



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Edward C Blum

Public School 046

**100 Clermont Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11205**

Principal: Brenda Hill

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Reviewer: Denis Pittman

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Public School 46, the Edward C Blum School, is located in Brooklyn. The school has a population of 388 students, from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. It serves an ethnically diverse population in a changing community which is reflected in the high mobility of the student roll. The ethnic composition of the school is 47.9% Black students, 47.6% Hispanic, 2.6% White and 2.6% Asian. Special education students account for 10% of the school population. Fourteen percent of students are English language learners. The school is in receipt of Title I funding with 81.8% student eligibility which is above the average for similar schools and well above that of City schools. Attendance levels are 90.8% which are below that of similar and City schools.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal has a strong commitment to student welfare and is well respected by staff, students and parents.
- The school has established a productive working relationship with parents and the community.
- The school is a safe, well-ordered environment for students.
- The curriculum is being effectively enhanced by extensions to the English language arts program and the extended day provision to enrich and support the learning of students.
- Relationships between students and staff are positive and students feel that staff are willing to help them.
- The community-based organization, 'Partnership with Children' adds a broad socializing context to the school's work in supporting students.
- The school uses its budget efficiently to acquire resources and support programs for promoting student achievement.

What the school needs to improve

- Introduce further rigor into the gathering and interpretation of data to provide a coherent overview of the performance of subjects and groups within the school and to understand how the school's performance compares with similar schools.
- Develop rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluating instructional programs and the effectiveness of strategic planning.
- Increase teachers' understanding and use of data to inform and revise instructional programs in order to meet the needs of different groups within the classroom.
- Ensure greater consistency in communicating high expectations for student achievement.
- Establish clear procedures to enable the effective communication of information about students and action plans between staff groups.
- Clearly focus professional development on achieving a consistency in the tracking of student progress and engaging more students in the learning process.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is an undeveloped school with proficient features.

The principal has been well supported by staff in creating a calm, safe and orderly community. Day-to-day administration runs smoothly, and students feel they are valued and their opinions respected. The school has created a positive relationship with its parent group and with outside agencies which work well together for the benefit of students. The school recognizes the need to improve achievement by establishing a greater consistency in its work such as in the quality of teaching and the use of data by all teachers. A priority for the school is to ensure that its high expectations of students' academic progress are seen in all lessons across the school. Where lessons are planned to accommodate students' varying abilities then they are interested and well motivated. Teachers are committed to improving behavior around the school and in classrooms and, in so doing, have achieved much in the creation of a better learning environment. The school is not yet making sufficient use of the data it collects to make strategic decisions about student progress within classrooms and at grade level. The principal has invested a significant period of her professional life in the school and this is greatly valued by the parents and local community. She ably utilizes this goodwill to promote the work of the school. However, more formal reviews and evaluation of the school's work are not carried out with sufficient rigor or regularity. This is particularly important in helping the school to undertake a more strategic review of its performance to establish the extent to which its goals and plans are being achieved.

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 student progress over time.

This area of the school's work is undeveloped.

The school collects a substantial amount of data relating to individuals, classes and grades. However this wealth of information is not being effectively organised or interpreted so as to inform the school's practice. The school does not have a sufficiently coherent overview of its performance particularly in relation to subjects within the school. The overview of science achievement is undeveloped and, consequently, student progress cannot be readily compared with other subjects. The inconsistencies, which are inherent in the system, are also reflected in the variable generation of data in respect of different groups of students such as English language learners and special education students. Insufficient consideration is also given to the any differences in performance in relation to gender or ethnicity. The monitoring of progress at an individual student level, within a classroom or at grade level is undeveloped. For example, the limited progress grade 5 students have shown in developing their reading levels is attributable to a lack of consistency in producing 'Running Records' of achievement. The generation and collection of formative information about students is not sufficiently organized to give a clear indication of the progress being achieved. The absence of any regular and structured analysis of data means that the school has very little strategic information to

make meaningful comparisons about its past performance in relation to students' progress. The inconsistencies in the collection and interpretation of data mean that there is insufficient capacity to use this to compare outcomes within and across classrooms. The lack of rigour in data analysis is also reflected in the very limited understanding of how the school compares with other schools of a similar nature.

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use available data to understand each student's next learning step. Through collaborative planning and student and parent engagement, they set high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating each student's learning.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The senior leadership of the school is involved in a collaborative process to establish long-term goals such as those identified in the Comprehensive Education Plan. Some aspects of data analysis have informed these plans. For example, the ECLAS-2 assessments provided literacy information to give a clear focus to guided reading in the lower grades. In addition the emphasis on literacy is also reflected in the development of levelled libraries in classrooms. However the information which the school generates about grade levels is not being rigorously interpreted by all staff. For example the decline in the progress of students in mathematics, as shown in the Princeton review data, did not produce a concerted positive response. The information which is being collected is not being orchestrated to produce modified plans to meet the needs of students in some classrooms. In a broader context, the identification of objectives which support students' social development or creating an ordered learning environment has been successful. The same commitment to achieve consistency in practice across the school is not reflected in the pursuit of academic goals. In consequence, energies are focused on a number of disparate objectives rather than focusing on the performance of students in greatest need.

The leadership of the school has demonstrated through documentation and meetings with staff, students, and parents its commitment to high expectations of performance and behavior. Its commitment to the philosophy and action plans of the Comer School development Program, which is based upon an active involvement of parents and the community, is helping in promoting these objectives. Some parents are showing an increasing willingness to be involved in their child's education. The structures for providing the flow of information about student performance and how they are to improve are appropriately in place. The use of this information in developing coherent action plans that are understood by all members of the school community is less consistently established.

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instruction: The school aligns its instructional activity and resources, and student engagement around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

In order to achieve an element of continuity to the curriculum the school has committed resources to the funding of curriculum programs which meet the requirements of the mandated curriculum. The school uses the Teachers' College Units of Study, modifying them according to student need. This data driven adaptation is most prominently reflected in English language arts and mathematics but not in science or social science courses. In consequence, the capacity to generate reliable consistent data about progress is mixed. The content of some of the curriculum maps and other programs is not being sufficiently

modified and interpreted to meet the specific requirements of classes and individual students. For example, the data which is being collected by the intervention services in the form of individual education plans (IEPs) is not being used consistently to inform and effect curriculum planning in some classrooms. The facility to collect meaningful data about students' need exists but is not organized efficiently so as to provide a good profile of student progress at classroom and at grade levels. Where good use of data is a feature of lesson planning, students are actively involved in their learning but the absence of small group activities in other lessons, for example, means that large numbers of students remain passive listeners.

Budget decisions are being appropriately governed by student need and the outcome of data analysis. This commitment is shown by the creation of small group sizes to promote the effectiveness of teaching at grade 4. The turnover of staff is relatively high. The school is striving to achieve stability in this area. The appointments of literacy and maths coaches reflect an awareness of the support that teachers need for the development of their instructional programs.

Scheduling decisions are specifically geared to utilise this expertise through the blocking of literacy and mathematics sessions at the start of the day. The provision of enrichment and extended day programmes is an indication of the response to specific student needs. Where the curriculum and lesson planning are appropriately structured then students are eager and interested. Overall, staff are supportive of students and there is a mutual respect between adults and students. Students say that they feel safe in the school and know who to go to if they have a problem.

The school rightly identifies attendance and lateness as issues to be addressed. The school has appropriate follow-up procedures in place. The school makes this a high priority and encourages parents to adopt the same attitude.

Quality Statement 4 - Build and Align Capacity: The development of instructional leadership, staff, and capacity are aligned around the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The school hires staff who have the skills and curriculum expertise to meet student needs, although an understanding of data has not been paramount among selection criteria. The school uses a range of strategies for identifying professional development needs, including staff surveys. It has made a substantial financial commitment to providing in-house consultancy for staff in relation to developing skills of data analysis and strategies for differentiating instructional programs. In order to create more time for staff development the literacy and maths coaches arrange 'lunch and learn' activities. This has proved an effective basis for the sharing of good practice. In a broader context the identification of the need to improve teaching strategies has been made at cabinet level meetings. However, the implementation of a strategy for observing classroom teaching has not been followed through with sufficient consistency. The level of formal observations conducted by the principal is too infrequent to establish a basis of consistency and high expectations of teaching performance. There is little evidence of teachers regularly observing each other to improve practice. Grade teams meet to plan their work but the amount of time they have to do this in sufficient detail is less than the school would wish.

The principal is respected by staff, parents, and students. Her long association with the school has created a core of goodwill which she is able to draw upon. The principal

understands the need for change and development. She is creating a network of support through internal and external agencies to provide a basis for sustaining further improvements. However, currently the management systems to sustain change, particularly in relation to teaching outcomes, are insufficiently robust. The school is calm and runs smoothly. Procedures to support students are well established and in consequence students know where to go and what to do should they have a concern.

The school has recognized the importance of developing its community relationships. A number of effective partnerships have been established including the Partnership with Children, Fort Green volunteers and St Joseph College. The Parents' Association through its strong commitment to the Comer Program has been particularly effective in developing and promoting community relationships for the benefit of students.

Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has built-in structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year, recognizing weaknesses in its improvement plans and teaching practices, and flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerated learning.

This area of the school's work is undeveloped.

The school's Comprehensive Education Plan identifies medium-term goals but there is no diagnostic assessment or timescale to determine the degree to which those goals are being achieved. The school has yet to establish a consistent process of collating data on the progress of students. This is because of variations in the degree of confidence in the use of assessment information by some staff, hampers the school in making decisions based upon a full range of information about staff performance which impacts negatively upon the efficacy of decision-making in the school. The comparison of student progress is taking place within some individual classrooms but that information is not coordinated to get a picture of comparative patterns within and between grades. Some of the formative assessments of students lack clarity and depth. There is some evidence of the collection of diagnostic assessment impacting positively upon good practice. For example, the school is using average measures of performance to check the progress of students in relation to their English language arts and mathematics programs. Because there is insufficient monitoring of the instructional programs, there is no strategic approach to improving practice. The absence of consistent, formative data means that the leadership team tends to react to circumstances rather than being proactive in its management strategies. In consequence, senior leaders are not sufficiently flexible in realigning practices and resources to improve the academic outcomes of students.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Name of School Edward C Blum public School 46	∅	✓	+
Quality Score	X		

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 student progress over time.	∅	✓	+
1.1 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • each student, classroom, grade level, 		X	
1.2 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ethnic groups, English Language Learners, special education students* 	X		
1.3 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all other categories of interest to the school* 	X		
1.4 Performance and progress are measured based on comparisons with similar schools, with the school's own past performance, and among students, classrooms, grade levels, academic subject areas, ethnic groups, and other groupings of interest within the school.	X		
Overall score for Quality Statement 1	X		

* These criteria are partially aspirational as of now because schools do not have routine access to all of this data. The NYC DOE plans to provide schools with enhanced access to the necessary data in 2007.

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use available data to understand each student's next learning step. Through collaborative planning and student and parent engagement, they set high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating each student's learning.	∅	✓	+
2.1 Using data, school leaders and faculty engage in a collaborative process to set demanding, objectively measurable goals for immediate and long-range improvement, and to develop plans and timeframes for reaching those goals.		X	
2.2 Goals and plans focus on the school as a whole and 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 Particular attention is given to improving the performance and progress of students in greatest need of improvement.	X		
2.4 High expectations are conveyed to students and parents/caregivers. Students and their parents/caregivers are regularly invited to provide information about each student's performance and how to improve. This information is central to setting challenging goals and developing, evaluating, and revising plans.		X	
2.5 Goals and plans for improving student performance and progress drive the activity of all members of the school community: leaders, staff, students, parents, and other partners.	X		
Overall score for Quality Statement 2		X	

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instruction: The school aligns its instructional activity, resources, and student engagement around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.	∅	✓	+
3.1 The school selects the curriculum based on how well it aligns with or implements the mandated curriculum and on the curriculum's capacity to generate meaningful interim data about progress towards goals and to support the school's high expectations and improvement plans.		X	
3.2 Teachers are accountable for improving instruction and student outcomes. They plan and differentiate their instruction based on the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.	X		
3.3 Budgeting decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.		X	
3.4 Staffing decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.		X	
3.5 Scheduling decisions about the use of teacher and student time are guided by the needs that emerge from examining student data and by the focused plan the school develops to improve student outcomes.		X	
3.6 Instructional programs actively engage students.		X	
3.7 Staff know and respect students and respond to their academic needs, as well as their personal needs that affect academic performance. Each student knows and trusts an adult on the staff who is concerned about him or her.		X	
3.8 Student attendance and engagement are high priorities. High rates and patterns of absences trigger immediate intervention.		X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 3		X	
Quality Statement 4 – Build and Align Capacity: The development of instructional leadership, staff, and capacity are aligned around the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.	∅	✓	+
4.1 Leaders, faculty, and staff are selected based on their high expectations for student performance and progress and based on their commitment and capacity to use data, compare outcomes within and across classrooms and schools and develop and revise plans and methods to improve performance and progress.		X	
4.2 Professional development decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes. Professional development is designed to help leaders, faculty, and staff use data, self- and peer-assessments, and collaboration with peers to achieve goals for improved school and student outcomes. Professional development and self- and peer-evaluation are aligned and overlap.		X	
4.3 The principal frequently observes classroom teaching and has a considered strategy for improving the quality of each teacher's instruction. Teachers frequently observe and support each other's classroom instruction with the goal of improving student outcomes.	X		
4.4 Planning, evaluation of results, and revision of plans takes place in teams. Leaders and faculty inform each other of their goals and results, candidly evaluate themselves and each other, and use what is learned to drive improvement.	X		
4.5 The principal is respected and has capacity to effect change.		X	
4.6 The school runs smoothly. Procedures are clear, communicated to all, and are generally followed.		X	
4.7 The school aligns youth development and support services around stated academic goals. Partnerships with outside bodies are routinely used to achieve academic goals.			X
Overall score for Quality Statement 4		X	
Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has built-in structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year, recognizing weaknesses in its improvement plans and teaching practices, and flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.	∅	✓	+
5.1 All school plans and other interventions include frequent interim goals and diagnostic assessments of progress designed to reveal in objectively measurable ways whether the plan is being effectively implemented and reaching stated goals.	X		
5.2 Comparisons of student progress within and across classrooms and schools are used in making interim diagnostic assessments and measuring the progress of plans and interventions.		X	
5.3 Information generated by periodic assessments and diagnostic measures of progress and comparisons is used to revise plans immediately in order to reach stated goals. Interim and final goals are modified when data objectively demonstrate that revision is required.	X		
5.4 Each plan's interim and final outcomes drive successive phases of goal setting and improvement planning, and each successive phase is characterized by agile and flexible realignment of practices and resources to improve student academic outcomes.	X		
Overall score for Quality Statement 5	X		