



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Osmond A Church

Elementary-Middle School 124

**129-15 150th Avenue
Queens
NY 11420**

Principal: Valarie Lewis

Dates of review: April 28 - 29, 2008

Lead Reviewer: Louise Kapner

Content of the report

Part 1: The School Context

Information about the school

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well
What the school needs to improve

Part 3: Main Findings

Progress made since the last review
Overall evaluation
How well the school meets New York City's evaluation criteria

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Osmond A Church is an elementary-middle school with 1,141 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 35% Black, 21% Hispanic, 3% White, and 41% Asian students. The student body includes 3% English language learners and 6% special education students. Boys account for 47% of the students enrolled and girls account for 53%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 93.9%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 71% eligibility.

The school is part of the Empowerment support network.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal provides excellent leadership and is highly focused on creating an environment where all students can succeed.
- The school collects a wide range of data that is very effectively used to guide instruction.
- Parents are unanimous in recognizing the school as a safe, caring environment with high expectations for all students.
- Well-differentiated professional development and mentoring are an integral part of the school program and used very effectively to support all staff and enhance teachers' skills.
- The school uses its resources and highly effective partnerships to create programs that further the educational goals of the school.
- Classroom instruction is very well planned, engaging, challenging and highly differentiated.
- Students know what is expected of them and appreciate the school's focus on learning.
- The school does an excellent job of providing intervention and enrichment services for students.
- The school is highly self-reflective and continually looks to revise practices to provide relevant instruction.
- Staff work in a highly collaborative manner to address the needs of students.

What the school needs to improve

- Involve teachers in designing a low-inference observation tool that they can use during intervisitations to share and learn best practices.
- Further refine youth development by including elementary school students in student government.

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.

Osmond A Church is an exceptionally well-managed school that implements many fine practices within a safe, nurturing environment. Administrators and staff work highly collaboratively as a school community strongly focused on meeting students' needs. Collection and analysis of data of students, classes, by grade and subject, and for all student subgroups is at a very high standard and used very effectively by teachers and specialists to guide instruction. Instruction is highly differentiated, rigorous and very well matched to the needs of students. Suitable interventions are provided and ongoing monitoring of student performance enables prompt changes. Precise learning objectives and rubrics provide students with clear criteria for success. They are actively engaged in learning and displays of their work throughout the school reflect high expectations. Students speak highly of their school and teachers and enjoy the challenging work and opportunities to participate in well-varied activities. However, presently the student government does not include elementary school students. Parents are unanimous in their praise of the principal and school staff, and actively participate in the school. Teachers maintain high expectations for themselves and are supportive of each other. They participate in well-differentiated professional development and many staff members work with mentors to hone their craft. However, teachers do not have regularly scheduled opportunities for intervisitations to learn and share best practices. The school has very successfully tackled all areas in the prior year's review. Data from Acuity is used as a benchmark to identify students' needs, set individual goals, and monitor progress over time. The work of the inquiry team focuses on grade 5 students who achieved in the lowest third on the English language arts exam. Skill-based instruction differentiated to the needs of each student has resulted in 80% of the targeted group showing improvement. Allocation of resources and effective partnerships support the school's goals and enrich the instruction. The school's ongoing self-reflection of its practices and the impact on student achievement enables prompt revision when necessary to ensure ongoing attention to all students' 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 the student's progress over time.

This area of the school's work is well developed.

The school holds itself very accountable for students' progress. The principal looks at State tests results as a "barometer" of student performance and as one "piece of the

puzzle". Using data from periodic and school-generated assessments, the school very effectively monitors the performance and progress of classes, grades, cohorts, and individuals, by subject and for each student subgroup. The principal pays close attention to student mobility and its impact on school test results. Collected data is used well to compare past and present performance by students on all standardized tests to identify trends in performance. As an outgrowth of the school's progress report, the school analyzed the decline of grade 4 students on the English language arts exam. Student response to fiction was identified as an area of instructional need and teachers are using suitable materials to support classroom instruction. The principal also reviews students' results from the social studies and science tests to compare student performance relative to their results on the English language arts test. The principal engages in a comprehensive comparison of her school to those in her peer horizon. A careful analysis by grade indicated that 10 out of 14 schools also showed a decline in the performance of grade 4 students on the 2007 English language arts exam.

The school holds all staff members to a very high standard in the collection and use of standardized and school-generated data to improve student outcomes. Teachers maintain comprehensive binders with longitudinal test results, present-year assessment data, and data summaries that are used very effectively to chart and monitor student performance and progress. Student portfolios provide additional evidence of achievement. Staff are thoroughly enmeshed in using data to focus themselves on students' needs and "where I need to take them" to improve student performance.

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.

The school very effectively reviews formal and school-generated data and student work during grade conferences, instructional and inquiry team meetings. Staff work in a highly collaborative manner to identify the instructional needs of students. Teachers work with their students developing long-term action plans and set interim goals that are reviewed in six-week cycles. Student work is used well to monitor progress toward improved outcomes. All students receive additional instruction during and/or after school, and in a Saturday academy. Specialists work with the most needy students using well-matched instructional approaches and suitable materials to improve students' skills. Higher-achieving students participate in Regents review and enrichment activities. Ongoing review of student work assures that changes are implemented as needed.

The school's goals and high expectations are very effectively communicated to the entire community. The Comprehensive Education Plan provides the framework for the school's program. It has been updated three times this year to reflect changes in initiatives. Instructional rubrics provide excellent guidance to students so they know what is expected. Grade 5 students use a clearly defined rubric to evaluate, score and reflect on their own writing. Teacher comments on student work and questioning during classroom lessons provide very good guidance and encourage students to be critical thinkers. One student shared how this school is challenging. He proudly noted that in his prior school, he was questioned about the color of stars. However, now his response needed to include "how long it takes for stars to change colors and to explode". Parents unanimously praise the principal as "knowing what's best for the school," and consider

the school as a “family” working together as a “community”. Parents are kept very well informed of their child’s progress and school programs through ongoing newsletters and meetings. “Student of the Month” is celebrated at evening meetings resulting in larger than usual parent attendance. Parents are also actively encouraged to share relevant information about their child with staff to ensure that the school meets each child’s needs.

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 school is highly embedded in the Core Knowledge Sequence providing students with a rich, rigorous curriculum that spirals in content and activities from the early grades through grade 8. Stand-alone and supplemental materials align each grade’s instruction with State standards and ensure that instruction is well matched to students’ needs. Arts education is infused in each grade and is well supported by many enrichment activities planned by the school to provide students with multiple avenues of expression. Teachers are held highly accountable. Administrators review student work monthly to monitor student performance and progress and the success of instructional strategies. Teachers effectively use results on student assessments to differentiate instruction within each class and across the grades. Lower-performing grade 8 students are highly engaged as they work in groups completing well-varied learning objectives based upon their reading a “Shakespeare made easy” version of “The Twelfth Night.” All middle school students are streamed for instruction enabling higher performing students to attend Regents classes in math and/or science. Students in the elementary grades are highly engaged in well-matched small group activities. Strategic decisions for budgeting, scheduling and staffing reflect very careful consideration of school programs and students’ needs. The principal is highly committed to allocating all available resources to the benefit of her students. Teachers speak of the wealth of materials and a well-stocked resource center enables staff to supplement classroom materials to enhance instruction. The school also prides itself on the nurturing environment reflected by high student attendance that is increasing as a result of a recently implemented automated phone-messaging system. All teachers engage their students in a monthly “Core Virtues Project” centered on being respectful. A peer mediation program further supports the school’s efforts in this area. The open-door policy of the principal allows students to frequently see and visit the principal. They are very comfortable asking for help when needed.

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.

Teachers value learning walks and formal observations by the administrators. Staff receive written suggestions that target strengths and areas for improvement, and include student-specific suggestions to improve instructional approaches. Staff also appreciate the highly varied opportunities to hone their craft. Trends in data analysis are used well

to effectively plan well-differentiated professional development by school staff and outside consultants. Staff also attend off-site activities to learn new instructional strategies and enhance their current practice. Mentoring is an integral part of the school program. New staff participate in a summer institute prior to their formal start date and meet regularly with their mentors during the school year to help them learn good instruction. Veteran staff and administrators also meet with mentors to support their ongoing learning. The principal and assistant principal speak proudly of the help they are receiving from a retired administrator. Teachers are highly supportive of each other and share best practices at grade meetings and lunchtime. They informally visit each other's classes to view instruction. However, there is neither a regular intervisitation schedule nor tools available to optimize teachers' formal sharing of ideas. The school clearly articulates its procedures and rules to the entire community, and this is reflected in the calm, orderly tone in the building. Students and parents receive the discipline code, which is aligned with class rules. Community service within the school engages the more difficult students to try to impact positively on their behavior. Student government includes older students in decision-making, but not elementary school students. Related service providers are supportive of students. They provide mandated counseling and offer good direction in high school selection processes. The school's strong links with outside organizations extends students' experiences. This year's partnership with the Brooklyn Museum involved teachers and students in various activities enriching the delivery of the Core Knowledge Sequence.

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 well developed.

The school is highly reflective and continually engages in meaningful review of programs and planning to meet its goal of supporting all students in an enriched learning environment to improve student outcomes. Daily meetings of administrators, and weekly instructional and inquiry team meetings, enable the school to review the school, class, grade and individual progress towards meeting interim and long-term goals. Standardized test results and ongoing interim and school-generated assessments provide essential information that the school uses very effectively to adjust instruction and change interventions and modify programs if necessary. As a result of careful review of students' results on the English language arts exam and monthly writing products, the principal recognized the need for more focused instruction in grammar and added a structured program in grades 1 through 8. The principal plans to use the results from Acuity and the standardized tests to effectively plan for next year. As a result of the inquiry team's work, a 10-minute skill of the day in literacy will be added into each classroom's instructional program. Administrators make use of frequent learning walks, that teachers jokingly referred to as "hourly," to carefully monitor teaching to ensure that students are learning and to match student placement to teaching style to maximize the learning potential of each student. A rubric is used to identify teachers' strengths and weaknesses in the quality of their instruction. Teachers' lesson plans further serve as a valuable tool to measure progress toward set goals. The principal has a clear vision for creating a school where all students will learn and be able to sustain their progress. Each summer staff members are highly engaged in preparing suitable materials to ensure that the school's instructional program is well matched to the students' needs and aligned with State standards.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Osmond A Church	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
Quality Score				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	
Overall score for Quality Statement 1				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 rigorous, 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	
Overall score for Quality Statement 2				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 and tardiness?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 3				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, and effectively address discipline related incidents?				X	
4.7 create effective partnerships with outside entities that support the academic and personal growth of the students?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 4					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
Overall score for Quality Statement 5					X

◇	Outstanding
+	Well Developed
✓	Proficient
➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features
Δ	Underdeveloped