

# Quality Review Report 2009-2010

**Grand Central Parkway**

**Elementary 196  
71-25 113<sup>th</sup> Street  
Queens  
NY 11375**

**Principal: Susan Migliano**

**Dates of review: January 25 - 26, 2010**

**Lead Reviewer: Jeannette Reed**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Grand Central Parkway is an elementary school with 679 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 3% Black, 13% Hispanic, 41% White, and 41% Asian students. The student body includes 7% English language learners and 10% special education students. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2008 - 2009 was 96.8%.

### Overall Evaluation

#### **This school is proficient.**

At the Grand Central Parkway School, the principal and faculty plan together, and share in the school's goals, while making strategic decisions that result in a caring and nurturing school in which all stakeholders are valued and students receive support for their academic and social needs. The newly assigned principal uses data to evaluate the effectiveness of school-wide practices and is open to initiatives relating to aligning curricula to State standards and make decisions to meet the needs of all students. Outside partnerships further this effort.

One of the school's major focus areas this year was creating a community of learners and developing into a professional learning community. To this end, teachers and faculty participate in a number of professional development activities and collaborative teacher teams in which they share best practices, gather and analyze data and develop short- and long-term goals to target the needs of students and raise achievement. Yet, evidence of good use of inquiry is still in the developing stage. The school has begun to differentiate instruction in the classroom however; this practice is not consistently evident in all classrooms, and the lack of a uniform protocol to evaluate pedagogy limits administrators ability to address this issue. While the school routinely collects and analyzes data, the school has not yet established school-wide structures to regularly evaluate and monitor systems in order to adjust and revise goal-setting, and instructional practice, particularly for higher achievers.

The Principal is a strong instructional leader who believes that each child is an individual who benefits from exposure to a challenging curriculum including the arts. The school's administration and support staff have made a concerted effort to increase and build communication between the general and special education staff, which has resulted in a coherence of academic practices for special education students.

The relationship between the school and parents is excellent. The school's open door policy for parents enable parents to voice their opinions and make recommendations reading school activities and student programs. Parents are invited to have coffee and conversation with the principal as well as take an active role in the school leadership team and formulation of the Comprehensive Educational Plan. The school provides ARIS parent link training frequently and support for interpreting ARIS generated reports. Families receive information about their children's progress, but specific feedback to students and families on how to achieve their goals in not yet consistently provided.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- Relationships across the school are warm, supportive and inclusive of students, teachers and parents who feel valued and who take pride in being part of the school community.
  - Principal initiated “Coffee & Conversation” mornings are designed to open communication with the parents regarding data, school programs, and day-to-day operations on an on-going basis. This initiative has resulted in parents’ full participation in the parent teacher association and the school leadership team. Teachers and parents who are involved in joint decision making around developing the Comprehensive Educational Plan and the budget, hold a common commitment to supporting student academic and personal growth.
  - The school has effectively implemented an “Acts of Kindness” display that honors students based on positive character traits. Parents, students, and faculty believe the school’s tone and overall climate have a positive impact on student engagement.
- The school maintains a highly effective and supportive learning environment that conveys high expectations for academic excellence for all students to their parents.
  - Parents’ participation in instructional workshops such as understanding the Progress Report and ARIS Parent Link serves to increase their knowledge of available educational resources and the school’s high expectations for students. Parents appreciate being kept abreast of their child’s academic progress and having an opportunity to participate in learning and helping with next learning steps.
  - As a direct result of the Learning Environment Survey, communication with parents was increased with the addition of a regularly up-dated school website, parent assessment survey, bi-monthly parent workshops, and monthly newsletters; consequently, this has lead to increased communication between the school, students, and families.
- The schools extensive partnerships support students and families in continual learning and promote academic and personal growth.
  - School partnerships with outside organizations include Columbia University Teachers’ College, and Project Arts and the Creative Movement for kindergarten students. These collaborations successfully engage students in extracurricular activities that expand their learning experiences and advance their skills.
  - The school’s addition of the services of a social worker and psychologist to the academic team provides continuous and effective support in the emotional development and growth for all students.
- School and classroom data provides the principal and staff with a clear picture of student performance that informs instruction and school organizational decisions.

- School administration gathers, analyzes, and effectively organizes data from State and periodic assessments enabling them to track progress and trends in student performance, adjust curriculum and instruction, and plan suitable professional development activities.
- The principal's programming decision enables all teachers to engage in collaborative teamwork. As a result, teachers work well together to review students' results developing a clear picture of students' needs and improving instruction.
- Classroom instruction provides many opportunities for meaningful student engagement in lessons that motivate the majority of students to reach their potential.
  - The design of curriculum maps aligned to the State standard helps teachers keep track of what has been taught and plan collaboratively what will be taught beyond the State exam requirements. The development of vertical teams support scaffolding and collaboration among the different grades resulting in sharing of new strategies and best practices.
  - Through curriculum planning and looking at student work, teachers create project-based learning activities and instructional rubrics to address specific needs of students in reading and math.
- The school has made progress in establishing a school-wide approach to communicating goals and the steps to achieve them.
  - School-wide goals are displayed throughout the school, in each classroom, on the school's web site, and shared in parent newsletters thus enabling all constituents to be in the loop. Teachers' meetings are venues for making goals "come alive" according to principal and staff.
  - Effective disaggregation of data has resulted in the ability of the school to determine student subgroup performance and effectively plan instruction as required.

### **What the school needs to improve**

- Expand feedback to parents by providing specific learning objectives so they can better track their child's progress toward attaining set goals.
  - Parents receive information about their children's goals with some recommendations for achieving their goals. However, it is not consistent, and there are no set benchmarks or formal interim reports providing parents with a clear picture of student performance and progress.
  - Inconsistent use of a school-wide protocol to provide explicit comments on student work limits supporting them in knowing next learning steps toward supporting continued growth.
- Design a uniform protocol for observations and learning walks to provide a common lens that evaluates and impacts learning.
  - The school does not yet have a refined structure that regularly evaluates instructional practices across the school thus preventing some staff from knowing grade-level curricular and instructional foci. Observations and focused

walkthroughs do not sufficiently focus on student-centered activities to insure that data is used well to guide instruction.

- Staff members do not sufficiently evaluate resource materials so that they can determine which resources are effective and why, relative to their classroom instruction.
- Refine planning by developing interim goals and benchmarks for decisions relative to teaching to support all students' learning, particularly for higher achievers.
  - The school uses data well to analyze individual and class performance and to ensure that each subgroup receives interventions to address their specific area of need. However, regular analysis of the performance of higher achievers is not evident, therefore precluding adjustment to instructional practices to support rigorous curriculum for them in the classroom leading to academic growth.
- Formulate teacher professional development plans to allow for targeted and continual monitoring and appropriate support when required.
  - The school's individualized teacher professional development plan is not clear and the protocol for monitoring the effectiveness of professional development support plans is not clearly delineated.
  - Staff do not yet receive adequate support on instructional practices that focus on rigor and next steps to help achieve desired teaching and learning outcomes.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2009-2010

<b>School name: Grand Central Parkway</b>	△	▶	✓	+
<b>Overall QR Score</b>			<b>X</b>	
<b>Quality Statement 1 – Instructional and Organizational Coherence: The school has a coherent strategy to support student learning that aligns curriculum, instruction and organizational decisions.</b>				
<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</i>	△	▶	✓	+
1.1 Design engaging, rigorous and coherent curricula, including the Arts, for a variety of learners and aligned to key State standards?			<b>X</b>	
1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best, and ensure that it is: aligned to the curriculum, engaging, and differentiated to enable all students to produce meaningful work products?			<b>X</b>	
1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet student learning needs?			<b>X</b>	
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?				<b>X</b>
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>			<b>X</b>	
<b>Quality Statement 2 – Gather and Analyze Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, analyze and share information on student learning outcomes to understand school and student progress over time.</b>				
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	△	▶	✓	+
2.1 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the school level?			<b>X</b>	
2.2 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the team and classroom level?			<b>X</b>	
2.3 Use or develop tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize and analyze student performance trends?				<b>X</b>
2.4 Engage in an open exchange of information with students and families regarding students' learning needs and outcomes?			<b>X</b>	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>			<b>X</b>	

<b>Quality Statement 3 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently engage the school community and use data to set and track suitably high goals for accelerating student learning.</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	△	➤	✓	+			
3.1 Establish a coherent vision of future development that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are understood and supported by the entire school community?			X				
3.2 Use collaborative and data informed processes to set measurable and differentiated learning goals for student subgroups, and students in need of additional support?			X				
3.3 Ensure the achievement of learning goals by tracking progress at the school, teacher team and classroom level?			X				
3.4 Communicate high expectations to students and families, engage them in decision-making, and promote active involvement in the school community?				X			
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>			X				
<b>Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school’s goals and student learning and emotional needs.</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	△	➤	✓	+			
4.1 Use the observation of classroom teaching and the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection, with a special focus on new teachers?			X				
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning?			X				
4.3 Provide professional development that promotes independent and shared reflection, opportunities for leadership growth, and enables teachers to continuously evaluate and revise their classroom practices to improve learning outcomes?		X					
4.4 Integrate child/youth development, support services and partnerships with families and outside organizations with the school-wide goals to accelerate the academic and personal growth of students?				X			
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>			X				
<b>Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for monitoring and evaluating progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	△	➤	✓	+			
5.1 Evaluate the quality of curricular, instructional and organizational decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school?			X				
5.2 Evaluate systems for assessing students, organizing data, and sharing information with student and families, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school?			X				
5.3 Establish and sustain a transparent, collaborative system for measuring progress towards interim and long term goals and making adjustments during the year and over time?		X					
5.4 Use data to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of structured professional collaboration, capacity building and leadership development strategies?			X				
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>			X				
<b>Quality Review Scoring Key</b>							
△	Underdeveloped	➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features	✓	Proficient	+	Well Developed



