



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Crocheron School

Public School 41

**214 - 43 35th Avenue
Queens
NY 11361**

Principal: Sari Latto

Dates of review: November 28 - 29, 2006

Reviewer: Kathleen Yates

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Crocheron School is an elementary school which serves an ethnically diverse population in Queens. There are 417 students enrolled from kindergarten through grade 5. The greatest proportion of students 43% comes from Asian families. In addition 38% are White, 13% Hispanic and 6% are Black. Eleven percent of students are English language learners. The proportion of special education students is 8%. The school is not Title 1 eligible.

The principal has served the school for nine years and staffing is stable. Attendance is 95.9% which is above average when compared with similar and City-wide schools.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal has an exemplary reputation in the school and provides excellent leadership and support for teachers and students.
- All staff systematically collect a wide range of data which they analyze rigorously to ensure no student is left behind.
- There is a sense of unity and collegiality among all staff who are committed to the school's success.
- Teaching is exciting and engaging so that learning is fun and memorable, and students consistently achieve well.
- This is a school with a heart and staff care for all the students very well.
- There is a particularly wide range of enrichment activities which provides all-round development of students.
- Staff support for one another is outstanding and is central to the good teaching to be seen throughout the school.
- Data on students' performance is exceptionally well used in decision-making at all levels.
- The school has close collaboration with parents who are actively involved in their children's learning.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop teachers' knowledge and understanding of technology and make use of it to deliver lessons across all subjects throughout the school.
- Continue to develop the social studies curriculum to focus on broader and essential concepts.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well-developed school.

This elementary school gives students an excellent start to their education. It is a school with a heart where all students are encouraged to do their very best so that they emerge as well-rounded citizens who achieve well academically, socially and emotionally.

Everyone around the school is committed to giving of their best. The principal provides excellent leadership and management, and leads a team in which all are conscientious, committed and loyal to the school. Teachers use data very well and are continually striving to present lively, interesting lessons where students are actively involved in assessing their own learning so that they have high expectations of themselves. Students achieve well. The curriculum is exciting and enrichment clusters are a notable feature of the school. All adults and students enjoy being together. Parents are regularly consulted about the education their children receive and are very actively involved in the running of the school. They are very appreciative of the wonderful way in which their children are cared for.

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 well developed.

The school regularly collects a wide range of information gained from assessments and tests which provide teachers with detailed data on the performance and progress of each student. The school is particularly successful in ensuring that no student is left behind. This is because teachers know their students very well and consistently use the data collected so that all teachers provide very well for the lower achievers, the gifted and the middle achievers. Teachers are aware of the performance of various groups of students, but there is more emphasis on the performance of individuals.

Teachers use a combination of both teacher-made assessments and checklists along with established State and City assessments. The staff constantly assess progress and revise goals and plans in response to new information. They discuss their practice, using the information they have about their students' progress to devise strategies to improve instruction and to support all students, particularly any who might be underachieving.

The school is very inclusive. It is very attentive to special education students through a range of intervention strategies and detailed individualized education programs that ensure these students are well challenged and make good progress. The needs of the 10 to 15% of the student population who are academically talented are also well planned for in weekly meetings with facilitators where self-selected research projects are developed.

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 well developed.

The school’s use of a wide range of assessment information is instrumental in facilitating the setting of whole-school goals and in ensuring that students make good progress, particularly in literacy and in mathematics. As a result of the work the school has already undertaken, teachers are accurate in their grading of students’ work. Students enjoy the challenges they are set. Teachers give them accurate and supportive feedback, and they are involved in assessing the quality of their own work, supported by rubrics. In this way, they are active participants in their own learning, and are helped to know and understand what they are doing well and what they need to do in order to improve. One student said, “The staff expect a lot of us, and we all try hard.”

Regular staff meetings, where all participants share and air their views constructively, are a significant factor in planning for improvement. These meetings are highly focused with a clear purpose of setting high goals for improving teaching practice and ensuring all students are assigned work which challenges them to do their very best. Staff also regularly gather together to reflect upon the suitability and appropriateness of the next learning step for individual students and refine their planning accordingly. The sharing of such expertise ensures teachers’ planning is well matched to the needs of all students.

Students having difficulties are quickly identified, resulting, when necessary, in a referral to the wide range of support services. Members of these services work together and share information extremely well ensuring a coordinated approach to students and their families and the school’s records demonstrate high levels of success. The academic intervention service team works in close collaboration with all teachers. Student placement in these services is kept under constant review, and students move in and out in accordance with their specific learning needs.

Expectations for all students are very high and these are shared with students and their parents who are actively involved in discussions of goals set. Their children’s progress towards the goals is regularly tracked and new challenges are then set which ensure all students make good progress in their learning.

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 well developed.

The degree to which instruction is planned and modified according to the needs of students is impressive, with a high level of involvement by teachers. The school’s curriculum is firmly based on high expectations of students and a constant review of their progress. The Crocheron School, however, goes much further than this. It is highly successful in developing all areas of learning through a wide range of enrichment classes. For example, students engage enthusiastically in visual arts, drama, music, craft and ballroom dancing. As a result, they develop into confident, motivated individuals who know how to get on well together and are well prepared in developing life skills. Students regularly perform in productions, such as ‘The Nutcracker Suite’, for parents, who are very

appreciative of the way the school encourages their children to excel in as many areas as possible. Attendance is above average and the school is alert to the reasons for absence. Behavior is very good and attitudes are positive. Students enjoy their lessons. For example, they speak with excitement about their science classes, where they get to hold beetles, use magnifying glasses and “discover a lot”, to quote one student. They are confident that any concerns they may have will be quickly and firmly dealt with.

The school budget is used carefully to support the curriculum and planned improvements. Parents work tirelessly to raise extra funds to ensure their children have the best opportunities for learning. Information about students’ progress is used well to ensure that there are continually high expectations of their performance. This is also reflected in the range of resources used to meet their individual needs such as in reading. Teachers readily describe their accountability for students’ learning and exemplify the good range of information that they use to inform their work. Teachers’ collaborative approaches, for example, in curriculum mapping exercises, ensure the alignment of instruction with the necessary skills and concepts. Action is also taken to support the needs of the special education students as well as extending the gifted students. The school recognizes that planning for the social studies curriculum does not have sufficient breadth or pay sufficient attention to some essential concepts to better enhance students’ learning in this content area.

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 well developed.

Staff turnover is low. Members of staff enjoy working in this very happy school where everyone is valued and well supported. Any new staff are very carefully selected and the process has proved highly effective in building an impressive team of reflective practitioners who work together extremely well. The principal provides excellent leadership and all staff are passionate about their school. This cohesion provides students with a happy, caring and stimulating environment which is the bedrock of the success they achieve.

The principal sets very high standards, regularly checks on the quality of instruction, and is very successful in communicating and sharing her expectations with everyone connected with the school. She is held in the highest esteem by staff, parents and students. She is well supported by her administration and the school runs very smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Effective use is made of support services when necessary to guide and develop students with particular needs, and to support their families if appropriate. Educational partnerships with a range of community-based organizations are strong. Visiting specialists, such as dance and drama teachers, provide students with specialized instruction and teachers with fresh ideas to extend their knowledge.

The principal frequently delivers lessons and works alongside teachers to model lessons which will excite and stimulate students. Together with all staff she is regularly involved in curriculum development as they review and evaluate the impact of their teaching. Although there are good opportunities for professional development, many teachers do not yet have the expertise or the confidence to enhance learning through the use of technology.

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 well developed.

The way that the analysis and use of data permeate the school's practice is a major strength. All areas of the school's work are carefully planned drawing on all available data, and kept under constant review. There is systematic monitoring and revision of planning for all students. As a result, staff regularly plan, evaluate and revise interventions and initiatives according to the needs of students. The staff are closely involved in decision-making so that school planning is determined by the results of data analysis and their clear understanding of students' progress. Plans have precise goals and timeframes and are revised when new information becomes available. The Comprehensive Education Plan is a working document reviewed as a whole on several occasions throughout the year.

Despite the school's success there is no air of complacency and the principal leads a team with a high level of commitment to further improvement. Many staff credit the school's high standards to a combination of high expectations and the precise use of data to guide instruction and determine students' learning needs.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The Crocheron School PS41	∅	✓	+
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			
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