



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



# **Quality Review Report**

**Lewis and Clark School**

**Elementary-High School 12**

**2555 Tratman Avenue  
Bronx  
NY 10461**

**Principal: Kathleen Lefevre**

**Dates of review: May 15 - 16, 2008**

**Lead Reviewer: Corinne Brown**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Lewis and Clark School is an elementary-high school with 281 students from kindergarten through grade 12. The school population comprises 43% Black, 53.7% Hispanic, 2.1% White, 0.7% American Indian and 0.4% Asian students. The student body includes 7% English language learners and 100% special education students. Boys account for 82% of the students enrolled and girls account for 18%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 60.0%. The school is not in receipt of Title 1 funding.

This multi-sited self-contained special education school serves students with severe emotional disabilities. The main site has two buildings, one for 15 classes of high school students in grades 9 through 12. Another building has elementary classes for kindergarten through grade 5 students and, new this year, two middle school classes serving students in grades 6, 7 and 8. Some students are in an inclusion program at Bronx Leadership Academy. Bronx Lebanon Hospital day treatment programs serve other students. All students have an individual education plan. The school has a rolling intake and high mobility. As of April 2008, 155 students joined the school and 100 students left in this academic year.

The principal took up her post full-time in September 2006.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The highly respected principal's open, caring and rigorous leadership invigorates the inclusive school culture and galvanizes the dedicated staff.
- The cohesive administration and staff bring about positive change in students' lives through transparency, collaboration and unified systems.
- The school effectively gathers and interrogates an array of relevant data to understand individual and school performance.
- Students in academic need make improved progress as a result of timely interventions.
- Motivational behavior programs are having good impact on students' attitude and readiness to learn.
- The committed staff are mutually supportive and create positive, inclusive learning environments through careful integration of guidance and services.
- Students are empowered through the student leadership council, feel safe and value staff's support, respect and care.
- Guidance and strong partnerships add to the beneficial curriculum and fully support student academic, social and emotional growth.
- The school manages its resources very well to support student learning through an interesting, varied curriculum.
- The parent coordinator, effective communication and events embrace the wider community and involve parents in the learning partnership.

### What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that all lessons suitably challenge and engage students by addressing individual needs and learning styles.
- Seek further ways to improve and maintain student attendance.
- Formalize professional growth plans for staff and evaluate their impact.
- Explore cross-curricular skill development, to include curriculum maps using common language, to strengthen student achievement.
- Extend goal setting at all levels to include quantifiable interim monitoring that measures progress towards specific goals.
- Through technology and graphic representations, deepen teachers', parents' and students' data understanding and use.

## 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 proficient.**

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

The principal has achieved a seismic shift in the school's culture since her arrival. The committed and caring staff is now galvanized and focusing more strongly on academics as well as emotional development. The administration encourages professional growth and creativity. Imaginative initiatives, such as positive behavior programs, already make an impact in the enlivened climate of collaboration, transparency and community spirit. Increased rigor and accountability means the school is dynamic, vibrant and student centered. Staff are reflective, dedicated to make a difference in students' lives and continually seek to improve. One parent commented, "I wouldn't believe the change if I didn't see it."

Although challenges such as attendance and parental participation continue, the school knows itself well and clearly identifies work in progress. It acted on the recommendations of the previous Quality Review with alacrity to help improve student outcomes. Teachers focus more in their discussions with students on ways to improve academically. Faculty collaborates further through increased common planning time. Data underpins decision-making and discussion across the school, with improved belief in its value. Teachers are at differing levels of technical skill in accessing and manipulating data, so this work continues. They differentiate broadly within lessons using data, but not with sufficient depth and consistency to address all students' needs. Some subject areas have begun interesting small-scale initiatives linking content, but teachers do not yet fully exploit opportunities to strengthen learning and engagement through cross-curricular planning. Students are empowered in directing their learning paths and parental participation has increased somewhat. The school uses data with students and parents to aid understanding of progress to a certain extent. Goal setting at all levels has developed, although not always formalized with interim inbuilt monitoring. The school is fortunate to have skilled administration, coaches, lead teachers and external support who deliver quality professional development. The school does not formally evaluate staff professional growth plans impact on learning.

The school's inquiry team is systematic, with careful calibration of information. It selected its target group of 15 cross-grade students based on data analysis, including consistent attendance and attitude. The team is suitably focusing on math skills. It explores the impact of strategies, such as teacher questioning and use of manipulative resources, on student learning within defined elementary classes. The team is ready to move to the next phase of its well-documented research.

**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.**

In common with many aspects of this school’s work, its use of data is creative. It cross-references data and presents it accessibly for staff and, increasingly, for parents and students. As all students have individual education plans, elementary teachers’ data binders on individual students contain a copy, as well as diagnostic reading results, math and English test and assessment data, and results from Scantron regular assessments. Work folders suitably gather writing, math and other content area work. At high school level, the school synthesizes individual education plans into digestible formats. It gives teachers flash drives with all data relating to those students they teach. Similarly, ‘snapshot’ spreadsheets provide comprehensive overview of individual student performance, assessment and other data for all students in electronic format. This is regularly updated, filtered and analyzed critically. The school has a good, ongoing understanding of performance and progress across grades, classes, and groups, such as gender and ethnicity. It notices no significance by gender and that English language learners make gains on a par with peers. The school routinely tracks progress across time, notices patterns and routinely compares its performance, particularly in attendance, with other special education schools. It analyses behavior reports rigorously and implements suitable response to patterns, such as incident location. The school compares general education math and English test scores results to its own and has established links to share best practices and strategies. It has made pleasing gains over the last two years in math and English.

The school wishes to extend the school community’s understanding of data through increased training in the use of graphics to present data in more accessible formats. It supports teachers to take increased ownership of accessing and interrogating data themselves through individualized training.

**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.**

Suitable goal setting across the school results from increased collaboration. The administration and willing staff work to implement systems that effect positive change. The school leadership team devises the Comprehensive Education Plan’s realistic and relevant goals. Teams write subject area goals based on Regents data. Staff know students well and seek to move them to less restrictive environments. Guidance counselors create suitable learning paths with students. Staff and students collaborate well and so achieve credit recovery through the Summer school program. The school focuses on grade 9, to ensure promotion. It is mindful of the new middle school classes, so tracks data to gauge acclimation and makes fitting changes as indicated. Early identification of students in greatest need of academic intervention, especially in literacy, results in timely effective interventions. A non-verbal student who did not know the alphabet now reads confidently because of efficient diagnosis and programs such as Read 180, and Lexia.

The school strives to share high expectations and its goals with the school community. Parents see the school as improving and value its good communication and support. Campaigns such as “Dare to Succeed” promote increased aspirations and engage students. The student leadership council shows the school’s commitment to involve students in decision-making that empowers them. The parent coordinator and all staff work tirelessly to inform parents about progress and so involve them in the learning partnership. Community access to the new playground and events like the carnival are slowly changing community perceptions to see the school as good place to learn.

**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.**

The school’s standards-based curriculum has in-built assessments, which are suitably supplemented with Scantron assessments, quizzes and other checks on understanding. It enriches the core curriculum for higher grades with courses based on students’ needs, such as street law. Film, theatre, the arts and debate interest and engage students, particularly through technology. Elementary school students enjoy dance, music and art. Middle and high school students have opportunities in culinary arts. Teachers create interesting lessons within the safe environment that they enliven with displays celebrating student success. They hold themselves accountable for student progress as well as to administration. Staff are positive and want students to succeed. The principal encourages creativity, so students’ self-esteem soars through successful involvement such as online debating and film production. Teachers broadly differentiate by group, but lessons generally do not offer sufficient challenge or address different learning styles limiting progress. Staff and students show mutual trust and respect within the nurturing school climate, which is supported by teachers’ reinforcement of positive behavior.

The school makes great efforts to secure consistent student attendance. This remains a significant challenge due to students’ previous experiences and mobility. Bulletin boards feature graphic representation of attendance data. Attendance this month averages 69.11%, in line with a continued slow upward trend. The school correctly identifies this as a continued priority.

**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 administration has clear understanding of staff strengths from frequent formal, and informal, classroom visits and the school leadership team’s walkthroughs. The principals and assistant principals discuss professional growth with staff individually, but do not formalize or evaluate this. Staff benefit from sound professional development, led by administration, lead teachers, and internal and external coaches, that relates to students’ needs. These include therapeutic crisis intervention, literacy and technology training. Observations show that these also benefit students. Teachers collaborate

more in teams because of increased common planning time. They have not mapped all content areas using common language, so do not consistently explore opportunities for students' cross-curricular learning. Collegial support and formal mentoring suitably supports new teachers.

Guidance counselors and other service providers offer intensive student support. Clinicians and external agencies attend planning meetings and maintain ongoing contact. They work seamlessly with school staff so supply comprehensive assistance. Several effective, relevant partnerships enrich the curriculum and support student holistic development well. The Social Services of Hip Hop develops social and personal responsibility. The Leadership Program boosts understanding of global studies through theatre studies. Data shows that the school's positive behavior programs, different for older and younger students, result in decreased reported incidents, particularly of violence. Within this supportive environment, these programs develop personal responsibility, motivate and improve students' attitudes and readiness to learn. The Lewis and Clark Bank behavior support system is an innovative initiative that engages students to make a positive change.

**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 school's culture change now places greater emphasis on academic rigor in addition to social and emotional wellbeing and growth. One teacher commented, "There's now a strong sense of vision. There's an emphasis on credits." Staff use data in the planning cycle to set realistic goals with students and for subject areas. Students are involved in all aspects of their learning. As one parent said, "Students now have a voice too." Staff monitor goals at least three times a year, in line with periodic assessments but do not always formalize this. Across the school, goals lack interim quantifiable checkpoints to measure progress.

Reading level checks through the year and teacher-made assessments enable teachers to tailor instruction to student needs more clearly or to refer for academic intervention services support. The administration examines all data regularly to make changes as indicated. The school revised the positive behavior system when data showed the previous system's impact declined. Staff introduce courses, such as "Race and Stereotyping," because of concerns regarding the student climate in school. The staff reflects on experiences and use this to inform future plans. The school sees increased use of technology as a continued major focus, so purchases accordingly. The math department is revising its courses to reflect Regents changes and to develop electives.

The principal's collaborative, caring leadership sets the inclusive tone for the school. She is highly respected for the positive drive since her arrival, the vision to embrace the community further and extend parent participation. With greater rigor in academics, the committed school community now looks to raise students' aspirations toward college education and lifelong learning. It evaluates itself well and recognizes it has made considerable progress in a short time, but is still on a journey. The school is poised to consolidate its good work as it moves forward.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: Lewis and Clark School</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.**

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		
<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.**

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		
<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.**

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		
<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?				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>			<b>X</b>		

<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>			<b>X</b>		

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