



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Phillip H Sheridan School

Public School 021

**715 East 225 Street
Bronx
NY 10466**

Principal: Joyce Coleman

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Phillip H Sheridan School is an elementary school with 807 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 73% Black, 23% Hispanic, 1% White, and 3% Asian and other students. The student body includes 5% English language learners and 8% special education students. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 89%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 66% eligibility.

The school has a higher than average number of students who leave and join the school at times other than in kindergarten. About a third of students are new to the school this year.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal and assistant principal model consistently the tone they expect in school and their high expectations for student achievement and progress.
- The school has good knowledge of the progress its special education students make and ensures they receive the support they need to succeed.
- The school plans and organizes professional development that meets the needs of the school and of individual teachers, including teachers new to the building.
- The school has a core group of teachers who provide good role models in showing what well-differentiated and exciting learning looks like.
- An inquiry and practical approach to instruction in math is resulting in students who are fully engaged in lessons.
- In grade 5, students are very clear about their long-term and interim goals in reading, writing and math and so know what to do to improve.
- Collaborative teamwork and regular meetings enable teachers to reflect on their work and to share ideas and effective teaching and learning strategies.
- Most teachers use the wealth of assessment information to identify each student's next learning steps in reading, writing and math.
- The school shares its high expectations with parents who attend workshops and events in increasing numbers.
- A strong partnership with Mosholu Montefiore Community Center enriches students' experiences through a well-organized after school club.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure all teachers use students' next learning steps to plan instruction that meets their differing abilities, interests and learning styles.
- Ensure all teachers plan how and what they want students to learn and so engage them more actively in lessons.
- Use data to set interim measures and benchmarks so the school can evaluate whether it is on track to achieve its long-term goals.
- Ensure the school's positive behavior management strategies are followed consistently by all staff.
- Expand opportunities for students to use computers more often to support their learning in a range of subjects.
- Monitor the school's new procedures for improving attendance to ensure they are being as effective as they should be.

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.

The principal has a very clear vision for the school's continued improvement and shares this effectively with staff, students and parents. She is supported well by the assistant principal. They model consistently their high expectations for student achievement and school tone in order to create "a caring and committed community of learners".

The good progress since the previous review is reflected in much stronger partnership with parents and more systematic use of data to drive instruction and monitor and review the school's performance. More parents attend workshops about what their children will be learning. The new progress reports give them good ongoing information about their children's achievement and progress and so they feel much better equipped to help with homework. Teachers meet regularly to reflect on what is working well and not so well so adjustments to instruction and programs can be made immediately. Discussions always focus on data from a range of sources including information from teachers' assessments, looking at students' work, and outcomes from learning walks and classroom observations. The inquiry team has identified its focus group and recorded its protocols, purpose and action plan. The school's challenge is to establish these systems over the coming year.

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 school now has an extensive range of assessment data that builds a secure picture of what each student knows and is able to do. This helps teachers especially well in tracking the progress of students who move into the area every year and who join the school in older grades. In addition, the detailed information provides the school with accurate data about student achievement and progress in each class and grade. As a result, the administration knows where the stronger teaching and learning is taking place and has strategies in place to initiate improvement. The school tracks the progress of special education students closely and meets their needs well.

Due to more targeted training for staff on how to use data to drive improvement, the school has improved the way it analyzes and compares the achievement of different groups of students. Consequently, it now knows that boys perform less well in reading and writing than they do in math, and that for some the difference is much greater than previously

realized. Subsequent adjustments to resources and programs are bringing about evident improvements in boys' achievement and progress this year. Work continues to move the school's "pushables" to level 3. These include Hispanic students and those who have recently joined the school in older grades. The school compares its performance carefully with other schools closest to its ethnic and social mix to learn from those who may be more successful in raising the achievement of some student groups.

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's goals are measured by students' expected end of year achievement. In addition, teachers have personal goals for improving their effectiveness. The school has introduced the Comprehensive Assessment of Reading Strategies (CARS) this year and uses end of unit tests in math to help teachers identify each student's next learning steps. Some teachers tend to identify the general skills rather than the precise skill area that students need to develop. This work is still in its early stages and not uniformly in place across the school. However, all teachers are finding the process useful in guiding instruction. Teachers continue to streamline the way they record the data to make the task time efficient and to help inform instructional planning. The school is now working on making its goals more specifically linked to those groups identified by data as in need of an extra push to move up a level including the achievement of Hispanic students and boys' in reading and writing.

There are high expectations that special education students will achieve as well as all other students and their needs are met effectively. The academic intervention team keeps a log of interventions each student receives so it can track closely what is provided. They do not yet collate students' next steps onto the same log to facilitate more effective evaluation of the intervention strategies. In addition the school is implementing strategies this year to push up those students who data has shown are close to achieving a level 3.

The way many grade 5 students share not only their personal goals in reading, writing and math but those of the whole class is impressive. This is because they have been fully involved in analyzing assessment data to identify the precise knowledge and skills they need to develop and in setting personal and class targets. The challenge now is to spread this very good practice to all classes across the school.

Parents regularly give and receive information about their children's progress. An increasing number attend workshops because they feel they get such good information about the school's work. Packages containing examples of what reading looks like at levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 for each grade and the skills students need to reach these levels help parents gain a real understanding of how they can support at home. Parents like the new progress reports because they receive up-to-date information about how their children are doing and no longer have to wait until the end of the year to find out if they are having difficulties.

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 curriculum includes all mandated subjects which have key assessments. These enable teachers to identify the knowledge and skills that some students need to revisit to boost their learning. Most teachers use the data effectively to identify suitable group work. A range of other subjects includes music, art, library and gym. Teachers think carefully about how to make learning more meaningful by making links across subjects. However, students do not use computers regularly enough to develop their skills systematically and support their learning in a range of subjects. The school gives students some responsibility through student government and class monitors. Good behavior and personal achievements are celebrated at special assemblies.

There is a core group of teachers who provide good role-models in how to differentiate and plan lessons that excite and motivate students’ learning. They use data highly effectively to target precisely students’ different needs. Learning in strategy groups is different depending on what each student or group of students need to learn. The best teachers plan how, as well as what they want students to learn. For example, in social studies lesson about “immigration” the teacher planned activities that met students’ different learning styles and so students who were mathematically minded worked on sequences and timelines while musically minded students wrote a rap poem. Some teachers successfully use a variety of teaching methods such as group work, role-play and partner talk to engage learners fully and meet their learning styles as well as their ability levels and interests. The school has plans to extend this good practice across the school, especially in the younger grades, so that all teachers consistently plan learning of this good quality.

Budgeting, staffing and scheduling decisions are based on a close analysis of data. For example, the school purchased a wider range of non-fiction books to motivate and interest boys to read. Due to the success of teaching violin to some grade 1 classes last year, the school adjusted its schedules so it could expand instruction to all grade 2 classes this year. The school has hired a new attendance officer who has put into place new procedures for monitoring and ensuring good attendance. There are early signs of success and the current average attendance is higher than this time last year.

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 school has effectively built the capacity of teachers to analyze and use data to drive instruction. It has done this through well-planned and targeted professional development opportunities and a strong collaborative team structure that enables teachers to meet regularly to observe each others’ classes and share ideas and good practice. Although some teams are more effective than others due to particular teachers’ expertise, protocols for developing good practice are established across the school. The principal, assistant principal, coaches and staff developer usually attend and so the focus of discussions is always on how to use data to improve instruction and learning. Good induction ensures teachers new to the school and to the profession quickly come on board to share the school’s goals and strive for continued improvement.

The principal monitors learning and teaching systematically by directly observing classes, scrutinizing student work and joining the many team meetings that take place. As a result, she knows where her most effective teachers are and uses them for focused intervisitations. Focused learning walks effectively evaluate good practice and identify areas for improvement. Because parents and teachers are involved these walks are an effective way of sharing the school's goals and high expectations.

The principal reminds students everyday to "make good choices wherever you are" and constant reminders throughout the day ensures that behavior is good for most of the time. This is not always the case in the cafeteria where some students often misbehave. It is not helpful that some adults do not follow the school's agreed positive procedures for managing students' behavior.

The school uses its specialist staff effectively to target support for special education students. As a result, some join general education classes for certain subjects and by the end of grade 5 most reach grade standards. The strong partnership with Mosholu Monteflore Community Center and other community-based groups enriches students' experiences through a well-organized after school club and curriculum projects. Last year, over 200 students enjoyed a varied range of activities at a five-day summer camp.

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 has a schedule in place for systematically monitoring and reviewing all aspects of its work. It has evaluated its effectiveness against the goals in its Comprehensive Education Plan, annotating in margins where it has been successful and where it has not. It has put into place a team structure that supports this work well. Long-term goals include an expectation that all students will make at least one year's progress every year. The school has not identified a more precise goal for those groups of students who data has identified need to achieve better in reading and writing.

Staff meet regularly to analyze data from periodic assessments in order to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching on learning. They track individual student progress closely and outcomes are used to make adjustments to programs and interventions when necessary. Each student has an end of year achievement goal and some have interim goals against which progress can be securely measured. The process is more established in grade 5 because students are so well involved in setting their own goals. The process of setting interim goals against which to check whether the school is on track to reach whole school end-of-year goals is in place but not yet fully established. The academic intervention team evaluates the progress of special education students and adjusts planned interventions when a need has been identified.

The principal is supported effectively by her assistant principal, coaches and staff developer to share a clear vision for the school's development. Due to more systematic monitoring of all aspects of its work, the school is clear about its strengths and areas for improvement. For example, it knows that there is still some work to do in ensuring all teachers plan lessons that meet the full range of abilities and that engage all learners. Systems in place now ensure that each year's goals build on a clear evaluation of the previous year's successes.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Phillip H Sheridan 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 demanding, objectively measurable goals for improvement, and to develop plans and timeframes for reaching those goals?			X		
2.2 focus on each student, classroom, grade level, academic subject and group of students whose performance or progress has been identified by the school as a particular focus area?			X		
2.3 identify and improve the performance and progress of those students in greatest need of improvement?				X	
2.4 share whole school goals with all members of the school community to rigorously improve the performance and progress of students?			X		
2.5 convey consistently high expectations to students and their parents/caregivers?				X	
2.6 regularly provide students and their parents/caregivers with information about the goals set for each student, and about each student's progress and performance, and how they can improve?			X		
2.7 invite and enable parents/caregivers to provide useful information to teachers and the school about the learning needs and capacities of their children?			X		
Overall score for Quality Statement 2			X		

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instructional Strategy to Goals: The school aligns its academic work, strategic decisions and resources, and effectively engages students around its plans and goals for accelerating student learning.					
To what extent does the school . . .	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
3.1 select core curricular approaches that facilitate and provide meaningful interim data about progress towards goals and focus on raising the achievement of students?			X		
3.2 provide a broad and engaging curriculum, including the arts, to enhance learning both within and outside the school day?			X		
3.3 hold teachers accountable for the progress and learning of the students in their charge, for making instruction interesting and compelling, and for creating a positive safe and inclusive learning environment?			X		
3.4 ensure that teachers use school, class and student data to plan for and provide differentiated instruction that meets the specific needs of all the students in their charge?			X		
3.5 make budgeting, staffing and scheduling decisions strategically, based on data, to meet the school's academic goals for all students?				X	
3.6 ensure that there is an environment of mutual trust and respect between all staff and students to support personal and academic development?			X		
3.7 ensure that there are effective and consistently applied procedures to encourage and monitor student attendance?			X		
Overall score for Quality Statement 3			X		

Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building to Goals: The development of leadership, teachers and other staff capacity is aligned to the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.					
To what extent does the school . . .	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
4.1 use frequent observations of classroom teaching by the principal and other available information to develop a differentiated strategy for improving the quality of each teacher's instruction?				X	
4.2 make professional development decisions strategically, based on data, to help meet the improvement goals of students and teachers?				X	
4.3 provide frequent opportunities for teachers to observe each other's classroom instruction and to meet together in teams to plan, share effective practices, and evaluate one another's instruction in an open and reflective professional environment?				X	
4.4 develop effective procedures for the induction and support of teachers who are new to the profession or the school?				X	
4.5 align youth development, guidance/advising and other student support services around stated academic and personal development goals?				X	
4.6 consistently implement clear procedures that enable the school to run smoothly and encourage effective student learning?			X		
4.7 create effective partnerships with outside entities that support the academic and personal growth of the students?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 4				X	

Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.					
To what extent do . . .	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
5.1 the school's plans for improving student outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?			X		
5.2 the school's plans for improving teacher outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?			X		
5.3 teachers and faculty use periodic assessments and other diagnostic tools to measure the effectiveness of plans and interventions for individual and groups of students in key areas?			X		
5.4 teachers and faculty use the information generated by periodic assessments and other progress measures and comparisons to revise plans immediately in order to reach stated goals?			X		
5.5 school leaders track the outcomes of periodic assessments and other diagnostic measures and use the results to makes strategic decisions to modify practices to improve student outcomes?			X		
5.6 school leaders and staff use each plan's interim and final outcomes to drive the next stage of goal setting and improvement planning?			X		
5.7 the principal and school community have a clear vision for the future development of the school and implement procedures and systems to effect change?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 5			X		