



Department of
Education

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

FOUR WAYS TO EVALUATE YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL AND IMPROVE YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION

Fall 2007

Dear Families of New York City Students,

Student achievement is the number one priority of the Department of Education's Children First school reform. Each day, our goal is to get students to learn. To meet this goal, we must hold our schools, our educators, and ourselves responsible for ensuring student success. Over the past year, we have created four new accountability tools to help educators and you:

- Evaluate how much your child's school improves his or her learning each year
- Compare each school's performance to that of similar schools on important educational outcomes, such as how many students pass state tests, pass needed courses, and graduate
- Identify each student's instructional needs, create a plan to improve each student's learning, and track student progress at several checkpoints during the year

The four tools are:

1. **Progress Reports** – this fall, for the first time, each school has received a report and a letter grade measuring its success in accelerating student learning during the 2006-07 school year
2. **Learning Environment Surveys** – each school has also recently received a report on what parents, teachers, and students said about the school on a first-ever annual survey last spring
3. **Quality Reviews** – during the 2006-07 school year, each school received an on-site review by experienced educators, a score of Well-Developed, Proficient, or Undeveloped, and a detailed report on how well the school is organized to support student achievement
4. **Periodic Assessments** – this year, each school is giving no-stakes assessments to identify each student's strengths and weaknesses so that educators can best meet the individual instructional needs of the student

These reports, described in more detail below, are being provided to families to enable them to see for themselves how well their schools are helping children learn and progress. The Department of Education is committed to helping educators and families use these tools to improve every child's education. We look forward to working with you to accomplish this goal.

বাংলায় এই নির্দেশিকা কপি সংগ্রহে অনুগ্রহ করে নিচের ওয়েবসাইট দেখুন অথবা আপনার প্যারেন্টকোঅর্ডিনেটরের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন।

要獲得本文件的中文譯本，請瀏覽下列網站或與您子女學校的家長專員聯絡。

Pou w jwenn dokiman sa a tradwi an kreyòl ayisyen, tanpri al sou sit wèb nou mete piba a, oswa kontakte Koòdonatè paran ki nan lekòl pitit ou a.

한국어로 번역된 자료를 원하시면 다음 웹사이트를 방문하시거나, 귀 자녀가 재학 중인 학교의 학부모 코디네이터에게 연락해 주십시오.

Для получения русской версии данного документа посетите нижеуказанный вебсайт или свяжитесь с координатором по работе с родителями.

Para obtener una versión en español de este documento, por favor visite el sitio de Internet a continuación o contacte a su coordinador de padres.

للحصول على نسخة مترجمة باللغة العربية لهذه الوثيقة، نرجو منكم زيارة الموقع الإلكتروني أثناءه أو الاتصال بمنسق شؤون الآباء التابع لكم.

اس دستاویز کی اردو میں ترجمہ شدہ اشاعت کیلئے براہ کرم ذیلی ویب سائٹ ملاحظہ کریں یا اپنے والدین ربط دہندہ سے رجوع کریں۔

www.nyc.gov/schools/accountability

PROGRESS REPORTS

Goal: The Progress Report measures each school's contribution to student academic progress, no matter where each child begins his or her journey to proficiency. Every fall, each school will receive a Progress Report that includes a letter grade of A, B, C, D, or F based on the school's success in promoting student progress.

Important information: The Progress Report evaluates schools in three areas.

1. **School Environment** evaluates the necessary conditions for student learning: attendance, safety and respect, academic expectations, parent/teacher/student engagement, and communication (data on the last four come from the Learning Environment Surveys)
2. **Student Performance** evaluates (1) for elementary and middle schools, student skill levels in English Language Arts and Math OR (2) for high schools, a school's success in graduating students
3. **Student Progress** evaluates (1) for elementary and middle schools, average student improvement from one year to the next in English Language Arts and Math OR (2) for high schools, annual student advancement toward graduation

Schools also receive additional credit for enabling high need students to achieve exemplary learning gains.

A school's performance in each area is evaluated relative to the performance of all schools serving the same grades citywide and to a peer group of 40 schools with similar student populations.

What it means for your student and your school: Schools are rewarded or face consequences based in part on their Progress Report grade. Rewards include money bonuses. Consequences include improvement efforts and, when the efforts fail, school closure. Families can use Progress Reports to choose among schools and to identify areas in which their school is performing well and areas in which their school can improve.

For more information, please visit www.nyc.gov/schools/Accountability/ProgressReports or e-mail us at PR_Support@schools.nyc.gov.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT SURVEYS

Goal: Parents, teachers, and students know best whether a school's learning environment helps students succeed. The annual survey and Survey Report provide a view of a school's learning environment as reported by you and other members of the school community.

Important information: In the spring of 2007, the DOE distributed surveys to parents and teachers, as well as students in grades 6-12. The surveys focused on four key aspects of a school's learning environment:

1. Safety and Respect
2. Academic Expectations
3. Parent, Teacher, and Student Engagement
4. Communication

The results of these surveys help to shape the grade your child's school receives on its Progress Report.

What it means for your student and your school: The Survey Report provides information your child's school can use to improve its learning environment. School Leadership Teams and Inquiry Teams can use Survey Reports to develop Comprehensive Education Plans. Working together with teachers, students, and school leaders, parents can use survey results to identify changes your school can make to help children learn. The next annual survey will be conducted this coming spring.

For more information, please visit www.nyc.gov/schools/surveys or e-mail us at Surveys@schools.nyc.gov.

QUALITY REVIEWS

Goal: Experienced educators conduct multi-day reviews of schools each year. These reviews draw upon each school's self-evaluation and upon observations of and by principals, teachers, staff, students, and parents. Quality Reviews focus on how well schools and classrooms are organized and operating to improve the achievement of every student.

Important information: Quality Review Reports describe what the reviewers saw at each school—what life is like there. The Report evaluates the school compared to others in the city, highlights exemplary work and student progress, and identifies areas where improvement is possible, including specific suggestions for improvement.

What it means for your student and your school: The Quality Review Report focuses on how well the school:

- Knows how each child is performing
- Plans and sets goals for improving each child's learning and academic achievements
- Uses its academic programs to meet those academic goals
- Plans professional and leadership development and student support services (academic and personal guidance, partnerships with outside organizations) to meet the goals
- Monitors each student's progress throughout the year and makes the changes needed to ensure that each student improves as planned

For more information, please visit www.nyc.gov/schools/Accountability/QualityReviews or e-mail us at QualityReview@schools.nyc.gov.

PERIODIC ASSESSMENTS

Goal: Periodic Assessments are tools to support student instruction. They provide teachers, parents, and students with timely and detailed information on what students know and where they need extra help. These assessments are not used to grade schools, principals, or teachers.

Important information: Schools have the flexibility to choose the Periodic Assessments that best fit their students' learning needs. With the information provided by Periodic Assessments, educators will be able to identify and assist struggling students before they fall behind, accelerate learning for advanced students, and help students achieve to their highest potential.

What this program means for your student and your school:

- Periodic Assessments are given up to five times a year in both English Language Arts and Math in third grade through high school. Literacy assessments are also given in grades K-2
- Schools are encouraged to provide you with reports showing your child's Periodic Assessment results and progress, and to discuss the significance of these results with you at parent-teacher conferences and at other times throughout the year
- At many schools, results will be shared through a user-friendly website called Acuity. As a parent, you may use the reports on Acuity as well as the reports provided by the school to follow your child's progress and to discuss strategies for improvement with your child's teachers. All students at schools using Acuity assessments have a login name and password that students and parents may use to view these reports

For more information, please visit www.nyc.gov/schools/Accountability/PeriodicAssessments or e-mail us at PeriodicAssessment@schools.nyc.gov.

HOW TO GET COPIES OF THESE REPORTS

Starting this year, reports will be provided to families at the time of parent-teacher conferences.

The reports are also available online. To see a school's report in English, please follow these steps:

1. Go to the New York City Department of Education Web site at www.nyc.gov/schools
2. Enter the school code or school name in the green section in the middle of the page where it says "FIND A SCHOOL." This will bring you to the school's Web page
3. Click on "Statistics" which is a link on the left side of the page

To see the school's Quality Review, scroll down to where it says "Quality Review Report".

To see the school's Progress Report, scroll down to where it says "Progress Report".

To see the school's Survey Results, scroll down to where it says "Learning Environment Survey Report 2006-2007".

Click on the report you want to see for that school and it will pop up. (You must have the free program Adobe Acrobat on your computer to view the report.)

Translated guides for the Progress Reports, Learning Environment Surveys, and the Quality Reviews are also available at www.nyc.gov/schools/Accountability.

Finally, you can also get copies of these reports, including translation guides, by speaking to the Parent Coordinator at your school.

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

There are a number of ways families can support their child's school by participating in the accountability process. Here are a few suggestions:

- **Learn the accountability results for your child's school.** How well did it perform on each of the accountability reports? What are its strengths? How did it do compared to other schools, and what can be learned from schools that performed better?
- Identify areas where your school did not perform as well as it could. **Talk to your child's Principal, Teacher, or Parent Coordinator about how they plan to improve**
- Track your child's progress on Periodic Assessments. **Discuss strategies for improvement with your child's teachers**
- **Attend your school's Quality Review Parent Meeting.** Find out the time and place of this meeting from your Principal or Parent Coordinator
- **Fill out your 2007-2008 Learning Environment Survey (spring 2008)**
- **Get involved**, and encourage other families to be involved in your school's Parent Association or Parent-Teacher Association, or School Leadership Team. You can also get involved at the school district level in your Community Education Council or on a citywide council