



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



# **Quality Review Report**

**Public School 051**

**Early Childhood School 051**

**87- 45 117 Street**

**Queens**

**NY 11418**

**Principal: Magdaly Saint-Juste**

**Dates of review: January 17 - 18, 2008**

**Lead Reviewer: Ronnie Young**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Public School 51 is an early childhood school with 261 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 1. The school population comprises 7% Black, 27.5% Hispanic, 15% White, 1.5% American Indian and 49% Asian students. The student body includes 20.7% English language learners and 9.5% special education students. Boys account for 55.6% of the students enrolled and girls account for 44.4%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 93.3%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 100% eligibility.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal provides strong leadership to her team of totally committed teachers.
- All school staff use data to have a detailed understanding of the performance and progress of all individual and groups of students in the school.
- The school and the majority of parents regard each other as partners in the education of their children which has led to excellent exchange of information.
- The core curriculum has been carefully selected to provide as much meaningful data as possible.
- All classroom activity is differentiated as far as possible by achievement level and task, and a wide range of teaching and learning strategies are employed.
- There is a clearly shared vision across the whole school community.
- Staff are flexible and react quickly to revise plans and goals for individuals and groups of students.
- There is an effective induction program and abundant support for new staff.
- The atmosphere is happy and productive and students show great enthusiasm for and enjoyment of learning.
- The school is very well organized, with clear procedures and policies which are understood and followed by all.

### What the school needs to improve

- Continue to seek similar schools in the City with whom to compare results and share good practice.
- Include measurable interim goals in all plans for teacher outcomes.
- Continue with effort to embed classroom intervisitation by teachers so good practice can be more easily shared.
- Build on the work of the inquiry team to identify further groups of interest to the school.

## 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 well developed.**

The principal provides strong leadership to her team of fully committed teachers and in the short time she has led the school (this is her second year), she has made great strides in the collection and use of data across the school. All teaching staff now feel comfortable and confident with using data and this has been helped by the production of comprehensive data files which staff keep on every student in the school. These files, plus extensive professional development have produced an excellent range of differentiated teaching and learning where every teacher is able to work at every student's level with their particular profile of skills and performance levels. Yet, objectively measureable interim goals for teacher outcomes are not fully developed. The school is very small, which gives it a warm and friendly atmosphere, particularly as it works very closely with parents to give a family feel. However, its small size has also limited its budget and facilities, and the principal has been very creative in making the most of what she has to enhance achievement in the school. She plans to build on these efforts by expanding the range of enrichment activities and broadening the curriculum.

Since the last review the school has started cohort tracking with this year's intake and is looking at student performance by ethnicity and gender sub groups. Goal setting has been prioritized and efforts are continuing to involve a larger number of parents, by providing family trips and classes in English for parents. The inquiry team operates well and is currently investigating low achievers among English language learners in kindergarten.

### **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 well developed.**

Public School 51 has worked very hard to embed its system of data collection and this is now used routinely throughout the school. Each class teacher has an excellent data file in which carefully records every student's progress and performance in reading, writing and math, and behavior, if relevant. Information for this file is from a variety of sources and external assessments. A range of internal assessments are also used including conference notes, teacher-made tests, running records, informal observations, rubrics-based tasks and portfolio tasks. This data is then carefully broken down into categories that include individual student, class, grade and subject. The school rigorously follows the progress of special education students, of whom there are relatively few, and all are taught

in collaborative team teaching classes. It has discovered that all special education students last year exceeded their benchmarks in mathematics, possibly because the nature of their special education needs had largely to do with language and communication. In fact one student is taking guided reading classes with grade 1 students, even though he is a kindergarten student. English language learners form a much larger sub-group and they are carefully tracked, both by ethnicity and according to the prevalent language spoken at home. Those immersed in their own language at home have been found to be doing less well. Gender is also tracked and the school has noticed patterns of achievement such as boys lagging behind in reading and writing or exceeding their targets, whereas most girls are on target. The school is now looking at different reading materials, such as non-fiction, to encourage those boys who prefer not to read. The school has been tracking its gifted and talented group, but as this is in its final year, this will end. It is now investigating further groups on which to focus.

Public School 51 has just begun cohort tracking with the present pre-kindergarten group, so it is too soon to have any impact. The school finds it difficult to compare itself to similar schools, as there are so few schools in the City with the same grade profile. However, the principal looks at the performance of pre-kindergarten to grade 1 students in network and local schools. The data file is used with confidence across the school. There has been extensive professional development for data collection and use across the school and common preps and grade meetings are the main forums for discussion of the data. Teachers are effusive in their praise for the data file and say how much it has improved both their practice and their knowledge of individual students.

**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 well developed.**

Wherever possible, decisions and goal-setting are carried out collaboratively. Because there is insufficient funding for an assistant principal, there is an advisory committee who works with the principal. This consists of the school and payroll secretary, the parent coordinator, the coach, the individual education planning teacher and guidance counselor. This gives viewpoints from all aspects of the school, as does the school leadership team. While the inquiry team is successfully focusing its efforts on a particular group of kindergarteners the principal plans to build on this by identifying other groups of students whose performance needs a closer assessment. Grade teachers have a joint free period per week in which to confer and collaborate. Cross-school staff, such as the coach, and reading teacher work with all staff in groups or individually. The school is very friendly and staff are open and work well together. As one teacher put it, “the school is like a family – we all help each other.” There are very close relationships with parents and most parents are fully involved with their children’s education. A plethora of information is sent out. There are frequent meetings such as the parent teacher association or special meetings to discuss the curriculum. For example, recently parents were introduced to the new Core Knowledge curriculum. The school generally, and principal specifically, have an open door policy and parents are invited to come in or telephone at any time to discuss their children. For example, a working parent who needed to discuss academic intervention with the principal was able to come to the school in the evening as that was the only available time for him to come in. To encourage parental involvement the school puts on lessons in English and computing especially for parents. These are well attended and have resulted in parents being able to assist their children better. Parents attest to the two-way relationships in the school both academically and personally. An example of this

is when one student's grandfather died, the school helped her with her grieving by putting together a memory book with her. Whole school goals are fully shared with all members of the school community, including staff and parents and, where possible, with students.

**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 well developed.**

The core curriculum has been carefully selected to provide as much meaningful data as possible. The data from the school's selected program makes differentiated instruction much easier and helps to group students within classes. All these programs have integrated assessments as does the program for after school tutoring. The school is restricted by space and funding as to what can be provided to broaden and enrich the curriculum, but in the absence of a gymnasium, it has music and movement classes and there is a full-time art teacher who works across all classes. Grade 1 students last year made puppets and learned puppetry and this year students will learn the recorder.

Differentiation is used in every classroom by every teacher. Students work individually, in pairs or groups, usually according to achievement level or learning style, and there is always a variety of activities going on. This means students are able to work at their own pace, in their own way, which has resulted in some excellent achievement and high levels of engagement. Support staff, such as paraprofessionals, the coach and academic intervention staff work with groups of students while the teacher works with others. In one mathematics class, for example, four different groups were engaged in adding one number to another, all in different ways according to their cognitive abilities and learning styles. The English language learners were working as a group with the English language teacher, learning math vocabulary on the computer. Teachers are now looking at learning styles to hone their differentiation skills even further. All staff are fully accountable for the performance and progress of their students and all results are discussed with teachers individually.

The principal uses the small budget carefully and creatively, for example, by buying specific books to raise boys' achievement in reading, and to bring in the art teacher. Another expenditure has been on increasing the number of school aides to raise safety. The purchase of computers has enhanced learning, especially with English language learners and those in the gifted and talented class. The principal has introduced a school blog to enhance communications within the school community. Technology will be the focus of spending this year, with the introduction of an intranet and the purchase of a SMART board. There are high levels of trust and respect across the school, led by the principal who insists on boundaries and professionalism at all times from her staff. Students are enthusiastic about and eager to learn and if they misbehave, parents are always called in. Strategies for absences and lateness are clear. There are rewards for students and classes with 100% attendance, although it is acknowledged that because students are all very young, there is a greater risk of absence due to sickness.

**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 well developed.**

In the absence of other senior staff, the principal carries out all lesson observations, either formally or informally. Some form of feedback is always provided, often as a written snapshot of what she has seen. Observations are used as the basis for professional development, discussions about differentiation or guided reading. The coach frequently models lessons for staff. The staff would like to introduce intervisitations by classroom teachers but the small number of staff makes this difficult. They are currently investigating how it can be put into operation. Grade leaders have visited other schools, however, to look at practice elsewhere. Professional development decisions are made strategically based on observations, data and grade conferences. Each month, a different principle of learning is studied. Recently, the principal has instigated study groups for reading on the principles of reading by Fountas and Pinell. The coach is the school mentor and sees new teachers twice per week independently. New teachers also receive special external professional development on curriculum and are well supported by their colleagues in the school. The school is very well organized with clear policies and procedures that are followed consistently by all the school community. Personal and self-development is plentiful, with a full-time nurse, guidance counselor, part-time speech and occupations therapists, an educational psychologist and a social worker. The school works with a number of outside organisations, for example, the Richmond Hill Association who is working with them on the playground planning team and Richmond Hill and Manhattan High Schools who work with the school on readalouds and the Junior achiever (Heroes) programs.

**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 proficient.**

The school sets interim goals for all its students in the form of benchmarks, at least three times per year. If goals are not met or if they are exceeded, the teacher meets with the coach to discuss the learning and circumstances of the student and to decide on more accurate goals or academic intervention. The coach and teachers are also in ongoing discussion about the success of various strategies and staff are happy to change direction if results are not as expected. At present, the school is in the process of formalizing strategic modifications to systems so it will be easier to standardize future practice across the school, especially in the area of future goal setting. The school has plans to include interim goal setting in its plans for all teacher outcomes, but this is not yet routine. Evaluation of practice is evident in all data files and is frequently the topic of discussion in grade meetings. The entire school community shares the same clear vision: that the school should be a model of early childhood learning and quality education. This is apparent throughout all practices and documentation and is at the forefront of all the school does.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: Public School 051 (Q051)</b>	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
<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 . . .	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
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 . . .	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
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 . . .	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
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	

<b>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.</b>					
<b>To what extent does the school . . .</b>	<b>Δ</b>	<b>➤</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>◇</b>
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	

<b>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.</b>					
<b>To what extent do . . .</b>	<b>Δ</b>	<b>➤</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>◇</b>
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>