



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Intermediate School 77

**976 Seneca Avenue
Queens
N Y 11385**

Principal: Joseph Miller

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Reviewer: Candido DeJesus

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Information about the school

This is an intermediate school with 51 classes organized into four academies based on different themes. Its 1,272 students are 71% Hispanic, 16% White, 9% Asian and 5% Black. Approximately 13% are English language learners, predominantly from Spanish speaking homes. Special education students make up about 13% of the population. About 82% of the students are Title 1 eligible, higher than the average for City schools and similar schools. Attendance at the school is 93% which is higher than similar and City schools.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal, supported by a strong cabinet, provides inspirational and effective leadership.
- The school has demonstrated significant academic growth in literacy and mathematics in the last few years.
- Strong guided reading and guided mathematics programs provide successful approaches to differentiated instruction and individualization.
- Classroom environments are print rich and are evidence of the effective implementation of the workshop model for literacy, mathematics and content area subjects.
- Systems used for consistently gathering data and monitoring student progress are exemplary.
- The leaders of the school hold themselves, staff members and students accountable for learning and academic achievement.
- Observations of lessons are used to give detailed feedback to teachers on their instruction and to inform the planning of further professional development.
- Teachers are reflective of their practice and have high expectations for their students to self monitor and be reflective of their own learning.
- There are frequent checkpoints throughout the year where interim goals are evaluated in objective ways.
- The school is clean, safe and conducive to learning.

What the school needs to improve

- Focus more resources on English language learners and students with special needs.
- Convey high expectations to parents to provide more information about their students that will help them improve goals and outcomes.
- Provide more opportunities for participation in and ownership of school plans and goals by the wider school community.
- Improve procedures for recognizing weaknesses in improvement plans and teaching practices targeted for English language learners and special education students.

Overall Evaluation

This is a well-developed school.

Intermediate School 77 school has successfully created a culture of professional learning and accountability. Staff turnover is low and school morale is high. The school has put into place comprehensive systems to gather a wide range of data and use periodic assessments to monitor the progress of each student. In addition, classroom instruction is characterized by strong programs in guided reading and guided mathematics. Content area teachers also contribute to school improvement efforts by embedding literacy practices in their daily lessons. Teachers not only maintain up-to-date data binders for each class, but they refer to their analysis of this data on a constant basis to make changes in planning, instruction and the implementation of interventions. Teachers frequently reflect on their practices and those of their colleagues. Students are taught to reflect on their own learning and to become proficient at self monitoring their efforts. These systemic practices have resulted in sustained student progress over the last three years. The school now needs to continue its growth for English language learners and students with special needs.

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 has implemented a system of data collection and monitoring that is exemplary. Each teacher is held accountable for maintaining all standardized and school generated data in notebooks. There are specific notebooks for literacy and for mathematics. These notebooks are analyzed and become the center of conversations at all planning meetings and professional development sessions. They are also crucial to the guided reading and guided mathematics lessons that are a mainstay to the instructional program of the school.

School administrators maintain their own assessment notebooks that assist overall school plans for improvement and allow comparisons to be made with the school's own past performance and that of other schools. Supervisors also use the information to evaluate teachers' planning and instruction. The staff frequently makes comparisons among classrooms, grades, subject areas and all groups of students which are relevant in the school. Variations in performance are analyzed and enable school leaders to identify new patterns and trends. Teachers maintain an objective and constantly updated understanding of their students' performance and progress. Interventions are based on the analysis of the data and the assessment of areas of needs. Special attention is paid to English language learners and special education students since they are the groups currently at risk of not meeting the standard. Longitudinal data is carefully analyzed to look for trends and patterns in performance and to ensure that the school is improving as planned.

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 school has set up procedures that contribute to consistency in how it plans instruction and sets demanding and measurable goals for immediate and long-range improvement. School-generated data is collected daily and collated with standardized data to provide a comprehensive picture of the strengths and areas of need for each student.

Parent, teacher, and student surveys are used to identify needs and strengths and set future goals for the Comprehensive Education Plan. Goals and plans focus as a whole on school improvement in a systematic manner and then are broken down into more specific goals for each class, grade, student and group of students. Teachers plan collaboratively in teams to accelerate the learning of students and to apply interventions for every student that needs it. The school pays particular attention to the performance and progress of its English language learners and special education students. High expectations are conveyed to students and parents, who are welcomed and encouraged to take active roles in the education of their children. Parental involvement is a proficient area that needs to be further improved.

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 school implements the mandatory curriculum and is effective at modifying curricula based on the capacity of teachers to generate meaningful interim data about student progress. Pacing calendars, to meet specific school needs, are developed in all content area subjects and are aligned to State standards. Classroom instruction is characterized by guided reading or mathematics that is based on the analysis of student data that is well documented in each teacher’s assessment notebook. This ensures that instruction is differentiated based on the needs of students and the focused plans the school has developed for academic achievement. Agreed structures are place to identify responsibility. Administrators have a comprehensive system of accountability for teachers and students around the stated focus of school improvement plans. Teachers and administrators are able to articulate how they are accountable for improving instruction and achievement.

Budgeting decisions support the implementation of interventions by funding additional support services, personnel and professional development. Extended day programs are scheduled before and after school and on Saturdays. Student attendance is about 70% for most of these activities. Strong teachers have intervention periods built into their daily schedule to work with pupils at risk of not reaching State standards. Block scheduling for literacy and mathematics provides the necessary time for differentiation of instruction as evidenced by daily guided reading and guided mathematics.

Teachers plan carefully and with student feedback have made lessons actively engaging for students. Teachers have high expectations for students. As a result, students are self-motivated and eager to learn. They feel respected and valued by their teachers and

feel there are always adults in the building they can trust and confide in. There are effective strategies in place throughout the school to encourage and reward good attendance. The impact is a higher than average percentage of attendance for students as compared to similar and City schools.

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.

Intermediate School 77 is a lab site for the "America's Choice" model of school organization and reform. Teams from other middle school are often brought to the school to observe best practices of the staff. Teachers are hired on their capacity to use data to set high expectations for student outcomes. The school is pro-active in its planning for professional development providing teachers the opportunity to develop the skills to achieve school goals and targets. Planning, assessments and revisions take place in teams. Self and peer evaluation is regular, scheduled and well embedded into the fabric of the school.

The principal and his assistant principals frequently observe classroom teaching, using good strategies for improving quality of instruction. These observations frequently drive professional development and are often shared as best practices. Supervisors also make good use of them in their monitoring of student performance. Teachers are comfortable visiting each other's classrooms for the purpose of supporting and evaluating their own teaching and that of their colleagues. Very strong processes are in place that ensures regular opportunities for close collaboration and planning among teachers and appropriate support personnel.

The principal is respected as an instructional leader who has steadily brought positive change to the school and makes sure the school runs smoothly and safely. He is supported by a very strong cabinet of assistant principals and coaches. This administration purposefully ensures that support services and youth development programs are effectively aligned with academic goals. Adolescent development is a particularly important focus of the school. The investment of more resources and support staff has had a significant impact on student achievement. The school has a number of excellent partnerships, with a wide range of external services that contribute to the effort to improve academic goals. As an example, outside partners provide after school tutoring, clubs, ballroom dancing and values clarification.

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 school has well developed practices for evaluating student progress throughout the year and basing instruction on flexible plans for academic improvement and social development. There are frequent checkpoints throughout the year where interim goals are evaluated in objective ways. Periodic assessments are used to measure the success of instructional plans and interventions.

Teachers' assessment notebooks are constantly being added to and analyzed for progress. Interventions and support services are continuously being discussed and modified as teachers keep a close eye on student outcomes. Important documents such as the Comprehensive Education Plan have served as the blueprint for leading the school forward. The staff is adept at revising plans or goals immediately should the interim data demonstrate that change is necessary, although this is not consistent throughout the school. As an example, the school has not been quick to revise plans or goals for English language learners and special education students. However the staff is proficient at using the success of certain plans to drive successive phases of goal setting.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Intermediate School 77 (IS 077)	∅	✓	+
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