

Quality Review Report

2008-2009

William Hallett

Elementary School 76

3636 10th Street

Queens

NY 11106

Principal: M. Carole Schafenberg

Dates of review: December 1 - 2, 2008

Lead Reviewer: Philip A. Composto

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

William Hallett is an elementary school with 663 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 30% Black, 52% Hispanic, 10% White, and 7% Asian students. The student body includes 17% English language learners and 33% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2007-2008 was 92%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 26% eligibility.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

The William Hallett School is a reflective school that constantly collects data on the achievement of its students. The school has a positive learning environment that reflects its commitment to the social, academic and personal development of its community. The school community shares a clear vision for the future development of the school. Staff takes every opportunity available to discuss student progress. The school administration recognizes additional formal opportunities for staff to share expertise and review student data is pivotal to student success. The school uses good support services to enhance teaching and learning.

The school collects many forms of data and provides this information to the teachers. They in turn utilize the information to plan classroom lessons. At this time, the data is in many discrete places and not organized into coherent, user-friendly systems. Teachers who differentiate instruction are more effective in addressing the individual needs of all students.

The school is not always explicit with students and their families about the small goals in all core subjects needed to achieve the long-term school or grade goals. Consequently, students and their families are unsure of the next steps needed to achieve success. They have not established interim checkpoints in all core subjects to achieve maximum learning outcomes for all students.

A strong home/school connection empowers parents to participate in all aspects of school life. Parents stated that the teachers have high expectations for the academic and emotional growth of all students. A student stated, "All lessons are exciting because every day we learn new things."

The school has developed a good core curriculum in most subjects with strong links between different areas. For example, science and English language arts both build on the skills in reading and writing. However, budget limitations mean there is currently little access to art education. The school has no art teacher but classroom teachers compensate for this by incorporating art throughout the curriculum. In addition, the principal who has an art background works with individual classes. Examples of student art work are displayed throughout the building.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school collects and uses a wide range of data to create a picture of the individual student's strengths and areas of need.
- School staff know their students well and have high expectations for their academic and personal development.
- The school delivers challenging and engaging curricula that emphasizes key State standards and ensures alignment in English language arts, math and science.
- The school has a comprehensive guidance plan and support services that connect with students and their families to enhance student personal and academic growth.
- The school community understands the clear vision that school leaders have for the school's development.
- The students are interested, engaged in their learning, and succeed both personally and academically.

What the school needs to improve

- Work with students and their families to develop SMART short-term goals in all subjects so that they are able to assess their own progress and articulate their next learning steps.
- Develop an organized system to gather and record data in all subjects, which will encourage further instructional differentiation in classrooms so that teachers address more specifically the individual learning needs of each student.
- Establish additional formal opportunities for staff to share expertise and look at student work and data.
- Establish interim checkpoints that are monitored through the year in order to achieve maximum learning outcomes in all core subjects to meet the needs of individual and groups of students.

Part 3: Main Findings

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

Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, generate and analyze information on student learning outcomes and use it to understand what each student knows and can do, and to monitor the student's progress over time.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

School leaders have a good knowledge of the progress and achievements of the students across the school. The teachers gather and use data to monitor the progress of individual students. This is particularly evident in English language arts, math and science. Teachers use and gather information from a variety of State and City Assessments. Results from the science, social studies and math unit tests help teachers highlight progress and identify trends and weaknesses. The school gathers further information from individual education plans, attendance and lateness records. However, staff members use many different systems for organizing this formal and informal class data, as the school does not have a uniform, school-wide system for recording and accessing data. As a result, the school does not analyze data efficiently to identify progress and to meet the needs of all students.

The coaches provide training that is building upon previous professional development and assistance in the use and application of data. While this has resulted in improved teaching, practice remains inconsistent and further training is planned to use data in matching instruction to learning.

The school's analysis and use of data on students who are at risk of not meeting the standard is very good. The information collated on special education student is full and detailed. The classroom teachers and assistant principal track each student who has additional support in learning and they record the area for improvement, the support and the strategies used has resulted in student progress. The school uses data to understand the performance of different ethnic groups. The school collects and analyzes the assessment data on a school-wide basis. The school leaders look at test scores from previous years across the subjects, allowing a comparison across grades. The school identified a three-year trend of slippage with students whose performance is at Level 3 and 4 on the Statewide test. The school instituted an effective school enrichment program for these 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 proficient.

The Comprehensive Education Plan, along with the principal's goals and objectives, outline the school's mission. The teachers, working with the assistant principals establish appropriate learning goals and objectives for each student. The school sets rigorous and measurable goals in English language arts, math and science for all grades

and classes. However, the school has yet to formalize goal setting with students and their families. As a result, parents and students are not always clear about their interim goals and the steps needed to achieve them. Specific Measurable Attainable Realistic Timely (SMART) goals are not consistently developed between the teachers and families. Good practice in some classrooms has index cards taped to the student's desk or notebook, that state, "My Strengths" and "What I am Working On". In these classes, the students are confident and can articulate their progress. However, this practice is not evident throughout the school culture, nor is it used consistently to ensure progress towards achieving school-wide goals.

It was evident that the school staff knows the students and has high expectations for their academic and personal growth. At the start of the year, the school communicates to parents its high expectations of attendance, behavior and academic performance. Parent handbooks, provided in English and Spanish, enable parents to understand school procedures and help them support children at home.

Quality Statement 3 – Develop Coherent Instructional and Organizational Strategies: The school uses rigorous curricula, teaching and organizational decision making to engage students and faculty in meeting all students' learning goals.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The school developed a challenging curriculum with a strong English language arts focus. High quality student work is evident throughout the school. The school has a full time music teacher and students enjoy their music lessons, adding to their commitment to learning. Students value the fact that staff take time to listen. As a result, many students have high expectations and the learning environment continues to improve.

In some lessons teachers plan differentiated instruction effectively. However, this practice is not consistent. Some teachers use data well to plan learning that meets the wide range of capabilities and interests in their classes. Too often students do the same work with different amounts of in-class support. Consequently, some students find the work too hard while others find it too easy.

The reflective nature of the school is illustrated in the very effective way in which the Inquiry Team has used data to refine its identification of the target population to a small group who can be effectively tracked. The application of lessons learned from this group is applied more widely and so is helping the school become more analytical in the way it looks at individual needs.

Scheduling personnel and financial decisions are aligned to the schools goals of improving the standards of achievement of all students. For example, the school has invested much on academic intervention services work. This has been successful in supporting and promoting the learning of all students.

Quality Statement 4 - Align Capacity Building to Goals: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school's goals for accelerating student learning.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

A committee of administrators and teachers select new teachers for their dedication and commitment to do the best for students and the ability to use data to plan suitable learning programs. Teamwork contributes to teachers working together effectively to evaluate how well students are doing. Teachers stated that they come in early and talk during the day when they have a free moment to discuss student needs. Teachers stated that the professional development program meets their needs. Formal opportunities, for staff members to experience and look at student data, are not evident.

The instructional cabinet plans and implements an effective professional development program. Professional development is differentiated and consistently responsive to the needs of the staff. Results of formal observations, informal observations and teacher performance reviews inform professional development needs. The coaches provide daily-embedded professional development driven by teacher requests and observed needs. Coaches and teachers work together to map and implement the curriculum. An F status teacher mentors and counsels new teachers, which is an effective practice in helping them improve teaching skills and acclimate to the new school.

The school has an excellent partnership with Steinway Mental Health Clinic. This allows parents and students to have access to family counseling. In addition, the school effectively utilizes the counselors, psychologists and social workers to enhance the academic and personal growth of students.

Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for monitoring and 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.

In order to improve student outcomes, good systems are in place to review this data regularly. The school leadership has a clear vision for the school's development that is shared with the school's community. Teachers use a variety of assessments to monitor the progress of students in English language arts, math and science. They regularly revise and discuss student goals in these subjects by conferencing with students and their parents. This good practice is not evident in other curriculum areas. The school has not consistently established benchmarks to monitor learning outcomes for all students in all core subject areas.

In the past, teachers developed general goals using the grade curriculum guidelines. This year, the school changed the structure of grade conferences. Last year, grade conferences targeted each grade. In the new initiative, teachers meet individually with their respective supervisor. The teacher and the supervisor analyze and address the progress of each group. This new procedure helps the teacher to focus on effective strategies that meet student needs and provide more assistance to targeted students.

The school leaders effectively use the Progress Report, Quality Review, Learning Environment Survey and other external data to evaluate its effectiveness and modify as

required. Good self-evaluation gives the school an accurate reflection of its practices and highlights areas for further improvements.

School Quality Criteria 2008-2009

School name: William Hallett School	△	▷	✓	+
Overall QR Score			X	
Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, generate and analyze information on student learning outcomes and use it to understand what each student knows and can do, and to monitor the student’s progress over time.				
<i>To what extent do school leaders and faculty regularly...</i>	△	▷	✓	+
1.1 collect and analyze actionable information, including assessment results and attendance data, to provide a complete view of the learning outcomes and needs of individual students and groupings of students?			X	
1.2 focus analysis on the learning outcomes and needs of all sub-groups of students?			X	
1.3 engage in an open exchange of information with students and families about students’ learning needs and outcomes, including assessment results and attendance data?			X	
1.4 design or adapt tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize and analyze student performance, identify trends and inform instructional and organizational decisions, and to enable students and their families to assess and track each student’s progress?			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 student’s learning.				
<i>To what extent do school leaders and faculty...</i>	△	▷	✓	+
2.1 use collaborative and data-informed processes to set measurable, actionable and differentiated learning goals in core subjects for individual students and groupings of students and develop differentiated plans and timeframes for reaching these goals?			X	
2.2 use collaborative and data-informed processes to develop the school’s Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP)?			X	
2.3 ensure that the achievement of learning goals, and the implementation of plans and timeframes for reaching these goals, is the central focus of school leaders, faculty, students and families?		X		
2.4 communicate high expectations to all students and families, and involve students in developing their learning goals and plans and in taking their next learning steps?			X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 2			X	

DEFINITIONS

“**Analyze**” or “**analysis**” includes, but is not limited to, comparisons of:

- the current and past outcomes of . . . individual students, administrative groupings and sub-groups of students and the school itself in core subjects;
- the outcomes of different classrooms and sub-groups in the same grades and core subjects; and
- the school’s Progress Report and other outcomes to those of peer/other schools

“**Assessment results**” include student outcomes on summative assessments (e.g., state ELA, math, science and social studies tests, NYSESLAT, Regents Exams, and Performance Based Assessment Tasks) and formative assessments aligned to the school’s curriculum (including Periodic, DYO, and teacher-developed Classroom Assessments).

“**Core subjects**” are ELA, math, science, social studies/history, the arts, foreign language, and physical education/health.

“**Data-informed processes**” include analysis of Progress Report, Quality Review, Learning Environment Survey, Inquiry Team findings, assessment results and attendance data

“**Groupings of students**” include classrooms, grade levels and high school cohorts.

“**Organizational decisions or strategies**” refer to a school’s use of budget and resources, staffing, planning, scheduling, grade structure, departments and teacher teams and other aspects of the school’s structure and organization that can affect student outcomes.

“**Sub-groups of students**” include special education students, English Language Learners, the other NCLB sub-groups, boys, girls, and other groups significant to the school.

Quality Statement 3 – Develop Coherent Instructional and Organizational Strategies: The school uses rigorous curricula, teaching and organizational decision making to engage students and faculty in meeting all students' learning goals.

<i>To what extent do ...</i>	Δ	➤	✓	+
3.1 school leaders and faculty deliver challenging and engaging curricula in core subjects, including the arts, that are aligned to state standards?			X	
3.2 teachers plan and teach lessons that are differentiated to meet the needs of individual students and student groupings and are designed to enable all students to reach their learning goals?		X		
3.3 school leaders make strategic organizational decisions to support a coherent and rigorous instructional approach that enables students to reach their learning goals?			X	
3.4 school leaders maintain a culture of mutual trust and respect and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?			X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 3			X	

Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building to Goals: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school's goals for accelerating student learning.

<i>To what extent do school leaders...</i>	Δ	➤	✓	+
4.1 use their own observation of classroom teaching and the analysis of student outcomes to implement an explicit, differentiated strategy to improve each teacher's instruction, with a special focus on new teachers?			X	
4.2 encourage teachers to take part in Inquiry Teams and other structured professional collaborations (informed by the examination of student work, assessment outcomes and their own peer observations) and share in the instructional leadership of the school with the goal of improved student learning?		X		
4.3 provide professional development that encourages teachers to continuously evaluate and revise their classroom practices to improve student outcomes?			X	
4.4 utilize youth development, support services and partnerships with families and outside organizations to accelerate the academic and personal growth of students?				X
Overall score for Quality Statement 4			X	

Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for monitoring and evaluating each student's progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.

<i>To what extent do...</i>	Δ	➤	✓	+
5.1 the school's plans for improving student outcomes and its strategies for improving each teacher's instructional practices include measurable interim goals and suitable time frames for evaluating success and making adjustments during the year?			X	
5.2 school leaders and faculty use interim checkpoints and data to inform lessons, improve curriculum, differentiate instruction and revise student learning plans throughout the year?		X		
5.3 school leaders use data to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of and modify organizational decisions, structured professional collaborations and teacher improvement strategies?			X	
5.4 school leaders and the school community have a clear vision for the future development of the school and implement procedures and systems to support academic, personal and professional growth?			X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 5			X	

Quality Review Scoring Key							
Δ	Underdeveloped	➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features	✓	Proficient	+	Well Developed