



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Horace Mann School

Public School 90

**86-50 109th Street
Queens
NY 11418**

Principal: Adrienne Ubertini

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Reviewer: Ronnie Solow

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Public School 90, the Horace Mann School, is located in the Richmond Hill section of Queens. The 859 students in grades pre-kindergarten to 5 are 51% male and 49% female. The ethnic composition of the school is 57% Hispanic, 29% Asian, 10% Black, and 4% White. English language learners comprise 21.65% of the students. Special education students are about 9% of the student body including four students who are visually impaired or blind. The school receives Title I funds for 100% of the students, which is above similar and City school averages. Student attendance, at 93.3% is above similar and City schools

The school community is preparing to celebrate the centennial of the building and many activities are being created to celebrate the successes of its graduates and students. The State has recognized the school as a high performing and gap closing school for 2004-2005, in appreciation of the academic performance of the students.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal and assistant principals are knowledgeable educators with well-defined roles and responsibilities.
- The building is well maintained with classrooms and hallways exhibiting examples of high quality student work.
- Data analysis drives the instructional program.
- Students are actively engaged in their learning.
- Staffing, scheduling and budgetary decisions are based on student needs.
- Professional development activities are differentiated according to need, skill and experience level.
- Students are well known across classes and grades by the administration and staff.
- The staff works in a supportive, collegial manner that encourages professional growth and development.
- Rules, regulations and procedures are well known and followed by all.
- Youth development activities support and enhance the academic program.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop additional strategies to increase parent involvement in the school life of their students.
- Create activities for higher achieving mathematics and science students.
- Expand the input of the elected student group to include additional quality of life areas.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well-developed school.

Public School 90, the Horace Mann School, is a school that uses the team approach to effective education. The principal has developed a cadre of educators that exhibit complementary skills in mathematics, literacy and subject area expertise. The administrative team of the principal and two assistant principals supports a community of learners that has steadily shown improved outcomes in English language arts and mathematics.

Grade teams work in a collaborative fashion to examine data, develop curriculum units of study, share lesson plans and materials and examine student work samples. The literacy and mathematics coaches, cluster teachers and other service providers support the efforts of the classroom teachers. The understanding and use of data and how it informs classroom practice underpins the instructional program. Data is examined to identify the needs of individual students, classes, grades and the school. Parents and outside agencies support the school program in a variety of ways. The principal and her administration have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for further development.

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.

Many forms of data are collected, integrated and analyzed to give the staff a better understanding of the needs of their students. Data from State, region and school assessments sources is used to monitor the progress and needs of individual students, classes and grades in the school. School-wide data is used to reveal and react to trends. Data from various assessments are examined to monitor performance outcomes for various sub-groups, including ethnic groups, English language learners, special education students, those with health problems, those living in temporary housing and a group of students from other countries with little or no formal education. Analysis of the data for each of these sub-groups enables the school to focus on students not achieving the benchmarks in literacy and mathematics and provide support services.

The school analyzes the data from year to year, as well as at regularly scheduled times during the school year, in order to assess trends for strengths and areas in need of further development. Comparisons with similar schools, those in the region and in the network indicate that steady gains are being made in literacy and mathematics. The administration and teachers jointly monitor the performance data in order to make informed decisions about the academic program, areas needing further development and for goal setting purposes.

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 administrators work with the teaching staff and parents to set goals for the school. The Comprehensive Education Plan and the principal’s goals and objectives serve as the baseline for the goal-setting process. State standards, City curriculum and regional priorities are incorporated into an action plan designed to encourage the growth and development of each student, class, grade and the school. The data for each class and grade is reviewed in order to create flexible instructional groups. Informal data is used by the administrative and grade teams to help inform decisions about regrouping and setting new goals. Classrooms display rubrics and high quality student work samples to encourage pupils to move to higher levels of achievement.

Data is used to differentiate instructional activities for English language learners, special education students, and students at different levels of achievement in the class. Students and teachers hold conferences on a regular schedule to review progress and assess areas in need of additional emphasis. Students know their reading level and can explain the strategy they are working to master. The principal is examining ways to create activities designed to challenge high achieving students in mathematics and science.

English language learners and students not performing at or above grade level expectations receive additional support services during the morning extended day program, during the school day in a pull-out or push-in model, and in the after school program. The students served constantly change in response to data.

High expectations are conveyed to students and parents by widely celebrating successes and achievements. Additionally, the school disseminates a monthly calendar and newsletter in English and Spanish, which notifies parents about the school program and events. The school community sets goals and plans for improving student performance.

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 incorporates curriculum maps with the mandated City curriculum in English language arts. The balanced literacy program incorporating leveled libraries includes a 150 minute literacy block for grades 2 through 5 and 135 minutes of instruction in kindergarten and grade 1. The mathematics program, Everyday Mathematics, includes 75-100 minutes of instruction in all grades. Science and social studies follow the scope and sequence of the State curriculum. The school has modified the region’s monthly writing topics and has created a literacy strategy of the month for the entire school. An item skills analysis of data from the Developmental Reading Assessment, conference notes and running records allows the school to determine the strategy of the month. Grade teams pair the strategy with the literary genre being studied and create materials to enhance student performance outcomes. A monthly performance task in mathematics, paired with teacher-made and commercial games and manipulatives, allows for further individualization and customization according to student needs.

Teachers are held accountable for improving achievement in their class according to well defined roles and responsibilities. Data is actively reviewed to determine areas of need. Students and teachers jointly set goals, conference to discuss progress towards meeting those goals and gain insight into student thought processes. Flexible classroom groups are outgrowths of the data analysis. Weekly grade team meetings allow teachers and coaches to prepare lessons and materials, review data, examine student work samples and create culminating activities for units of study. Classroom teachers use assessment data, informal assessments, observations and conferencing notes to differentiate the educational program for the students in their class.

Budget, staffing and scheduling decisions are based on the needs revealed by the data and supported by student progress information. Creative use of the budget supports identified areas of need and has had a clear impact on student progress.

Students are actively engaged in learning activities. They know their level in reading and mathematics and can articulate goals they have established. Many activities are designed to stimulate further engagement. All classroom activities include the workshop model of instruction with whole group, small group instruction coupled with activity centers and the incorporation of writing tasks in all subjects.

Students are well known by the administration and staff across classes and grades. Students stated that many people are there to help them when they require assistance. One student stated "everyone appreciates each other in this school." Attendance is a high priority. Procedures are in place to contact a family when a child is absent. Incentives are used to reward excellent and improved attendance.

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.

The personnel committee reviews resumes of prospective staff members. Viable candidates are questioned about balanced literacy and the workshop model, use of data to set high expectations for student performance, interpersonal relationships, working in a vertical and horizontal team environment and extent of computer literacy.

Professional development activities are designed and differentiated to meet the needs of the staff and to improve their ability to use data to improve student achievement. Data from observations, walkthroughs, examination of student work, teacher surveys and more formal data sources provide insights into professional development needs. At faculty conferences, the coaches model a strategy designed to address a revealed need. Modeling of the strategy continues in the grade team meetings and study groups. All meetings include an examination and analysis of the pertinent data. Staff also attends regional and City-wide professional development sessions and share the information with their peers. The coaches constantly provide detailed item skills analyses of skills from various examinations to every teacher in order to improve classroom performance outcomes.

The administrative team is highly visible and visits classrooms on a daily basis. Written feedback from informal visits is provided on a snapshot sheet that captures the room environment, evidence of proactive learning and proactive teaching. The formal observation process includes a pre-observation and post-observation conference, the

observation and a timely written report. Tenured teachers are observed twice per year, and untenured teachers are observed four times per year. Self-evaluation and peer observation is encouraged, embedded and supported by the principal. Teams of educators support one another in professional growth and development. Planning and evaluation of results occurs regularly and in teams.

The principal is described as a knowledgeable and supportive educator with significant capacity to manage change. Clearly established rules, regulations and procedures, published in handbooks for parents and staff, contribute to an orderly learning environment. Children use a one finger wave when greeting an adult in the hallways, contributing to the quiet learning environment.

Many youth development activities and partnerships support the academic, social, emotional and physical development of the students. The elected student group provides feedback on the lunchroom to the administration. The principal is developing other quality of life areas for them to discuss and provide the school staff with their insights.

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 Comprehensive Education Plan, the principal's goals and objectives and constant review of all other school plans by the school leadership team determines the focus for the school. Assessment data from all sources are systematically reviewed to determine priorities. Each grade team examines their data to determine the next steps and make necessary revisions in their teaching practices. Rubrics are revised based on analysis revealed from the strategy sheets, student portfolios, conference notes, class and unit tests and formal assessment results. Simulated testing conditions are created using old State exams to enable students to feel comfortable in formal testing environments. Analysis of these results enables the school to react to any needs revealed through the test data. Revealed needs are incorporated into the Comprehensive Education Plan and other appropriate plans. The new information is disseminated at faculty conferences, study groups, cluster groups and team meetings. Data is constantly and consistently used to inform the classroom activities and to modify practices across the school.

Grade teams regularly review data to assess needs. Current trends revealed by the Princeton Review interim assessments and other data sources indicated the need for vocabulary development and spelling support. Grade teams are currently creating guidelines using research-based materials to address this need. All information revealed by the data sources result in regrouping within classes, differentiation of instruction and materials, scaffolding of lessons and creative use of classroom activity centers. Collaboration between teachers, academic intervention staff and English as a second language teachers, coaches, special education staff and other service providers results in new goals, new practices and new plans designed to improve student performance outcomes across the school.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The Horace Mann School (PS 90)	∅	✓	+
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