes the need to integrate technology in all classrooms to further enhance instruction. Teachers stated that they appreciate working with a consultant, who supports them in the area of literacy development. Teachers and paraprofessionals do not consistently plan together to use school, class and student data to provide differentiated instruction that meets the needs of each student. Data is readily available but it is not always used for the purpose of differentiating instruction.

The art program offers visual arts and music for all students. In addition, enrichment art, violin and percussion classes for select students in grades 1 and 2 are offered during the lunch hour. A highly engaging dual language program motivates students to learn in English and in Spanish. Mutual trust and respect between staff and students greatly support the academic and personal development of each student. Attendance rates are high because students enjoy coming to school. Procedures are in place to monitor student attendance. The school aide and guidance counselor call the homes of students who are absent each day. Once a month, during lunch, the principal recognizes students who have perfect attendance with a certificate and a pencil.

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 principal and math coach visit classrooms both formally and informally on a regular basis. They analyze student work with the goal of determining individual, grade-specific, and school-wide professional development needs. The next step for the school is to use teacher survey data to drive the professional development decisions. The school does not yet formally survey teachers to see if their professional development needs are being met. New teachers receive mentoring by the coach, and have the opportunity to visit other teachers' classrooms. The school does not yet have a formal program for all teachers to observe each other's classroom instruction. Common planning time has been provided at least once a week for all teachers to work collaboratively to analyze and interpret student data and to plan curriculum goals. However, some teachers fail to take advantage of this resource. In addition, this year, each teacher has built into their

program a weekly professional development prep to create a culture of collaboration and reflective practice. The school has partnered with the following departments, organizations and institutes of higher learning in order to support teachers in aligning instruction with data to improve student outcomes: Teachers' College, Hunter College, Wireless Generation, Inc., and the Department of Education Society of the Educational Arts (SEA), Inc. Artists guide students in utilizing various art forms to explore and challenge academic, community and social issues.

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.

Teachers have been introduced to the professional teaching standards, and to date nearly all of the staff have articulated short-term goals in the area of assessing student learning. The progress monitoring component of Reading 3D is currently being implemented in a small number of classrooms, but it is not implemented in all classrooms. The school has not yet developed a seamless school-wide data system to extend goals that include plans for improvement, for both teachers and students, with benchmark timeframes.

Through the formation of the school enrichment model committee, professional development in this area has been core and center to the expansion efforts school-wide this year. Weekly newsletters to teachers state the goals and plans for professional development so teachers are regularly informed. Ongoing and periodic assessments, such as running records, on-demand writing and Everyday Math unit assessments, help the school monitor whether the students are making progress. The instructional cabinet and the inquiry team continue to revisit instructional goals and make the adjustments necessary based on data to guide instruction and meet each student's needs. The principal has a very clear vision for the future development of the school and has an outstanding comprehension of the steps necessary to implement this vision.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Firefighter Christopher A Santora 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