



# **The New York City Department of Education**



# **Quality Review Report**

**Eileen E Zaglin School**

**Elementary-Middle School 225**

**1075 Oceanview Avenue  
Brooklyn  
NY 11235**

**Principal: Joseph Montebello**

**Dates of review: April 16 - 18, 2008**

**Lead Reviewer: Lysbeth Bradley**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Eileen E Zaglin is an elementary school with 963 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 4% Black, 27% Hispanic, 50% White, and 18% Asian students or those from other ethnic backgrounds. The student body includes 38% English language learners and 18% special education students. Boys account for 56% of the students enrolled and girls account for 44%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 90.6%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 66.4% eligibility.

Public School 225 is in its first year as an empowerment school. The main building serves students from pre-kindergarten through grade 8. The school shares this building with a District 75 school that is situated on the same floor as grade 6 classrooms. Between 25 and 30 students from Public School 771 are included full time in classrooms with students from Public School 225.

The school has a barrier-free annex, managed by an assistant principal, which is situated within the Kingsborough College complex and serves around 80 students in four collaborative teaching classes from pre-kindergarten through grade 2. Over 70% of those enrolled are special education students, some with significant needs. The school also has collaborative team teaching (CTT) classes in the main building as well as self-contained classes for special education students and one self-contained class for English language learners in grade 7.

The school has a significant transient population. The school had a predominantly Russian population, but in the last few years the ethnic composition has changed significantly. Nearly a quarter of enrolled students are recent immigrants, principally from Pakistan and Mexico. In addition, between a quarter and a half of the students move to District 21 gifted and talented programs at the end of grade 5.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- Administrators and faculty share a commitment to meeting the needs of the school's changing population.
- The curriculum is increasingly broad and engages students by providing new challenges and greater opportunities for active involvement.
- The school is making good progress in developing a differentiated curriculum and instruction that takes good account of the complex needs of its students.
- Professional development has been effective in enabling administrators and teachers to make increasingly good use of a wide range of data to track student progress.
- Beneficial partnerships have been developed over the last two years that have enhanced and extended opportunities for learning.
- The school has been effective in promoting better attendance and punctuality, and reducing suspensions.
- The administration has made well-reasoned changes in organization, scheduling and deployment to accelerate the progress of those students in greatest need.
- The school is working hard to reach out to parents and caregivers from an ethnically and culturally diverse population.
- Students mostly enjoy learning, feel safe in school and are very well supported by everyone in the school community.

### What the school needs to improve

- Ensure consistency in the way that administrators and teachers assess and track the progress of special education students on both sites.
- Build on the good work in analyzing hard data and authentic assessments by identifying next steps for all students and involving them in evaluating their own learning.
- Sharpen the goal-setting process by introducing specific success criteria and sharing these more widely.
- Establish benchmarks and interim goals for all new initiatives in order to measure the impact on the quality of teaching and learning, and student progress.
- Align formal and informal observations with the recently introduced professional standards to focus on learning and student progress.

## Part 3: Main Findings

### Progress made since the last review

The school has made good progress in addressing the issues identified in the previous Quality Review report

### Overall Evaluation

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

The school is making a determined effort to stem a recent dip in performance and to tackle barriers to sustained improvement. Significant changes in the school's population has meant that administrators and faculty have needed to focus on the use of data in a more rigorous way than before to ensure that the curriculum and instruction are organized responsively to meet the diverse needs within the school's complex structure. The school has established the correct priorities and is tackling them in the right order. The goal-setting process is not yet sharp enough however and does not enable the school to move swiftly enough in response to interim data or to celebrate its achievements against specific success criteria. Teachers have worked extremely hard to develop the curriculum and rubrics to assess students' learning. Not all teachers are at the stage of identifying next steps on a regular basis or involving students in assessing their own learning, but there is already developing good practice in a number of classrooms.

The administration has tackled the issues from the last review in a comprehensive way underpinned by effective professional development and enhanced opportunities for collaboration. This has led to significant progress in gathering, recording and using data, and in developing teachers' confidence in assessing student learning. This in turn has strengthened the school's systems for holding teachers to account, for raising expectations of what students can achieve and for differentiating instruction. The curriculum has broadened and deepened through increasing use of technology and beneficial partnerships with local organizations. Improvements have been made in the way that intervention services work with groups of students through a "push in" model to target their needs more effectively. Paraprofessionals are also working more effectively, but there is a wide discrepancy in the way that the performance and progress of special education students are recorded and tracked across the school. The inquiry team has made good strides in its research where it is gathering evidence on the impact of differentiated instruction on the achievement of a group of English language learners in a CTT class using specific ESL techniques. By limiting the variables, the team has already identified what helps these students retain knowledge through using interactive technology to deepen understanding.

### 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 the student's progress over time.**

#### **This area of the school's work is proficient.**

The school has made good progress in the way in which it gathers records and uses data to track the performance and progress of individual students, classes and grades. The

development of assessment binders and student portfolios is beginning to bear fruit and to promote greater consistency in the way that teachers use data to plan instruction for different groups of students, particularly in the elementary grades on the main site. Administrators, coaches and faculty make timely use of predictive, interim and authentic assessments to redefine groupings, provide suitable interventions and support and realign the curriculum in order to ensure that no one slips through the net.

Senior leaders are using data effectively to track progress as well as performance and to identify accurately the reasons for trends and patterns in performance among different subgroups. The administration and faculty are also looking more closely at the progress and performance of English language learners and of students in CTT classes. This is putting them in a better position to evaluate the effectiveness of changes in the way that learning is organized for these students and the impact on the progress they make.

While much has been achieved in the past year, there remains an unacceptable level of inconsistency in the way that the performance and progress of special education students is assessed and tracked. On the main site, improved procedures bring together all the information relating to each student so that teachers can gauge accurately how well these students are achieving individual goals and to determine next steps. At the annex, where special education students are in the majority, there is a lack of rigor in the way that information is gathered, recorded and communicated. This means that the efforts of all staff involved are dissipated and students' individual needs are not planned for in sufficient depth.

**Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use data to understand each student's next learning steps and to set suitably high goals for accelerating each student's learning.**

**This area of the school's work is proficient.**

The school has taken good account of all available information in determining whole school goals for the current year and has underpinned these with clear action plans. The administration has wisely chosen to broaden the cabinet by involving the literacy and math coaches in decision making. These goals are broadly measurable, but they do not generally have specific success criteria, and this makes it difficult for all staff and parents to understand precisely what part they have to play in achieving them. Increasing rigor in the analysis of data has enabled the administration to identify and focus effectively on those individuals and groups in greatest need of improvement, many of them English language learners. Leaders have not been afraid to make radical changes in the way students are grouped and in the way that intervention teachers are deployed to ensure that students' needs are met in the most effective way. Although it is too soon to quantify progress, there is clear evidence of improved attendance and greater engagement in learning.

Teachers have worked collaboratively to develop rubrics in reading, writing and math in order to promote consistency in the way that students' work is assessed. Students are clear what they have to do to reach each certain level. Teachers provide clear feedback to students on their achievements, but do not always identify next steps or involve students in evaluating their own work.

The school has worked extremely hard to reach out to its ethnically and culturally diverse population. Using a wide range of strategies and tapping into the expertise of personnel familiar with the different communities, it does all it can to communicate with parents in a large number of different languages. Parents are encouraged to become involved in their

child's learning. They are provided with regular information about the curriculum, are told which level their child is working at, but only have a broad sense of the goals they are aiming for.

**Quality Statement 3 – Align Instructional Strategy to Goals: The school aligns its academic work, strategic decisions and resources, and effectively engages students around its plans and goals for accelerating student learning.**

**This area of the school's work is proficient.**

The curriculum is planned to align with State standards and to provide a range of information to assess student progress and performance. Teachers have been actively involved in taking these developments forward and in realigning the curriculum and instruction in response to interim and other diagnostic assessments. Students are clearly benefiting from the way in which teachers are making learning relevant to their interests, skills and needs. A lot of thought has gone into providing students with new challenges and access to a broader curriculum through the increasing use of technology and hands-on activities in many content areas, through after-school activities and the school enrichment model. Students blossom when exposed to chances to perform in music and drama both in class and outside of lessons.

Through the consistent and regular analysis of data at grade meetings and in other forum, administrators and members of faculty are being held to account for the progress of the students for whom they are responsible at an individual, class or grade level. A better understanding of data has led to different groupings of students within a grade or within the classroom. These more flexible arrangements are enabling teachers to plan work that aligns more closely with students' knowledge, skills and understanding. The work of the inquiry team is providing a much needed focus on spurs and barriers to progress for English language learners in CTT classes that has the potential to influence future strategic planning.

The administration is increasingly demonstrating its capacity to think creatively in the way that it plans for, acquires and assigns available resources and personnel. This is, in no small part, responsible for improved behavior and better attendance and punctuality, along with the insistence on adherence to procedures by all staff.

**Quality Statement 4 - Align Capacity Building to Goals: The development of leadership, teachers and other staff capacity is aligned to the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.**

**This area of the school's work is proficient.**

The administration is building the capacity of the staff by involving larger numbers of them more frequently in decision making and curriculum development. There are good levels of collaboration between staff and a willingness to share good practice. Teachers appreciate the fact that the assistant principals "know what it's like to be in the classroom". This year, the school is building on its work on the principles of learning, by choosing to focus on the professional standards of student engagement and the learning environment as the first priority. Supervisors undertake a program of observations that is building consistency of practice and is beginning to promote continuity between the elementary and middle grades. These observations are not yet fully aligned with the professional standards to ensure that they focus on the impact of instruction on student learning.

The school does all it can to meet the needs of all its students and is not prepared to give up on anyone. It has provided the right learning environment for students who have failed to thrive elsewhere. Students feel safe in school and well supported by everyone in the school community. They appreciate the way that guidance counselors help them sort out their problems. The vast majority enjoy learning and show respect for each other, the administrators and their teachers.

Over the last two years, the school has developed productive partnerships with community-based organizations that complement and extend the breadth and depth of the curriculum. The range of after-school programs provides really good opportunities for students to develop talents, learn new skills and reinforce learning. Parents and students spoke enthusiastically about the way these partnerships have enriched the curriculum.

**Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.**

**This area of the school's work is underdeveloped with proficient features.**

The administration and faculty have shown a good grasp of what is needed to meet the needs of the school's changing population. The principal has a clear vision for the school's future development. Most staff are committed to this vision, understand the reasons behind organizational changes and support them. The school's self-evaluation provides clear evidence that there is an accurate identification of what is going well and where more work is needed.

The school has established the correct priorities and is tackling them in a coherent way and in the right order. Action plans support school goals, but not all new initiatives. Furthermore, action plans do not generally have benchmarks and interim goals that enable the school to measure their impact on the quality of teaching, learning and student progress in order to make timely adjustments or to extend initiatives more widely. Success criteria are not always specific enough and this prevents the school from determining the extent to which it has been effective in reaching its goals.

In spite of these shortcomings, the school has worked hard to come to grips with Acuity and teachers are making good use of the data from predictive and interim assessments to realign the curriculum, redefine curricular goals, group students according to specific needs and to track their performance and progress on a more regular and consistent basis.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: Eileen E Zaglin School</b>	△	▷	✓	+	◇
<b>Quality Score</b>			X		

### Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather and generate data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor the students progress over time.

To what extent do school leaders and faculty provide . . .	△	▷	✓	+	◇
1.1 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of each student, classroom, grade level?			X		
1.2 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of special education students?		X			
1.3 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of English language learners?			X		
1.4 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of ethnic groups, gender groups and all other categories of interest to the school?			X		
1.5 a measurement of performance and progress based on the school's own past performance, and among students, classrooms, grades and subject areas?			X		
1.6 a measurement of performance and progress based on comparisons with similar schools?			X		
1.7 training, management systems and structures that support teachers in the use of school data to inform planning and instruction and to track the progress of students?			X		
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>			X		

### Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use data to understand each student's next learning steps and to set suitably high goals for accelerating each students learning.

To what extent do school leaders and faculty . . .	△	▷	✓	+	◇
2.1 engage in collaborative processes to set demanding, objectively measurable goals for improvement, and to develop plans and timeframes for reaching those goals?		X			
2.2 focus 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 identify and improve the performance and progress of those students in greatest need of improvement?			X		
2.4 share whole school goals with all members of the school community to rigorously improve the performance and progress of students?		X			
2.5 convey consistently high expectations to students and their parents/caregivers?			X		
2.6 regularly provide students and their parents/caregivers with information about the goals set for each student, and about each student's progress and performance, and how they can improve?			X		
2.7 invite and enable parents/caregivers to provide useful information to teachers and the school about the learning needs and capacities of their children?			X		
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>			X		

### Quality Statement 3 – Align Instructional Strategy to Goals: The school aligns its academic work, strategic decisions and resources, and effectively engages students around its plans and goals for accelerating student learning.

To what extent does the school . . .	△	▷	✓	+	◇
3.1 select core curricular approaches that facilitate and provide meaningful interim data about progress towards goals and focus on raising the achievement of students?			X		
3.2 provide a broad and engaging curriculum, including the arts, to enhance learning both within and outside the school day?				X	
3.3 hold teachers accountable for the progress and learning of the students in their charge, for making instruction interesting and compelling, and for creating a positive safe and inclusive learning environment?			X		
3.4 ensure that teachers use school, class and student data to plan for and provide differentiated instruction that meets the specific needs of all the students in their charge?			X		
3.5 make budgeting, staffing and scheduling decisions strategically, based on data, to meet the school's academic goals for all students?				X	
3.6 ensure that there is an environment of mutual trust and respect between all staff and students to support personal and academic development?			X		
3.7 ensure that there are effective and consistently applied procedures to encourage and monitor student attendance?				X	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>			X		

**Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building to Goals: The development of leadership, teachers and other staff capacity is aligned to the school’s collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.**

To what extent does the school . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
4.1 use frequent observations of classroom teaching by the principal and other available information to develop a differentiated strategy for improving the quality of each teacher’s instruction?			X		
4.2 make professional development decisions strategically, based on data, to help meet the improvement goals of students and teachers?			X		
4.3 provide frequent opportunities for teachers to observe each other’s classroom instruction and to meet together in teams to plan, share effective practices, and evaluate one another’s instruction in an open and reflective professional environment?			X		
4.4 develop effective procedures for the induction and support of teachers who are new to the profession or the school?			X		
4.5 align youth development, guidance/advising and other student support services around stated academic and personal development goals?			X		
4.6 consistently implement clear procedures that enable the school to run smoothly and encourage effective student learning?			X		
4.7 create effective partnerships with outside entities that support the academic and personal growth of the students?				X	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>			X		

**Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for evaluating each student’s progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.**

To what extent do . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
5.1 the school’s plans for improving student outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?		X			
5.2 the school’s plans for improving teacher outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?			X		
5.3 teachers and faculty use periodic assessments and other diagnostic tools to measure the effectiveness of plans and interventions for individual and groups of students in key areas?		X			
5.4 teachers and faculty use the information generated by periodic assessments and other progress measures and comparisons to revise plans immediately in order to reach stated goals?			X		
5.5 school leaders track the outcomes of periodic assessments and other diagnostic measures and use the results to makes strategic decisions to modify practices to improve student outcomes?		X			
5.6 school leaders and staff use each plan’s interim and final outcomes to drive the next stage of goal setting and improvement planning?		X			
5.7 the principal and school community have a clear vision for the future development of the school and implement procedures and systems to effect change?			X		
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>		X			

◇	<b>Outstanding</b>
+	<b>Well Developed</b>
✓	<b>Proficient</b>
➤	<b>Underdeveloped with Proficient Features</b>
Δ	<b>Underdeveloped</b>