

# **Quality Review Report**

## **2009-2010**

**The Henry M. Boehm School**

**Elementary School 055**

**54 Osborne Street  
Staten Island  
NY 10312**

**Principal: Sharon Fishman**

**Dates of review: March 8 - 9, 2010**

**Lead Reviewer: Margaret Schultz**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Henry M. Boehm is an elementary school with 708 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 5% Hispanic, 88% White, 1% Black, 1% American Indian, and 5% Asian students. The student body includes 1% English language learners and 20% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2008 - 2009 was 94.7%.

### Overall Evaluation

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

The new principal has created a learning environment that is well focused on student outcomes with a vision to continue to accelerate learning. Through strong motivational leadership and the support of the assistant principal, staff, and parents, the school consistently conveys high expectations to its students. The principal takes every opportunity to share with staff and parents, and involve them in creating “an exciting world of learning.” Parents feel welcomed at the school, participate in leadership building activities, and comment that, “PS 55 is a place where their children are happy and parent involvement is welcomed”, a sentiment echoed by staff and students.

The administration has structures in place to provide a common lens to promote the evaluation of teaching practices allowing for coherence and the recognition of next steps to promote professional growth. All teachers are engaged in a structured professional collaboration using an inquiry approach. During team meetings, teachers feel empowered to make decisions that will best meet the needs of their targeted students, as well as all students, who they oversee.

The school schedules common planning time for teachers to analyze data, plan curriculum and classroom lessons, and share best practices. As a result, there has been an increase in all students' outcomes, particularly in the early childhood grades and with the lowest performing students. The school recognizes that the next step is to further expand data analysis structures to identify trends in student progress and performance in order to inform the curriculum and instruction.

The school has made good progress in its use of data to identify patterns and trends in many aspects of the school's work. However the administration and teachers do not yet extend data gathering analysis practices to provide a complete picture of subgroups of students progress, nor do teachers' responses to student work reflect guiding comments, level of performance, and next steps to help in improving work. This means that teachers do not yet use data to set measurable and differentiated learning goals for students, especially for the higher achieving students.

The administration makes strategic organizational and instructional decisions to support the school's goals and improve student learning. In order to decrease class size due to budget cuts in third grade classes, a new class of fifteen students was formed for three periods a day to focus on students' needs in reading and writing. In addition, in response to student needs, the school has been effective in developing internal capacity and external partnerships to provide support services for students and families.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school communicates very effectively with students and their families, who have high praise for the academic and personal support that their children receive from school staff.
  - School leaders and teachers use ongoing information from periodic assessments to involve parents and students in understanding learning performance and progress. Students, in conversations with teachers, review their work against established benchmarks to monitor their growth. Teachers and students work collaboratively to reflect on progress, revise short-term goals, and set next steps toward reaching long-term goals.
  - The parent coordinator schedules monthly parent workshops that assist families with information to address their children's learning needs. One such workshop is the ARIS Parent Link tool that enables parents to access their child's assessment outcomes in a timely manner and attain information to assist their child at home.
- Parents are true partners and have a voice in school decision making, thus fostering a collaborative and caring community built upon mutual trust and respect that supports high expectations.
  - Through extensive participation as volunteers in the learning leaders program, the school successfully promotes involvement and leadership of parents. Because of their participation in this program, at-risk first grade students are improving their comprehension skills. One parent reflected others' views when commenting, "This is a place where my children want to be, and I want to be."
  - The principal creates an open door policy through a monthly parent coffee meeting during which, the school's goals and policies are discussed. Parents feel they have a voice and their opinions are valued, and their suggestion of a specific preparation for the English language arts test became part of the school's program and has led to an increase in students' performance.
- The school's leaders make effective organizational decisions in relation to the use of time and personnel across all aspects of the school's work that support improvements in learning.
  - The school's effective scheduling is successfully impacting on student performance. This year, departmentalization of the school's fifth grade has resulted in all teachers understanding the specific needs of all students in that grade. Extensive common planning time for grade 5 teachers enables them to collaborate and plan strategies to incorporate in all the disciplines that address the specific needs of each student.

- At teacher team meetings, teachers hold themselves accountable for the students' academic progress, since all teachers are working with the same students. During these team meetings, teachers plan interdisciplinary lessons employing strategies that meet the needs of students working at all levels. In addition, lead teachers of each teacher team meet with the administration once a month at data meetings to discuss the most current school data and then turn-key the information during teacher team meetings, resulting in improved classroom instruction and increased student outcomes.
- Structures are in place that provide a common lens to promote the evaluation of teaching practices in order to support the identification of next steps and foster professional growth and coherence.
  - The school has established extensive structures to provide evaluative feedback to staff around teaching practice. The administration's walkthroughs on two grade levels twice weekly results in a 'Common Patterns and Trends' memo providing all staff with best practices and areas for improvement. Additionally, individually visited teachers receive a walkthrough feedback memo outlining commendations and suggested strategies to implement in order to accelerate learning. This practice identifies needs and fosters professional growth among the staff resulting in improvements in classroom instruction. The school's professional development plan is continually reviewed and revised based on the aggregate information culled during the walkthroughs.
- The school's systems and an extensive network of specialized support personnel work diligently to meet the personal, social, physical, and emotional needs of students.
  - The friendly faces program involves the entire school community in fostering excellent citizenship. Teachers choose students to meet with the principal to discuss rewards for students who demonstrate random acts of kindness and demonstrate good citizenship. As a result, the school is providing opportunities for students to develop greater social and emotional skills and bullying incidents have decreased.
  - An external partnership allows the school to have an afternoon extended day program that enables students to receive counseling and homework assistance, as well as explore interests in cooking, drama, sports, and arts and crafts. As a result, the school provides the opportunity for students to grow both academically and personally. As one student states, "We all try our hardest because everyone does their best to help us learn"
- The school's administration has fostered professional collaboration through grade level teacher inquiry teams, enabling teachers to reflect on instructional practices.
  - There are inquiry teams on every grade level, whereby teachers are able to meet and discuss targeted groups of students, develop next learning steps, and effectively track students' progress in meeting short- and long-term goals. All teachers are using and tracking Teacher College assessments to measure growth in the interim benchmarks of the reading levels for each student.

- The grade 5 team meets on a regular basis to analyze formative and summative data of their targeted students. Teachers develop and share strategies to support student vocabulary development in reading comprehension. Teachers are successfully expanding vocabulary development into their students' extended responses. As a result, there has been an increase in their higher leveled students' performance as evidenced by an increase in students' work and results on formative and summative assessments.

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

- Extend data gathering analysis practices to provide a complete picture of students' progress.
  - Teachers gather and analyze summative data. However, not all teachers analyze classroom-level data, including student work and projects, to identify the strengths and needs of individual students. As a result, not all students' needs are being met, especially special education students.
- Deepen teachers understanding of how to use data to differentiate instruction to accelerate student learning.
  - Teachers analyze various forms of data to identify the strengths and needs of students. However, differentiation and varied levels of challenge are not being applied consistently. As a result, the individual learning needs of students are not always addressed and higher achievers are not always challenged. This results at times in low levels of engagement and insufficient progress.
- Strengthen the use of data to set measurable and differentiated learning goals for students to improve student outcomes.
  - Although teachers analyze data to identify which students require additional support, they do not apply it consistently to create differentiated learning goals for the higher achieving students across all grades, or monitor their progress and identify next steps to maximize growth.
- Expand data analysis structures to identify trends in student progress and performance in order to inform the curriculum and instruction.
  - Although the school has structures in place for evaluating and adjusting assessment practices and tools, those tools are not fully aligned with a focus on building alignment and coherence between what students need to know and be able to do, what is taught, and how teachers assess what students have learned.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2009-2010

School name: Henry M. Boehm	△	➤	✓	+
<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>							
△	<b>Underdeveloped</b>	➤	<b>Underdeveloped with Proficient Features</b>	✓	<b>Proficient</b>	+	<b>Well Developed</b>