



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



# **Quality Review Report**

**Edward Collins School**

**Elementary School 146**

**968 Cauldwell Avenue**

**Bronx**

**NY 10456**

**Principal: Janet-Ann Sanderson-Brown**

**Dates of review: January 31 – February 1, 2008**

**Lead Reviewer: George Wallace**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Edward "Pop" Collins School is an elementary school with 481 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 48% Black, 51% Hispanic, and 1% other students. The student body includes 17% English language learners and 11% special education students. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 50%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006 -2007 was 91.0%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 91% eligibility.

The school shares its building with a small high school.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school collects and uses a wide range of very useful performance data.
- Good monitoring of the progress of special education students occurs allowing the implementation of carefully thought through programs of support.
- The principal and staff have high expectations of students in their personal development and academic performance.
- Parents value highly the frequency and quality of communications from the school including the ease with which they can contact staff about their children.
- The school provides a rich, attractive, well resourced and cared for environment for learning.
- Teachers use data to guide their lesson planning and differentiate tasks to meet the needs of individual students.
- The school is effective in its work on promoting high levels of attendance and reducing lateness.
- Collaboration between staff is strong and effective leading to a widespread sharing of ideas and practice.
- The principal has set a highly positive tone throughout the school, which continues to promote school improvement.
- The school runs very smoothly because of the consistent and effective implementation of policies and procedures.

### What the school needs to improve

- Extend data analysis techniques to include strategies for the identification of reasons that may be reducing student performance.
- Sharpen whole school action planning so that it is clear to the school community what the improvement goals are and how the school intends to achieve them.
- Ensure that all goals are objective, measurable and time related, and include evaluation points that determine levels of success.
- Ensure that the outcomes arising from the evaluation of goals drive the next stages of school, grade or class improvement.
- Endeavour to find ways to widen the range of partnerships and after school clubs available to 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 proficient.**

The Edward “Pop” Collins School is a warm and welcoming school, which provides its students with a rich, attractive and nurturing environment for learning. The principal has a clear vision for school improvement and is well respected in the community. She has set in train a variety of actions, which are transforming the school. Staff are well versed in data collection and successfully use such information to address each student’s next steps in their learning. There is, however, very little analysis of data by category to ascertain or determine whether there are specific reasons for blockages in learning. There is a consistent approach to classroom organization so that teaching is efficient and student involvement in their learning maximized. It is common in lessons to see students engaged, challenged and encouraged to comment and get involved at levels commensurate with their understanding of the points covered. Students requiring special support receive a variety of well-targeted, good quality intervention measures to aid their learning.

Staff collaboration is widespread, effective and valued. School leaders communicate well with staff and set high expectations. As such, teachers respond well, challenge students appropriately and recognize that they are accountable for their students’ learning. Parents are strong in their support for the school and are very happy with the quality, frequency and variety of communication they receive from the school. They value the “open door” policy of the school that allows frequent contact with the principal and teachers. The school runs smoothly because staff know, understand and implement a wide range of agreed procedures consistently. However, whole school planning and the setting and evaluation of strategic goals for school improvement are less effective.

The school has been successful in addressing all of the areas for improvement arising from the previous Quality Review. Five out of the six points have significantly improved and further enhancement of teachers’ data analysis skills is on the agenda for further development.

### 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 successfully collects a wide range of very useful information on students’ performance. Continuous assessment and periodic tests provide teachers with a wealth of information upon which they successfully plan students’ next learning steps. The principal and coaches, including the school’s data specialist, receive information from

teachers about student progress. They chart the information and converse with teachers about the performance of their students. The school identifies students with specific or potential learning difficulties from such discussions and other communications. Consequently, the school is on top of its understanding of student progress and performance, and therefore, specific forums exist for staff to discuss students' needs. It is a consequence of the detailed tracking of students that a wide range of additional support is available to students. An outcome of well-targeted intervention is the low number of students who are held-over or have to attend summer school. Teachers' use of data to differentiate their approaches to teaching, and in particular the resources they use for different groups of students, is equally strong. However, the school largely bases its data analysis on what individual students know and can or cannot do. While the principal and staff have information about the performance of students by category or groups, such as ethnicity, gender, lateness or general attitude to learning, there is little analysis of the academic performance of students by such criteria.

The school keeps student performance records. The principal ensures that she knows and understands the trends in performance among students as well as by class and grade. Conversations with students and teachers keep her well versed with regard to student and staff needs. The school is aware of its performance in relation to other schools. Staff training in the acquisition of data through new assessment programs together with general data analysis continues to be a successful feature of professional development.

**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.**

Teachers use data well to plan for students' next learning steps. Their planning is largely based upon item analysis so that areas of learning that pose difficulties are re-taught. Student goal setting exists but is not widespread.

The school does not always directly analyze its rich body of data to produce key goals for whole school improvement. The Comprehensive Education Plan provides a useful evaluation of the school's work from the preceding year. However, there appears to be no improvement plan or specifically designed action plan for this year. The school has determined that improvements need to occur in areas such as writing and teachers' use of new assessment programs. However, there are no plans that show the strategic route, methodologies, interim evaluation points or success criteria for these key goals.

The principal has recently introduced a useful program, which requires teachers to identify subject and professional development goals. Some are objective, measurable and time related while others are not. The school has scheduled an interim evaluation of teachers' goals for February this year. Teachers are good at focusing on their students to plan highly appropriate work for them. Equally strong is the sharing of ideas at grade meetings, which leads to improvements in teachers' planning, assessment, resource use and student performance. The school inquiry team provides a focus on specific low achieving students although there are yet few outcomes from the research that shows specific improvements for the students under study. More generally, throughout the school, teachers work hard to ensure that students in greatest need are making good progress.

Teachers have high expectations of their students' learning and attitudes to learning. Parents recognize this and are pleased. They receive plenty of good quality information

about the school, its work and their child's progress. They value the "open door" policy of the school and the ease with which they can contact and talk with staff.

**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 school provides a good core curriculum for its students. In particular, the outcomes of discussions at various levels have ensured that teachers adopt whole school practices that promote good learning habits by students. The school collects data on a continuous basis and teachers use it to raise students' achievements. The curriculum includes social studies, some aspects of the arts and specialist science teaching. A small high school has recently moved into the building and dual use of space for sports has reduced the range of extra-curricular activities offered by the school.

The principal and senior staff monitor teaching. Through this and various meetings, they ensure the implementation of effective approaches to teaching and new ideas as appropriate across the school. Teachers are accountable for the progress their students' make. Classrooms are colorful, well resourced, stimulating and organized to provide a highly stimulating environment for learning. Students are motivated in their lessons. They feel secure and included in the activities of the school. Good use of data by teachers is ensuring that they respond very well to students' individual needs. Therefore, teachers differentiate instruction matching it closely to students' needs so they are more able to succeed.

The principal has organized the school so that staff members work to their strengths. Formal collaborative staff meetings, such as the 100 minutes allocated for grade meetings and preparation, strengthen the strong informal collaborative staff activities. Weaknesses in whole school goal setting limit the opportunity to take some strategic decisions to support learning. Parents, students and staff work cooperatively in an environment where there are strong levels of respect and trust, which supports students' academic and personal development. The school is highly active in promoting the highest levels of attendance. There are many systems in place to promote good attendance. The older students have much higher attendance rates than the youngest children.

**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.**

School leaders know their school well. They carry out formal lesson observations and frequently undertake informal walkthroughs of lessons. In other circumstances, direct modeling of lessons occurs as well as other forms of support for teachers. Such information together with assessment data allows leaders to provide guidance on best practice. One significant feature of this over recent years has been the highly effective way in which teachers have embraced the importance of differentiated instruction. New initiatives often lead to a program of professional development. This year there has been a focus on the use of a new assessment program. Professional development is a strong feature of the school and teachers feel wholly supported by the school in gaining the necessary knowledge and skills to enhance their instruction. The strong collaborative approach to staff development also ensures that staff members feel comfortable about

observing each other teach and learning from such activities. New teachers in particular feel well supported through the warmth of staff cooperation and the support measures in place to induct them into their new profession and school.

An after school program operates in line with the students' academic and personal development goals of the school. The school is effective in keeping parents informed about student progress and therefore the need for any guidance programs to aid learning. Guidance and support services align with the school's approach to students' academic and personal development. However, partnerships with other organizations exist, but are few. The school runs extremely smoothly. Students work diligently and throughout the corridors and classrooms there is evidence of a wide range of interesting and good quality student work.

**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 principal and other staff know the key areas that the school is working on to raise student achievement. They record this in various ways. However, there does not appear to be an overall planning document identifying core improvement goals together with the appropriate strategies, resources available, personnel responsible and evaluation points to check progress. There is some reference to goals and school improvement progress in the short addendum to the previous year's Comprehensive Education Plan, but it is neither user friendly nor comprehensive. The principal has put in place a new procedure focused directly on teachers' identifying goals for student improvement. The process includes a mid-year review. However, the quality of precision of the goal setting language varies considerably leading, in some cases, to difficulties in determining levels of progress.

Faculty uses a wide array of data to determine the level of student progress. It is through the principal's and other senior leaders' understanding of issues for development that continuous improvement occurs. There are no interim points in the school year to evaluate specific goals. However, there is plenty of discussion at different times about individual student progress and ways to enhance learning to improve progress. This means that where a strategy may be failing a student, the school seeks an alternative approach. The senior leaders, through their use of data and other forms of monitoring information, assess the quality of progress of student achievement. Whenever progress appears to be insufficient, school leaders and teachers work to re-dress the weakness, either through one on one conversation with a teacher or through grade meetings or targeted professional development. Since there is no 2007-08 school development plan showing goals for student improvement, then evaluation to ensure the next steps of goal setting cannot take place. However, the diligence of individual teachers is such that through attention to continuous improvement, teachers are always alert to students' next steps for learning. This approach falls in line with the excellent tone set by the principal for the success of the school reflecting her vision about doing the best for students and driving up standards.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: Edward Collins School (X146)</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 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	
<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 and tardiness?				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, 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		
<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>