



**Department of
Education**

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

**Quality Review Report
Office of Accountability
2008-2009**

Quality Review Report 2008-2009

The East Flatbush Primary School

Early Childhood School 361

**3109 Newkirk Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11226**

Principal: Dianne Martin

Dates of review: March 4 - 5, 2009

Lead Reviewer: Marianne Ferrara

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The East Flatbush Primary School is an early childhood school with 666 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 2. The school population comprises 86% Black, 9% Hispanic, 3% White, and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 8% English language learners and 12% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2007 - 2008 was 92.5%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 89% eligibility.

The new principal was appointed to her position on August 25, 2008.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

The school has many sources of assessment data that provides teachers with a clear picture of students' strengths and their areas of need. In most respects this data is used well to inform instruction and make organizational decisions. Teachers develop lessons and modify the curriculum to address the needs of students including some subgroups, especially the diverse needs of special education and English language learners. Any student at-risk of underachieving is monitored closely and intervention services are provided for them. However, data is not yet fully employed as a school-wide practice for making classroom instructional decisions and not all teachers use data to differentiate planning and teaching for all students, particularly those capable of high achievement.

The process of inquiry is very well developed and the inquiry team and academic intervention specialists use formative and informal assessments to recommend and implement strategies for improving the target group of students' achievements. Based on the previous years' experience a more extensive monitoring and tracking system has been developed for each student in the group and best practices established and shared.

The principal makes informed and effective organizational decisions across all aspects of the school to support improved learning. School leaders are reflective and work collaboratively to develop teacher capacity and student improvement. They evaluate the effectiveness of current practices and plan for revisions and adjustments for academic growth and to provide opportunities to help students succeed. As yet, goal setting and a program for individual professional development are not adequately implemented. Insufficient planned opportunities are made for teachers to observe and learn from each other's best practices. Whilst there are goals identified in the Comprehensive Educational Plan, interim checkpoints to evaluate the progress made towards achieving long-term individual and school goals are not part of the overall plan.

On-going communication between the home and school ensures that academic expectations, social behaviors and attendance policies are shared with parents. The school engages parents as partners in supporting achievement and personal growth and encourages involvement in their children's learning through workshops and participation in classroom activities.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The staff's detailed knowledge of each student ensures that they are able to make strategic decisions about suitable programs and policies that will have a positive impact on improved learning.
- The school communicates effectively with parents and provides them with opportunities to be involved in their child's learning.
- The inquiry team works collaboratively to collect, analyze and share data, and select effective strategies to ensure student improvement.
- The school has established productive partnerships with organizations that provide opportunities for enrichment and support for student success.
- The administration monitors and evaluates students and school progress and knows precisely what the school needs to do to improve.
- School leaders and the school community share the same commitment and vision for continually improving and supporting student achievement.

What the school needs to improve

- Review whole-school goal-setting procedures and strengthen the use of data analysis to set long-term goals and establish interim targets and checks.
- Extend the use of data to ensure differentiated planning and instruction in all subject areas to better meet the needs of each subgroup of students, particularly those capable of high achievement.
- Implement a rigorous professional development program that is diverse and ensures that all teachers develop rigor in all subject areas to fully engage and motivate all subgroups.
- Improve monitoring of progress towards long-term goals in all subject areas by setting interim checkpoints and timeframes against which progress can be measured and revisions and adjustments made as needed.

Part 3: Main Findings

How well the school meets New York City's evaluation criteria

Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, generate and analyze information on student learning outcomes and use it to understand what each student knows and can do and to monitor the student's progress over time.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The school considers both formal and informal assessments as important and necessary sources of data for identifying students' instructional needs. Thorough tracking and monitoring procedures for reading and math enable the administrators, teachers and coaches to use the information arising to adjust instruction. Staff analyzes data and makes specific, instructional changes for targeted at-risk students. Special education students in self-contained classes are taught in general education classes based on their ability in a specific subject area. After-school classes are used well for students in need of additional support. While the school identifies higher achieving students, there is no formal plan implemented to address and develop their areas of strength.

Within the classes involved in the school's inquiry process the strong cooperation among this group of teachers ensures that they implement, monitor and revise strategies based on data analysis but these successful procedures are not yet fully developed as a school-wide practice in all subject areas.

Parents state that the school has made great efforts to involve them in their children's learning. They receive information related to their children's progress, attendance data and behavioral issues through school and teacher outreach. Conversations, conferences, workshops and reports, such as the *Reading First*, progress monitoring, are all used to share information and promote discussions about the students. Parents feel they are informed and know when their children are in need of additional support.

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 staff's thorough knowledge of their students' social and academic development enables them to articulate what has to be done to have their students reach the next level of learning. Classroom support teachers, coaches and academic intervention specialists, collaborate to determine strategies and resources that best suit the individual requirements of any student in need. To establish uniform goal setting in all core subject areas, the administration has created a template that teachers can use to record class and individual student goals. This practice is at an early stage. While students articulate what they are learning, not all are able to discuss their individual goals.

The school goals identified in the Comprehensive Educational Plan are based on reading, attendance and parent involvement data. These goals are discussed at school

leadership team and parent-teacher meetings. The United Federation of Teachers chairperson has input in this goal setting process and the goals are shared with teachers at faculty and grade conferences. Such sharing of this information ensures that the school community is fully aware of and can implement any agreed goals and plans.

The school and parents are committed to instilling high expectations throughout the school community. Parents volunteer their time to support school initiatives that are intended to improve student achievement and progress. Many parents attend the literacy and math family nights so that they can contribute to the school-home connection. These events provide parents with opportunities to learn with their children. They participate in various activities designed to promote enrichment in these subject areas.

Monthly newsletters and the school messenger telephone system are valuable means of sharing information with parents. At the beginning of the school year, parents receive a school handbook that describes school policies and an outline of the curriculum for each grade level. Regular attendance is seen as a major responsibility of both the school and home for ensuring student development. The school follows up absences extensively and incentives to reward perfect attendance are provided.

Quality Statement 3 – Develop Coherent Instructional and Organizational Strategies: The school uses rigorous curricula, teaching and organizational decision making to engage students and faculty in meeting all students' learning goals.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

School wide instructional programs are aligned to the State standards and uniformly taught in both reading and math. Both *Reading First* and *Everyday Math* require that specific and sequential implementation procedures be followed. *Thinking Maps* have been introduced to strengthen the writing program. Differentiation of planning and instruction is not a common practice for all teachers in all subject areas. While individual needs of at-risk and most subgroups of students are addressed through targeted lessons and materials, students who are meeting the standards as well as those students capable of high achievements do not receive the same good level of differentiation or rigor of instruction to accelerate their learning enough.

School leaders are making strategic changes to programming based on data, observations and teacher feedback. For example, to meet the needs of the English language learners, the principal made it a priority to have the grade 1 students self-contained with an English as a Second Language teacher, supported by coaches and other specialist staff. When teachers identify special education students in self-contained classes who are working on grade level, these students are transferred to general education classes for instruction in specific subject areas. The staff collaborates in providing opportunities for all these students to learn. The school leaders ensure that the teachers have the resources necessary to address the different learning styles of the students.

The staff cares a great deal for their students and wants them to succeed. Students say that they feel safe and know their teachers care about them. The school celebrates and recognizes holidays, events and accomplishments such as perfect attendance.

Parents state that they appreciate the work of the staff and the new principal. They are secure in sharing their ideas and supported when their concerns are brought to the attention of the administrators. One parent's statement, "I'm very comfortable with my son being here," was repeated by several parents. Parents feel that the school values their involvement by supporting the academic and social growth of their children and working with them as partners in their children's education.

Quality Statement 4 - Align Capacity Building to Goals: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school's goals for accelerating student learning.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The principal undertakes both formal observations and informal visits to evaluate the quality of classroom instruction. These occasions help her to recognize the areas to address in planning professional development. As a result, several teachers are engaged in on-line training. The services of the regional *Reading First* coach and the school reading and math coaches also assist teachers to improve their skills. The mentor and coaches presently deliver most of the professional development for new teachers. The new principal now has an understanding of the strengths and needs of the staff and plans to implement a more rigorous and differentiated school wide program for all teachers based on their individual needs.

The process of inquiry is very well developed among the inquiry team members and classroom teachers who service the targeted grade 1 students. Based on the team's experience from last year, the classroom teachers of these students are now part of the process. They have developed a more extensive monitoring and tracking system for each student and best practices are identified and shared at conferences. However, timeframes with interim goals have not yet been established and the inquiry process is not practiced school-wide. For example, not all teachers are using the adaptive computer program, *Ticket to Read*, which differentiates reading instruction based on student need.

The school promotes productive partnerships with families and outside organizations and there is a spirit of mutual respect among all constituents. The Morningside Center for Teaching Social Responsibility, which will address behavioral issues and Music and the Brain, which will teach the children keyboard skills, are two of the programs being introduced this year. The "Dad's Club" encourages father-son activities such as bowling and cultural dinners. The "Parents as Learning Partners" program invites parents in their child's classroom to collaborate with their learning, through either a project or being part of a lesson. These imaginative initiatives are having a beneficial impact upon student attitude and parent involvement.

Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for monitoring and 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 principal wants the school to be, "A school that anyone in New York City would want to send their child". The principal has a clear vision of what needs to be accomplished to improve the school and is committed to achieving desired improvements. She

encourages the implementation of new programs and policies and is willing to make the necessary adjustments to ensure their success. Teacher daily schedules are changing mid-year to accommodate the *Music and the Brain* keyboarding program that will begin this year. The School Self Evaluation Form for the Quality Review supports the school leaders understanding of the strengths of the school and the steps the school must take to continue to improve. The *Book of the Month* has begun as a uniform activity throughout the school. *First Fridays* is a program that encourages parental in-class involvement by having the parents participate in class lessons, read with their children or do projects with a group of students. Next year, the implementation of common preps is a priority for planning both on and among grade levels. Presently, there is no designated common time for teachers to work collaboratively to plan lessons and discuss student needs and progress.

Curriculum pacing calendars are available for reading, math, writing, social studies and science. They provide guidance for teachers to ensure that the curriculum, which is aligned to the State standards, is being taught consistently in all classes on every grade. Curriculum mapping is not yet an established practice and there is no evidence that interim checkpoints are being used to plan and differentiate lessons. Practices used to monitor and revise reading and mathematics are firmly established and supported by the coaches and the academic intervention specialists. However, these practices are implemented primarily for addressing areas of weakness and are not replicated in all curriculum areas. The inquiry team periodically evaluates the progress of the target group of students and adjusts their instruction, their goals and the programs they are using.

The analysis of data provided by *Reading First* and multiple sources of additional assessments result in modifications to the curriculum and teaching methodologies where weaknesses are identified. While each of these sources provide information specific to mastery of a skill, some assessments are redundant and provide conflicting information. Higher achieving students do not receive the same level of differentiated instruction based on the areas of strength identified through extensive data that is available and adjustments are not made to their instruction.

School Quality Criteria 2008-2009

School name: The East Flatbush Primary	△	➤	✓	+
Overall QR Score			X	
Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, generate and analyze information on student learning outcomes and use it to understand what each student knows and can do, and to monitor the student’s progress over time.				
<i>To what extent do school leaders and faculty regularly...</i>	△	➤	✓	+
1.1 collect and analyze actionable information, including assessment results and attendance data, to provide a complete view of the learning outcomes and needs of individual students and groupings of students?			X	
1.2 focus analysis on the learning outcomes and needs of all sub-groups of students?		X		
1.3 engage in an open exchange of information with students and families about students’ learning needs and outcomes, including assessment results and attendance data?			X	
1.4 design or adapt tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize and analyze student performance, identify trends and inform instructional and organizational decisions, and to enable students and their families to assess and track each student’s progress?			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 student’s learning.				
<i>To what extent do school leaders and faculty...</i>	△	➤	✓	+
2.1 use collaborative and data-informed processes to set measurable, actionable and differentiated learning goals in core subjects for individual students and groupings of students and develop differentiated plans and timeframes for reaching these goals?		X		
2.2 use collaborative and data-informed processes to develop the school’s Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP)?			X	
2.3 ensure that the achievement of learning goals, and the implementation of plans and timeframes for reaching these goals, is the central focus of school leaders, faculty, students and families?			X	
2.4 communicate high expectations to all students and families, and involve students in developing their learning goals and plans and in taking their next learning steps?			X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 2			X	

DEFINITIONS

“**Analyze**” or “**analysis**” includes, but is not limited to, comparisons of:

- the current and past outcomes of . . . individual students, administrative groupings and sub-groups of students and the school itself in core subjects;
- the outcomes of different classrooms and sub-groups in the same grades and core subjects; and
- the school’s Progress Report and other outcomes to those of peer/other schools

“**Assessment results**” include student outcomes on summative assessments (e.g., state ELA, math, science and social studies tests, NYSESLAT, Regents Exams, and Performance Based Assessment Tasks) and formative assessments aligned to the school’s curriculum (including Periodic, DYO, and teacher-developed Classroom Assessments).

“**Core subjects**” are ELA, math, science, social studies/history, the arts, foreign language, and physical education/health.

“**Data-informed processes**” include analysis of Progress Report, Quality Review, Learning Environment Survey, Inquiry Team findings, assessment results and attendance data

“**Groupings of students**” include classrooms, grade levels and high school cohorts.

“**Organizational decisions or strategies**” refer to a school’s use of budget and resources, staffing, planning, scheduling, grade structure, departments and teacher teams and other aspects of the school’s structure and organization that can affect student outcomes.

“**Sub-groups of students**” include special education students, English Language Learners, the other NCLB sub-groups, boys, girls, and other groups significant to the school.

Quality Statement 3 – Develop Coherent Instructional and Organizational Strategies: The school uses rigorous curricula, teaching and organizational decision making to engage students and faculty in meeting all students’ learning goals.							
<i>To what extent do ...</i>	Δ	➤	✓	+			
3.1 school leaders and faculty deliver challenging and engaging curricula in core subjects, including the arts, that are aligned to state standards?			X				
3.2 teachers plan and teach lessons that are differentiated to meet the needs of individual students and student groupings and are designed to enable all students to reach their learning goals?		X					
3.3 school leaders make strategic organizational decisions to support a coherent and rigorous instructional approach that enables students to reach their learning goals?			X				
3.4 school leaders maintain a culture of mutual trust and respect and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?			X				
Overall score for Quality Statement 3			X				
Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building to Goals: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school’s goals for accelerating student learning.							
<i>To what extent do school leaders...</i>	Δ	➤	✓	+			
4.1 use their own observation of classroom teaching and the analysis of student outcomes to implement an explicit, differentiated strategy to improve each teacher’s instruction, with a special focus on new teachers?			X				
4.2 encourage teachers to take part in Inquiry Teams and other structured professional collaborations (informed by the examination of student work, assessment outcomes and their own peer observations) and share in the instructional leadership of the school with the goal of improved student learning?			X				
4.3 provide professional development that encourages teachers to continuously evaluate and revise their classroom practices to improve student outcomes?		X					
4.4 utilize youth development, support services and partnerships with families and outside organizations to accelerate the academic and personal growth of students?			X				
Overall score for Quality Statement 4			X				
Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for monitoring and evaluating each student’s progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.							
<i>To what extent do...</i>	Δ	➤	✓	+			
5.1 the school’s plans for improving student outcomes and its strategies for improving each teacher’s instructional practices include measurable interim goals and suitable time frames for evaluating success and making adjustments during the year?			X				
5.2 school leaders and faculty use interim checkpoints and data to inform lessons, improve curriculum, differentiate instruction and revise student learning plans throughout the year?		X					
5.3 school leaders use data to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of and modify organizational decisions, structured professional collaborations and teacher improvement strategies?			X				
5.4 school leaders and the school community have a clear vision for the future development of the school and implement procedures and systems to support academic, personal and professional growth?			X				
Overall score for Quality Statement 5			X				
Quality Review Scoring Key							
Δ	Underdeveloped	➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features	✓	Proficient	+	Well Developed