



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Beach Channel

High School 410

**100-00 Beach Channel Drive
Queens
NY 11694**

Principal: Dr. David Morris

Dates of review: February 4 - 6, 2008

Lead Reviewer: Denis Pittman

Part 1: The School Context

Information about the school

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

What the school needs to improve

Part 3: Main Findings

Progress made since the last review

Overall evaluation

How well the school meets New York City's evaluation criteria

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Beach Channel is a high school with 1773 students from 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 52.6% Black, 32.4% Hispanic, 10.4% White and 4.6% Asian students. The student body includes 3.1% English language learners and 17.1% special education students. Boys account for 58% of the students enrolled and girls account for 42%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 77.4%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 100% eligibility.

The school shares its building and resources with two other schools, one serving students ranging from grades 6-12, the other a district 75 school.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal has a clear, well-articulated vision which is shared effectively with the school community and drives improvement.
- Data collation and dissemination is systematic and comprehensive enabling effective tracking of individual students' performance and progress.
- The small learning communities have promoted improved relations between students and staff and between students themselves.
- Parents are well informed about their children's progress and they value the open dialogue they have with the school.
- The curriculum is effectively enhanced by a Credit Recovery program, the small learning communities' content orientation and a range of extra curricular activities.
- The very productive arrangements with outside agencies and organizations significantly support the learning experiences of students and teachers.
- Professional development and the monitoring of teaching are extremely well focused and in consequence enhance the learning opportunities of students.
- Budgeting and staffing decisions have been effectively and efficiently aligned with the school's improvement needs.
- Administrative structures and procedures are well conceived, leading to an improved learning environment for most students.

What the school needs to improve

- Improve the monitoring and evaluation of progress by identifying interim goals, time scales and strategies to reach them.
- Continue to provide training in the use of data to inform instructional planning and track progress particularly for special education students.
- Differentiate instruction to ensure that strategies are relevant to the specific learning needs of individual students.
- Ensure there is consistency of practice in relation to the implementation of behavior management procedures and sustain the focus on improving attendance levels.
- Provide opportunities for the sharing of good practice particularly through the medium of the small learning communities.

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 has successfully established a more structured learning environment within the school. He has worked assiduously at creating more open and collaborative systems with both staff and parents. Parents are appreciative of his efforts in this area. In relation to improving student achievement and the quality of instruction he has a well conceived agenda for change. Day to day administration runs effectively. Students say that their opinions are increasingly respected and listened to. Clearly articulated goals are set to improve consistency of attendance and student achievement. An essential element of this change is to improve the overall quality of teaching throughout the school. Teachers are increasingly making better use of the data to promote the performance and progress of students. This is evident in the improving graduation rates for senior students. In some lessons there is insufficient use of data to modify instruction in line with students' needs. In consequence lesson plans for some classes are not sufficiently detailed or differentiated to meet the needs of individual learners. In general, teachers are committed to improving behavior in classrooms but there is variability in the consistency with which procedures are implemented. The school's processes for formulating and deciding upon school plans are collaborative. However there are some shortcomings in specifying interim goals so that implementation and monitoring can be efficient.

Students are appreciative of the wide range of course opportunities provided in the small learning communities. These communities are proving an effective structure for highlighting individual needs and enabling better student relations within the school. Productive partnerships with business and outside agencies enhance the curriculum and promote learning opportunities for students. The school has made some progress in relation to issues raised at the previous Quality Review but attendance and teaching quality remain an issue. The school has established an inquiry team for monitoring low achieving students in grade 9 who are under-performing in English language arts.

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 efficiently collects relevant performance data from State and Regents examinations and from periodic assessments. Using its own diagnostic assessment of core subjects the school effectively identifies the changing patterns of achievement of grade 9 students. The profile of grade 9 shows a high proportion of students who are achieving below expected levels in literacy skills. The school utilises the baseline diagnostic data in order to form classes and identify initial intervention support for students. As a result of using this data, the inquiry team has been able to target

underachieving students in this grade and utilize a range of predictive assessments to identify areas of weakness.

The use of diagnostic data and formative assessments enables special education students to be effectively identified. The school relates this information to the relevant referral systems to make recommendations for the support of students. The initial effectiveness of these systems is not reflected in the consistent tracking of the progress of special education students in some classes. Conversely, although there are not large numbers of English language learners, their needs are identified through systematic diagnostic testing and progress is monitored well. Relevant data is communicated to staff so that they are able to adjust their teaching strategies in accordance with this information. The relative progress of ethnic groups, although tracked, is not considered as a specific feature. However it is effectively addressed through individual assessment and support programs. Similarly, the analysis of the differences in gender performance is undertaken but the difference is not significant and so has not become a specific focus.

The school takes a regular account of the results of schools which have a similar student composition and the data which emerges from involvement with the program 'High schools that Work'. The principal has a continuing focus in training staff on more comprehensive and intensive data collection through relevant professional development programs in order to address some inconsistency in practice.

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 data well to devise detailed plans and to set challenging goals for students. These plans are the result of collaborative meetings between departmental staff. The administrative supervisors of the small learning communities and teachers rigorously analyze scholarship reports after each marking period to identify common issues within the subject area or specific requirements for individual students. Whilst these issues are carefully articulated insufficient attention is given to specifying interim objectives for skills analysis allied to relevant timeframes.

At the individual level, most teachers set next-step goals so that students are challenged in their learning. The effective collation of formative assessment helps staff to identify efficiently students who are underachieving. The element of underachievement is also a result of the lack of continuous education because of poor attendance and the high mobility of some students. The support and implementation of intervention strategies for these students is comprehensive and increasingly effective. In a broader context the relatively low outcomes of student performance in mathematics have been a particular focus for improvement.

Students are increasingly aware of personal goals set for them and are being helped to evaluate their progress towards these objectives through discussion with teachers. There is a clear expectation that students will work with teachers to share the responsibility for the essential development of proficiency in literacy skills. A more general expectation about sustaining high attendance levels is robustly reinforced by aligning it with pass requirements for classes. These challenges are routinely conveyed to parents through regular conference meetings and documentation. The school is aware that some parents are disinclined to make contact with the school and is energetically addressing this issue through an increasing number of parent workshops, surveys and informative newsletters

Parents appreciate these efforts at promoting improved communication between them and the school.

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 maps and planning effectively reflect the Regents course requirements. The generation of assessment data in relation to performance is detailed and comprehensive but the identification of progress by students towards specified skills is less systematic. The student data which is collated is mainly from the outcomes of marking periods. The curriculum is enhanced through a good range of elective programs in the small learning communities. A General Equivalency Diploma program has been established for disaffected students. The school also provides an extensive after-school program to support struggling students.

Teachers are accountable for the quality of their instruction but there is some inconsistency of practice. Most staff embrace new technology, have a good range of teaching approaches and make their lessons interesting and motivating for students. However a minority of staff use a limited range of teaching strategies, being predominantly didactic, focusing on question and answer methodology with sporadic independent work by students. In these situations the absence of structured lesson plans militates against the reinforcement of learning objectives for students.

The budget is managed well to promote the needs of the school. There has been an effective strategic commitment to enhancing professional development, employing additional staff with special education expertise and improving technology resources. Attendance continues to be a high priority and is monitored closely at class and whole school level.

Quality Statement 4 - Align Capacity capacity is Building to Goals: The development of leadership, teachers and other staff 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 school is effectively building the capacity of its staff to sustain improvements in the quality of its outcomes. There is a well-conceived and systematic program of lesson observations conducted by the administration to monitor and develop instructional practice. Professional development priorities have centered on improving lesson planning, building positive relationships, behavior management and identifying the skill needs of students. Staff training, sometimes given by the principal, has regularly been focused on these objectives. This work is having a major impact on changing and improving the culture of the school to focus on learning outcomes and student progress. The development program is differentiated to enable individual staff to receive help to improve specific professional competencies such as lesson planning. The school has an established mentoring program to support new staff which helps them settle into school quickly and become part of a supportive team.

The school has made a strategic investment in sustaining the numbers of its support and guidance staff. The quality of the guidance students receive is good and welcomed by students who appreciate the help given to them. Administrative procedures are efficiently

structured and in general effectively implemented. This large school is well ordered and disciplined. However strategies to manage students are inconsistently implemented by some staff and this, on occasions, leads to confrontational behavior. Productive partnership links exist with JetBlue airlines and community-based organizations which help with the after-school program. Professional organizations and businesses support the elective program providing enriching learning experiences for students.

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 systematic analysis of performance data and classroom-based assessments is providing an effective basis for planning and identifying goals for departments and small learning communities. The comprehensive collation of data for the graduation cohort enables a focused strategy of intervention support for individual students. This strategy was successful in raising the school's overall performance index last year. However the evaluation of progress in achieving whole school goals such as improving reading and writing across the curriculum is impeded by a lack of clearly defined interim objectives and time frames.

The school is very competent in the use of diagnostic materials for the identification of baseline competencies in core subjects. The maintenance of student profile data within the guidance program provides an effective basis for the analysis of progress of individual students. As a result, there is meaningful conferencing between teachers and subsequently students which has enabled the school to make accurate comparisons of outcomes between classes. This process is particularly effective in monitoring the progress of the current graduation cohort.

The collaborative discussions within small learning communities and subject departments which are based on emerging data effectively promote strategic decision-making. The focus on improving math instruction emerged from this dialogue. The school is committed to rationalizing resources and training in this area. In a wider context the processes of review and monitoring are geared to sustaining graduation rates and the continuity of students learning. The very effective strategic planning of the principal and his clear vision for the school has won him the support of the school community.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Beach Channel High	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