

# Quality Review Report 2008-2009

**Mount Hope School  
Elementary School 028  
1861 Anthony Avenue  
Bronx  
NY 10457**

**Principal: Marie Barresi**

**Dates of review: April 6-7, 2009  
Lead Reviewer: Dolores Esposito**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

The Mount Hope Centennial School is a pre-kindergarten through grade 5 school serving 772 students. The school population comprises 22 % Black, 77% Hispanic and 1% Asian and other students. The student body includes 35% English language learners and 16.5% 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 92.1%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 95.2% eligibility.

### Overall Evaluation

#### **This school is well developed.**

The principal and the cabinet have added an increased focus and attention to the analysis of data so that they can measure the progress and performance of students more accurately. The principal's strong strategic leadership develops a culture that is supportive and respectful for all members of the school community. There are many opportunities for professional development for teachers, based on a range of their needs and interests. Staff work extremely well together within a culture of collegiality and mutual support. There are differentiated opportunities of support, based on a tier system, within the school. New teachers often work with a coach, lead teacher or consultant as required. The administration has ensured that the organizational structures in the school provide the supports for teachers to meet regularly for planning and for monitoring student progress. There are also opportunities for teachers to develop their own research and understanding of content and instructional practices to accelerate student learning. The impact of professional development opportunities is evident in the focused planning and delivery of instruction in classrooms and in the use of data by administration and support staff in their daily practice. Although a wide range of data is collected, there is not sufficient evidence that indicates that staff target students and differentiate their instruction consistently to meet the needs of all students.

The work of the inquiry team illustrates effective use of technology to support the analysis of data, identifying patterns and trends in the school. This information is shared with parents throughout the year to enhance and support the communication of progress for each child in a very comprehensive and inclusive manner. This is reflected throughout the school, where the focus is on a holistic approach to meeting the needs of each student. The school provides a varied and stimulating curriculum which builds upon student opportunity and experience. Curriculum continues to be refined and aligned to standards-based rubrics so that students can take more ownership and monitor their own learning. The impact of this work is not yet evident school-wide in all content areas however. The school is well managed and led, which supports the capacity development of teacher leadership. The staff has ownership of their learning and administration continues to support a culture of continuous improvement. This enables the school leadership and staff to effectively work in partnership with families to provide consistent academic and personal support.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal provides focused leadership and works very hard to create a culture where all constituents are valued and feel respected.
- The administration has developed a comprehensive professional development plan that supports the continuous development of best practices.
- The administration has made key organizational decisions to ensure that teachers are effectively supported in raising student achievement.
- School leaders and faculty systematically collect and analyze a wide range of data in order to successfully identify the needs of students, and to evaluate patterns and trends to improve student progress and performance.
- The school provides comprehensive information to parents about the progress of their children to enhance the home and school connection.
- The school provides a clear and engaging curriculum, that is aligned to standards in all core subjects, to support the various academic, social and emotional needs of students.
- The school's use of collaborative planning and inquiry team work enables the identification and sharing of best practices in the school.

### What the school needs to improve

- Expand opportunities to identify and target students for differentiated instruction in order to successfully meet the needs of all students.
- Develop standards-based rubrics school-wide that are clearly aligned with the curriculum to provide students with focused next steps to support their learning.
- Ensure that the school's goal setting process includes measurable interim goals and timeframes for evaluation and adjustments, to monitor student progress and performance.

## 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 well developed.**

The administration and faculty collect a wide range of relevant data and have a clear understanding of individual, group and subject performance. This informs teaching and learning as well as the organizational adjustments that support the school goals. The principal and the extended cabinet have developed systems and structures that facilitate the analysis of data and patterns and trends in the school. These patterns also guide the supports for intervention and enrichment opportunities for students in all subgroups. The inquiry team has taken a lead in supporting the staff in data analysis and in engaging in data dialogues. This team has been instrumental in providing the staff with various data sources through the use of technology. There are many opportunities for teachers to discuss and analyze their data with this team. The impact of this work is evident in the efficient level of organization that teachers and administrators utilize to plan and set goals. The school makes good use of comprehensive data binders and has expanded teachers' knowledge of data, as evidenced in the new "data days". This structure was established this year to facilitate and support teacher understanding of the implications from their data and how information is translated into instructional planning and practice. The school has been looking closely at the progress of English language learners in order to accelerate their progress. The use of ARIS has also assisted staff in organizing and managing data to track the progress of each student more efficiently. These developments are having a positive impact on overall student performance, as demonstrated in enhanced outcomes in both internal and external assessment results.

Parents are afforded multiple opportunities to receive information and continue to be involved in their child's learning through the progress reports that are sent home four times during the school year. This is in addition to the required report cards. Parents are very enthusiastic about the quality of education that their children receive and are very appreciative of the academic and personal support provided by the staff. As one of the parents said, "My son gets a good education in this school and they prepare him for the future". Technology has greatly assisted the school in the collection and analysis of data in order to track the progress of all students more efficiently.

**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 is a well organized learning community that has high expectations for all of its members. They have developed a variety of opportunities for teachers and support staff, including Aussie consultants, to plan and set goals for every grade and content area. The school uses collaborative processes to ensure that there is equity of voice and involvement in all aspects of planning. These positive collaborations have resulted in effective inquiry team meetings as well as school leadership meetings.

Teacher's use of data is comprehensive and well organized in their data binders and utilized in all planning sessions that guide the progress of the school including the Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP). The administration has built on the excellent start to goal setting by enabling all teachers to develop their practice in negotiating individual learning goals for students. However, at present, some of the goals set lack the rigor to sufficiently differentiate for all students and subgroups. The administration is aware of this issue and is developing systems to enable teachers and support staff to meet regularly to adjust the learning goals for individuals and groups of students in all core subjects. The active and consistent practice of student self-assessment is not yet evident school-wide. Teachers engage in classroom assessments and conferencing to monitor student progress and are growing in confidence in adjusting their instruction accordingly. The academic intervention services team provides the principal with monthly updates on student progress and performance. Data analysis is supported by "data days" which allow teachers to plan for intervention and enrichment opportunities for their students. Technology has enabled staff and students to further develop and analyze their goals in a more comprehensive and effective manner. Students have wiki spaces to enable them to monitor their own progress.

Parents are informed about student growth and progress through collaborative sessions such as curriculum night, lunch with the principal, quarterly progress reports, website access, celebrations and workshops. The school actively and successfully promotes partnership between parents and school. This collaboration has led to a high functioning school leadership team that works closely with parent leaders to effectively communicate the school's expectations and progress of their children.

**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 well developed.**

The school provides an organized and engaging curriculum which broadens student opportunity and experience. This provides good student support academically, socially and emotionally. The current social issue that is being explored in the upper grades is bullying. This work is supported by the guidance counselors and other staff who work closely with teachers in supporting students with strategies for success. One teacher reported the effective team work that is part of the school culture as "amazing". The school has a character development program that is supported by their 'book of the month' initiative. This gives staff and students the ability to explore issues of concern and to develop the whole child, which is the school's focus and has led to greater student engagement in their learning, both personally and academically. The adults continuously foster a safe and respectful environment that results in student confidence and leadership.

Curriculum maps in all core subjects have been aligned vertically and horizontally, based on state standards in all grades. The units of study are aligned to professional development and school assessments. The use of standards based rubrics aligned to the curriculum is evident in the upper grades but is not yet consistent school-wide. These infuse accountable talk and visual literacy, which are the foci of the inquiry team's analysis. Students demonstrate high levels of engagement, good behavior and enthusiasm for their learning. This is supported by the rigorous action plans in every content area for every student. These plans allow staff to begin to differentiate support for students in tiers. These tiers are based on the analysis of data and are reviewed periodically by teachers and administration. Although some of this work has begun, the consistent implementation of the differentiation of instruction, based on data to improve student achievement, is not yet evident school-wide.

Leaders make informed and effective organizational decisions in all aspects of the school to support teaching and learning. The relationships among students, teachers and administrators are collaborative and respectful, resulting in an environment that is conducive to learning. Students and staff feel valued and confident, which in turn results in a willingness to engage in additional work. The careful scrutiny of attendance and follow up procedures results in improved attendance, of currently 92.1%.

**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 well developed.**

The school provides extensive personalized professional development and support for teachers in order to learn effective teaching methods, and encourages self-evaluation and revision of instructional strategies to support improvement in student achievement. The impact of professional development is evident in classrooms, encouraging student self reflection and self monitoring of learning. Classroom discourse and samples of student work are also indicative of these practices. The strategic collaboration and collegiality across and within grades enables staff to share their expertise and best practice. Teachers regularly participate in a variety of opportunities to share information and to learn from each other. These opportunities enable them to plan and analyze data to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching. As a result, teachers are engaging in a variety of practices that differentiate learning for students, based on careful data analysis. This promotes greater teacher leadership and opportunities for collaborative inquiry. The administrative team also participates in this process by providing feedback that is based on the patterns and trends of the school, to improve the progress and performance of all students and the quality of teaching overall. Formal and informal observations assist the school to target the professional development needs of staff with personal and professional goals. The professional teaching standards are used to provide feedback, with clear, individual next steps for staff identified. Teachers are tiered in three levels based on need, support and interest. New teachers receive an extensive amount of professional development. The support is provided by consultants, coaches and administration, as well as by external groups such as the National Council for Teaching Mathematics and Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development conferences. The school is well supported by their network with opportunities to analyze data and to build teacher leadership and capacity. The school measures the impact of these opportunities by the effect it has on student performance. Teacher feedback is aligned to professional development goals and is carefully reviewed and monitored to ensure that there is student progress. This results in a school culture that supports reflection with the lens on improvement.

The school's inquiry team continues to expand and provides multiple opportunities for staff to engage in inquiry, data analysis and reflection. There is close attention to English language learners and the impact of accountable talk and visual literacy. This work is shared in many ways very regularly with staff and parents. The school's website and wiki space, developed by staff, is another tool to support the individualized professional development of staff. The school is thoughtful in looking at the whole child and includes all relevant support services to support families and students effectively. There are two guidance counselors who work with students regarding social issues. The clinic in the school provides useful additional resources that benefit the whole school community. Students appreciate and enjoy collaborations and partnerships, including a focus on the enhancement of the arts through trips sponsored by the "Bronx Ensemble". Families have on-site support from the Montefiore Clinic which provides programs such as "Moving Smart" through their health coordinator.

**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.**

There is a clear vision to develop student capacity to learn and to provide high levels of efficient support for staff in order to raise progress and performance for all students. The cohesive cabinet uses all data sources to evaluate the effectiveness of their organizational decisions, interventions, enrichment programs, professional development supports and deployment of staff. One example of the use of data to make strategic organizational decisions is the purchase of the Wilson Program to meet the identified needs of English language learners and special education students. This has led to the improvement in outcomes for this population, based on formative and summative assessments.

Currently the school does not include measurable outcomes and interim checkpoints in all goals across the school in order to precisely monitor progress and growth. Although administration does monitor the progress of students, it has yet to ensure the progress of every sub-group and student systemically, with clear timeframes for adjustments.

Reflection and evaluation are part of the school culture. As a result, it is an organization that knows its strengths well and has a focused plan for further improvement. There are many school structures to support staff in data analysis and progress monitoring of students. The school has initiated the "data days" as an opportunity to work collaboratively with colleagues and to analyze data patterns for all students and subgroups. Many of the teachers were appreciative of this new support for their learning and expressed hope for the continuation of this practice. These strategic conversations take place during school grade meetings and after school for collegial study groups. Some of these include the study of Ranzulli's Model for enrichment. These conversations have led staff to expand their professional development and include more differentiated strategies for intervention and enrichment. The administration is ensuring that these initiatives align closely with the schools' Comprehensive Education Plan. The principal leads lunch and learn sessions to build a culture of collaboration and has been successful in building the trust of the staff during her first year. The school is thoughtful and strategic and is seeking to continually develop and use data to guide future practice, with student achievement at the core of their work.

## School Quality Criteria 2008-2009

<b>School name: The Mount Hope Centennial School X028</b>	△	▷	✓	+
<b>Overall QR Score</b>				<b>X</b>
<b>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.</b>				
<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?				<b>X</b>
1.2 focus analysis on the learning outcomes and needs of all sub-groups of students?				<b>X</b>
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?				<b>X</b>
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?				<b>X</b>
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>				<b>X</b>
<b>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.</b>				
<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?			<b>X</b>	
2.2 use collaborative and data-informed processes to develop the school’s Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP)?				<b>X</b>
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?				<b>X</b>
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?				<b>X</b>
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>				<b>X</b>

### 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
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>				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
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>				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
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>			X	

**Quality Review Scoring Key**

Δ	Underdeveloped	➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features	✓	Proficient	+	Well Developed
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