



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

**The Edward A. Fogel School for Critical Thinking
and the Arts**

**Elementary School 068
4011 Monticello Avenue
Bronx
NY 10466**

Principal: Cheryl M. Coles

Dates of review: November 8 - 13, 2007

Lead Reviewer: Joy Stopher

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Edward A. Fogel School for Critical Thinking and the Arts is an elementary school with 806 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 86.5% Black, 10% Hispanic, 1.5% White, and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 1.6% English language learners and 13.8% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006 -2007 was 93.3%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 94% eligibility.

The school is part of the New York City Department of Education's Autistic Spectrum Disorder Nest (ASD Nest) flexible inclusion program for higher functioning children with autism spectrum disorders in kindergarten through grade 5.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- There is a high level of collaboration amongst committed and dedicated teachers.
- The ASD Nest program is of a very high quality.
- The school makes very good use of data to understand student performance and progress and to support teachers in differentiating instruction.
- There are very good systems in place to support students who need the most improvement.
- The principal is very active and successful in seeking out programs, partnerships and resources to support learning.
- Music and chess are well embedded into the instructional program and really engage and motivate students.
- The assistant principals, coaches and guidance teams are very effective in providing teachers with support.
- The school has very high expectations and puts a strong emphasis on the celebration of learning.
- Students love reading and are encouraged to do so at every opportunity to help them progress well in all areas of the curriculum.
- New teachers are well supported and professional development for all staff is given a high priority.

What the school needs to improve

- Build the capacity of the school by extending the opportunities for teachers to take on leadership roles and contribute to the achievement of the school's goals.
- Continue to develop and refine the use of data.
- Continue to share the very good instructional practice that exists in the school, throughout the school.
- Expand the programs for higher-functioning students.

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 .

Public School 68, The Edward A. Fogel School for Critical Thinking and the Arts, has a great reputation within and beyond its community. High expectations, endless opportunities to celebrate success and the engaging and motivating music and chess programs are a few of the reasons why. Staff collaborate well together and are very supportive of each other. Teachers new to the school are very appreciative of their “buddy coaches”. The assistant principals are well respected and with guidance teams and coaches provide a high level of support to help the school move forward. The principal is a highly effective manager of resources and seeks out endless programs, partnerships and materials that will support teachers and improve student progress. Professional development is given a high priority. The school has now recognized the potential to build its capacity further by extending the opportunities for staff to take on leadership roles and contribute to more fully to the achievement of the school’s goals.

The school puts a very high emphasis on books and reading, recognizing that this is a major factor in student progress in all areas of the curriculum. There are very good structures and systems in place to support students who most need it including the students who are part of the highly effective ASD Nest program. The school is now beginning to examine ways of expanding its programs to make sure its higher functioning students really achieve their potential.

Since the last Quality Review, the school has been successful in improving its use of data so that is now used to help teachers to differentiate their instruction resulting in some very good instructional practice. School leaders now intend to strengthen the use of data and share the best instructional practice across the school to raise the barrier yet again. Writing instruction has been aligned throughout the school and students have a greater awareness of their goals. The inquiry team has been meeting regularly since the start of this academic year and has identified a target group of students to try to find ways to anticipate and halt slippage. The school also sees a role for this team in sharing best practice.

“Good is not good enough.” is a phrase which is often heard in the school which bears testimony to its philosophy to move continually forward and its logo to “keep an open mind”!

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 collects an extensive range of data to monitor student progress at every level. As well as test results they include teacher observations, simulations, conferencing and a whole range of qualitative data generated from meetings and surveys. Very good use is made of the Student Assessment Management System (SAMS). The extent to which ECLAS data is used to monitor individual student progress is noticeable and evident in all classrooms. The significant emphasis given to monitoring the performance and progress of special education students is no less than you would expect from an administration highly skilled in this area. The data required by the ASD Nest program is exemplary and a good model to promote throughout the school. Individual profile sheets, reading records and good evidence of regular scheduled meetings to discuss individual education plans contribute to this highly effective aspect of the school's work. Professional development is given a high priority throughout the school but there has been a specific and successful focus on supporting and training teachers to use data to inform planning and instruction in response to the last Quality Review report.

Although English language learners represent a small population within the school, their progress and performance is monitored and testing responsibilities are shared by the administration team. Articulation amongst teachers is considered important in monitoring the performance of this group as its size means the test data has limited value. The school has recently done much analysis of data by ethnicity, gender and its past performance in math to try and identify the groups of students who are not making a year's progress. Intervisitation is an established part of the school's comparison of its progress with similar schools.

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

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

Monthly grade conferences are used for administrators and classroom teachers to plan instruction and set goals for individual groups, small class groups and the whole school. Teachers know their students well and bring their knowledge to these conferences. Collaboration amongst staff is of a very high quality. The grade conferences are an important part of the school's instructional leadership and contribute to the formulation of the whole school goals. Whilst this has been very effective in most respects not all staff feel they are able to contribute fully to decision making. The school has been very active in responding to this.

An important part of the highly effective way in which the school focuses on those students most in need is seen in the work of the child study team who meet weekly. This is a multi-agency team who discuss "at risk" students with the class teacher. Data is used to set goals, plan instructional strategies and share information with all those involved. This ensures a truly whole school approach to improvement.

It is a credit to the school that it has been able to so successfully implement the ASD Nest program and create a truly inclusive learning environment. This is leading to the identification of much good practice, for example in home school communication which includes a daily “book”. Teachers have a continuous dialogue with parents and the book provides some wonderful and inspiring comments which bear testament to the high quality of the teachers’ work. “I love opening this notebook because I like to get feedback on my child’s progress ” wrote one parent. Another parent, movingly wrote, “My child has autism but autism doesn’t have my child.”

The school has very high expectations for all its students and holds regular celebrations and enters students for a wide range of challenges in which they are very successful. Part of the strategy is the successful “Reach for the sky” program. Music plays an important part in the life of the school and student performances are much in demand in the locality. Students are quite clear about what they need to improve and report that they talk to their parents about this. The school has done much to increase parental involvement in workshops and provide them with strategies to support their children at home. Parents are appreciative that they get a lot of information about their child’s progress and that communication with teachers is good.

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 principal is a highly effective manager of resources. Teachers commented that “she is constantly providing the resources and materials that we need”. This helps teachers improve their instruction, support their teaching and engage students. All budgeting, staffing and scheduling decisions are made on the basis of data, not only from test results but from the rigorous observations of teaching and student learning. Administration has a very good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in instructional practice and makes strategic decisions based on this to improve student performance.

Very good use is made of data to support teachers in differentiating instruction. This very effective practice has enabled administration to recognize that the next steps are to strengthen the use of data further and share the very good instructional practice that exists in the school more widely. All teachers are involved in curriculum mapping during grade conferences and the detailed curriculum plans with projects and topics supports differentiated instruction.

The development of reading and writing is at the heart of the school’s core curriculum. Students are given every encouragement to learn to enjoy reading and most do so at every opportunity, even on the way to the bathroom! Books are everywhere. Music and chess are well embedded into the instructional curriculum and really engage and motivate students. The school has very good facilities for music this is a significant part of the school’s broader curriculum. Students love it. Ask them what they enjoy about school and back will come the response “gym, music, chess, robotics and we read a lot”. The school has worked tirelessly to improve instruction to support students who are at risk of not making the grade but now recognizes the importance of expanding the programs for higher functioning students.

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.

New teachers are well supported and professional development is given a high priority for all staff. First year teachers are assigned a buddy teacher, have all day meetings at the beginning of the school year and two preps a week for their own development. Mentors also have two preps a week to mentor colleagues or provide additional professional development.

The assistant principals, coaches and guidance teams are very effective in providing teachers with support. There are frequent observations and learning walks. Teachers receive written feedback with suggestions for improvement. Topics for professional development are driven by administrator observations, student data and teacher input. Effective use is made of "fireside chats" to discuss development in a comfortable and non-threatening manner. Intervisitation and visits to other schools is an important dimension in professional development. Teachers benefit from a good range of workshops and "lunch and learn" activities. Once a month a formal grade conference takes place during common prep with designated supervisors. The school is now ready to build its capacity by extending the opportunities for teachers to take on leadership roles and contribute more fully to the achievement of the school's goals.

The principal is very successful in seeking out partnerships which really enhance learning. Education through Music provides instruction in keyboard, movement, recorder, violin and chorus and enriches the lives of students and the community. Partnerships with Fordham University have extended staff skills in technology and the partnership with the Trust for Public Land is building a joint school and community playground.

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.

Following a recent analysis of data the teachers and administration have made significant progress in working together to identify ways in which all teachers can be more fully involved in developing a clear vision for the future. This is a good example of how the school reviews the information it receives and acts upon it to revise plans and practices well.

Whole school planning begins at the classroom level where information is collected and used to identify trends and what is needed to improve student outcomes. SAMS data includes mid year as well as end of year goals. Students are also involved in setting goals through personal goal sheets "Where am I now? Where do I need to go?" The ASD Nest programs offers some very good practice in this area through consultant visits which detail successes, goals and the next steps for programs to be successful. SAMS and data dialogues are used to monitor student progress throughout the year effectively. The data dialogues are conducted three to four times a year and allow staff to have targeted discussions about interim results and performance. This results in early intervention and realignment of support and practice where it is needed most.

The school is "continually moving forward" and making good use of data comparing student progress within and across classrooms. When this data suggests a specific intervention is ineffective staff collaborate on the modifications needed. The principal and assistant principals are very active in ensuring that these adaptations are made quickly

and are well supported. For example, where data analysis shows a teacher needs additional support to enable students to make better progress the coach and staff developer are made available to effect change.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The Edward A. Fogel School	△	▶	✓	+	◇
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 . . .	△	▶	✓	+	◇
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 . . .	△	▶	✓	+	◇
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 make 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	