



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

William Lloyd Garrison School

Elementary-Middle School 031

**250 East 156th Street
Bronx
NY 10451**

Principal: Liza Diaz

Dates of review: January 29 - 30, 2008

Lead Reviewer: Peter Lewis

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The William Lloyd Garrison School is an elementary-middle school with 815 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 29.5% Black, 66.5% Hispanic, 1.6% White, and 2.5% Asian students. The student body includes 18.7% English language learners and 7% special education students. Boys account for 48% of the students enrolled and girls account for 52%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 91.4%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 82% eligibility.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Leaders and faculty share the principal's very clear vision and high expectations.
- Data is used well at senior and class levels in understanding student needs and in monitoring the impact of interventions.
- Training in the use and analysis of assessment has been very well planned.
- There has been a very rapid development in teachers' confidence in using data so that instruction is closely matched to students' different needs.
- Regular and carefully focused monitoring of the full range of school activities ensures that developments achieve a rapid impact.
- The school's organizational procedures are exceptionally well documented and communicated so that all staff reflect the school's high expectations.
- Organization is exceptionally clear and is backed up by strong teamwork across the school which, as a result, runs smoothly.
- The emphasis on high academic achievement and on effective professional development has helped the school to secure rapid improvements in tone, practice and, as a result, student achievement.
- Staff are very carefully selected and deployed to ensure the best curriculum and instruction for students.

What the school needs to improve

- Use the good understanding of data to further increase teachers' confidence in setting clear and differentiated goals for students based on their prior achievement.
- Ensure that measurable objectives for learning are consistently set in lessons, and that teachers' and students understand when these have been achieved.
- Further develop the good range of resources available to teachers in extending opportunities for practical and investigative learning.

Part 3: Main Findings

Progress made since the last review

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

Overall Evaluation

This school is well developed.

The William Lloyd Garrison is an increasingly successful school that has made rapid strides in securing improvement in the year and a half since the principal's appointment. The curriculum is well planned and stimulating, which engages students' interest and motivates them to give of their best. The principal sets very high standards for herself, students and teachers. These standards are well supported by very good systems of monitoring, planning and professional development. Organization is excellent and clearly understood, which ensures that there is a strong understanding of expectations and practice.

The school has been proactive in building its systems of data collection and analysis. Staff regularly share information about student achievement and are well supported by administrators and other leaders in making use of the information gained in planning instruction. Student progress is measured accurately from baseline assessments and regular reviews and assessments enable this progress to be tracked, and interventions planned at an early stage if the data shows any slowing of learning. This is a considerable improvement since the last review and demonstrates the effectiveness of the school's emphasis on training teachers in the use and analysis of data. Although the school recognizes that very good progress has been made in this aspect of its work, it also acknowledges the need to ensure even greater consistency in differentiation and in the accuracy with which teachers set goals for their students.

The school's inquiry team has developed rapidly, with the establishment of a focus group designed to elicit information about the impact of intervention services on identified lower achieving students. Members of the team have been highly effective in staging the introduction of information about data, with the result that teachers have rapidly developed confidence in its use. As a direct result of this research, the school has also identified the need to further develop the level of investigative work in which students are involved in order to reinforce their research and comprehension skills.

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 has gathered, and makes use of, a comprehensive range of data that provides ready access to information about student performance. There is a clear realization, particularly at senior level, of the usefulness of student performance information in answering the question, “How well are we doing, and how can we do better.”

The school has established good quality data trails to show student progress from kindergarten through grade 3 that link well with the data produced for the older grades. This enables the school to track progress from students’ starting points, and will be further enhanced when the data for younger students is computerized, which is planned to happen in the near future. Because of this, the school is able to make good comparisons between classes and grades by subject, which it uses well in tracking the progress made by all groups of students. Additionally, item analysis enables administrators and teachers to identify those strands in which students need extra practice. Coaches and the assistant principals provide very good support in ensuring that modifications are planned and their impact checked. Teachers’ assessment binders are comprehensive and regularly updated following testing and conferences with students. The information is generally well used in planning lessons that are well focused on students’ different needs. This demonstrates the impact of the school’s good systems to develop teachers’ understanding of data. In a similar way, comprehensive information relating to the achievement of special education students and English language learners is regularly updated and analyzed, and provides the school with a clear picture of rates of progress. Consequently, timely action is taken should students fail to learn at an appropriate pace. Modifications to, for example, the support provided for English language learners as a result of this level of analysis, have accelerated the progress made by this group of students.

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use data to understand each student’s next learning steps and to set suitably high goals for accelerating each student’s learning.

This area of the school’s work is well developed.

The school has made a very good start in setting goals for its students that are based on their prior achievement and, as a result, are differentiated. Although this is a comparatively recent initiative, it clearly demonstrates the understanding that leaders have of the comprehensive data that they have established in the school. Assistant principals keep a close track on teachers’ use of class based and whole school assessment data in goal setting. They acknowledge that there remain some inconsistencies in the accuracy with which teachers set targets that reflect students’ potential. Good use is made of data, particularly information about students’ past performance, in setting whole school goals for the achievement of students across grades and, particularly, in English language arts and math.

The principal has ensured that comprehensive systems are in place to enable staff to meet regularly and to ensure that very knowledgeable support is readily available to assist teachers in planning work for students that is driven by an understanding of student goals. This good level of collaboration is at the heart of the school’s rapid development in its use of data. Student progress is a core element of discussions at senior and class level and ensures that established timeframes for improvement are understood and tracked. The school has established a good focus on the improvement of different groups of students. Special education students and English language

learners have clear targets for improvement, but the school has also ensured that goals for other students, including those who can achieve at a higher level, are set and regularly reviewed. Together with the clear planning for whole school improvement, this ensures that the principal's vision of the highest expectations for all students is well understood by teachers, students and their parents. Students know their targets well and have a high degree of pride in their achievements. As one said, "Our teachers really care about how well we 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 well developed.

The curriculum is well developed to align with requirements and to enable the collection and analysis of data. This, in turn, is used well across the school in identifying "at risk" students and those who are capable of achieving at a higher level. The school has placed a strong emphasis on improving students' reading comprehension skills, a sensible move derived from the good analysis of data, particularly relating to English language learners' progress. The principal acknowledges that there remains more to be done to ensure that all teachers understand the potential of this, and the opportunities for investigative and practical learning that are presented to students. The introduction of the 'Stretch' program has resulted in increased opportunities for research in both social studies and in science, and this, in turn, has reinforced the work already undertaken to establish and plan for links across subjects. At the same time, the principal has ensured a careful match of teachers to whole school needs, such as in the appointment of two mentors to support new teachers, and the deliberate policy of planning staffing levels to ensure smaller classes.

The school has moved a long way, and over a short period of time in training and in providing support to teachers in using data to plan for differentiated instruction. As a result, they conference well with students and, in most lessons, use the information gained in planning effectively for students' different needs. Students say that lessons have become more interesting, as a result, and that they have a much clearer understanding of where they are doing well and what they need to do in order to improve. The school acknowledges, however, that lesson aims are often set in general terms that cannot be assessed accurately. This hampers teachers and students in recognizing when success has been achieved. Coaches and assistant principals meet regularly with teachers and this, together with rigorous monitoring of planning and assessment documentation, has firmly embedded a strong sense of accountability for student learning. Consequently, data informs different methods of teaching and learning in the majority of lessons.

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 established a very good range of systems for monitoring the effectiveness of teaching and the curriculum, that have been successful in supporting

planning and in securing improvement. Teachers value the support that they receive through mentoring and feedback, and appreciate the opportunities available to see identified examples of good practice in colleagues' classrooms. As one observed, "It's so refreshing to be at a school where the administration supports learning." As a result, teachers demonstrate a strong commitment to their students, and understand that the development of assessment materials, particularly classroom binders, helps them to plan more accurately for students' different needs.

Professional development is embedded as a part of the school's day-to-day activities. Coaches, the principal and assistant principal are very visible in classrooms and plan the support that they provide carefully, in relation to the analysis of student data. The school's organization is exemplary. The principal has established clear guidance on procedures, and maintains a very clear record of observations which enable a very effective tracking of outcomes. Comprehensive records of classroom observations, for example, are well aligned with records kept by coaches of interventions for particular teachers. Guidance and support staff are required to keep track of the impact of their activities which, when analyzed alongside student data, builds a clear picture of effectiveness which is well used by school leaders in planning continuing development. Since her appointment, the principal has worked hard to further develop community and other partnerships that enhance opportunities for student learning. The partnership with the Bronx Arts Ensemble, for example, has extended both the school's arts program and the cultural awareness of 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 well developed.

The school monitors its success in reaching established student and whole school goals carefully. Systems of monitoring and analysis, and their outcomes have been shared well with the school community, which has established a good level of understanding of what is to be achieved, and the developments that are planned to support change. The principal has a very clear vision for the school's development, and for what should be expected of students. Because of the clarity with which this has been expressed, and the strength of support provided by assistant principals and coaches, this has become a vision that is shared by the entire community.

Student and whole school targets are established from baseline data, and are tracked rigorously by teachers and administrators. Regular interim assessments, although recently established, are well used in checking that students are making the progress that is required and this is now well supported by the use of new Department of Education software in building an even clearer picture of patterns of student achievement. As a result, the need for modifications to programs or additional support for students or teachers is identified rapidly, and appropriate action taken. The impact of this has been seen in the increased progress that has been made, particularly in English language arts, by students from all groups.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: William Lloyd Garrison 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