



THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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MEMORANDUM

To: All Principals: Fordham and CUNY Networks
Inquiry Team Members: Fordham and CUNY Networks

From: Elizabeth Lopez: Senior Achievement Facilitator

Re: Quality Review 2007/2008

Date: September 18, 2007

Please note the following with regard to the Quality Review process for school year 2007/2008:

Philosophy

The Quality Review is designed to evaluate schools through a process in which professional judgment determines the effectiveness of a school using a predetermined set of criteria.

The Quality Review Process (Review)

1) Self Evaluation

A self-evaluation is to be completed by the school three weeks prior to the Quality Review scheduled date. The self-evaluation form has been modified and can be downloaded from the DoE website. All schools should have the self-evaluation on hand.

The self-evaluation is a school's opportunity to show itself off in a positive light. "Good" self-evaluations include: evaluative language and data, signposts indicating where data evidence in the school can be found and should be no longer than eight pages in length.

The self-evaluation should be completed by the Principal in collaboration with the Principal's Cabinet and/or Inquiry team, parents and students. The self-evaluation should be a distillation of the views of all stakeholders in the school.

2) Day 1 and Day 2

The Quality Reviewer will come prepared having seen the following:

- The school's 06/07 test scores with cohort data information (by ethnicity, gender, etc.)
- The school's demographic information

- The school's 06/07 Quality Review report
- The Quality Reviewer will not have the school's 2007 Progress Report, however, it will be available on line and the reviewer can access it if s/he wants to.

Principal Interview (A conversation with the Principal and key members of his/her staff)

The first conversation with the Quality Reviewer is your opportunity to tell what makes your school special. In addition to discussing the self-evaluation, you want to discuss what you are most proud of, what you have achieved as Principal, what the school was like when you became its Instructional Leader and what wakes you up at four in the morning. In addition to discussing the school's positive features, be prepared to address its barriers to progress.

The Quality Reviewer will then engage you in a focused and structured discussion about the school's most recent data. The school's data set will empower the entire Quality Review. Your goal for this part of the conversation is to work with the Quality Reviewer to triangulate your school's data.

You will then discuss the six-ten classes the Quality Reviewer will visit. Be able to speak about why these particular classes were selected. The purpose here is to let the Quality Reviewer know how well you and/or your Team know what is going on in these classrooms. Be able to articulate what you expect the Quality Reviewer will see and the skill sets of the teachers involved. Allow for a range of teaching ability. You want to showcase your very best practitioners, those who are relatively new and have grown because of on site professional development and those who were marginal but have changed over time because of on site and other professional development opportunities.

Remember that the Quality Reviewer may ask to visit classrooms or other areas in the building not otherwise scheduled. Also remember that you and/or your Instructional AP are to accompany the Quality Reviewer while touring the school building.

Classroom Visits

During the classroom visits, the Quality Reviewer will ask again for the context of each visit: "Why are we visiting this classroom?" Your answer(s) will provide them with expectations. S/he will then look around, listen and watch to see if there is evidence of student learning. S/he will be observing to see if there is a disconnect between the teaching and the learning. Principals tend to concentrate too much on what the teacher is doing rather than on the impact of the effectiveness of the teaching. The Quality Reviewer will be asking him/herself, "Is the impact good enough?" Additionally, the Quality Reviewer will look to see if the classroom environment is encouraging students to come in and become active participants in their learning.

The reviewer will look at the work in the room and what assessment is like in that classroom. S/he will look to see how children are given feedback regarding the quality of their work and if expectations are explicit within the classroom environment.

After each classroom visit, the Quality Reviewer will ask if what was seen was what was expected. You may want to have observation reports of these teachers on hand to share with the Quality Reviewer as this will help to triangulate the conversation.

Note that the UFT Chapter Leader does not have to be visited but should be heard if s/he wants to speak to the reviewer or be part of the staff focus group conversation.

Note, as well, that the Quality Reviewer will not want to see piles of assessment binders in isolation in your office. If you want the reviewer to see assessment binders, do so in the classroom with the teacher attached so the teacher can talk through the work with the Quality Reviewer. By the same token, the Quality Reviewer will not want to look at reams of student work. When looking at student portfolios, have the students there to talk about their work.

End of Day 1

At the end of Day 1, the QR'er will provide the Principal with feedback and state some emerging concerns, if any. The purpose here is for the Principal to go home, reflect upon the day and come back the next morning prepared to show/discuss what was not covered/addressed by the end of Day 1.

Day 2

On Day 2, the QR'er will arrive early and read the walls. S/he will observe how student work is celebrated and how classrooms are organized. S/he will look for instructional charts and rubrics. S/he will have informal chats with school staff and children. The reviewer will gather as much information as possible and then distill, decipher and feed it back to the Principal.

If not scheduled on Day 1, the QR'er will meet with the following groups: parents, teachers and students.

The reviewer will look at curriculum with the school's Coaches.

The reviewer will participate in a collaborative activity which may be a full Inquiry Team meeting.

The reviewer will then spend some time writing the school's report.

The reviewer will then have an exit conference with you and key members of your staff (your call). It is not yet known who, in addition to the Principal, will

participate in that conference. Last year, it was the LIS. This year, it will be the Network Leader and/or the SAF.

That Was Then...This Is Now

1) Scheduling

A general schedule will be published in September and given to the SAF's and SSO's who will then distribute them to the Network Leaders who will then disseminate the information to the schools.

The 100 schools that participated in the pilot Quality Review in the spring of 2006 and did not have a Quality Review in 2006-07, may contact their Network Leader to request an early review. Otherwise, these schools will be reviewed at the same time as other schools in the network.

Schools that were "Well-Developed" **AND** received an "A" on the progress report **AND** do not have a brand new Principal in place will undergo a reduced review – one day only.

Schools with 600 or less students will have a one and a half day review over a two day period. Schools with 600-1200 students will have a two day review over a three day period (half day-full day-half day) Schools with 1200-1800 students will have a two and a half day review over three days (2 full days and one half day) Schools with more than 1800 students will have a review for three full days with two reviewers.

The Quality Reviewer will try to extend his/her time in a school if the school has identified innovations that are taking place that are successfully accelerating student achievement. Exemplary practices will be highlighted on the school's Quality Review Report and will be shared as "Outstanding Features."

2) Grading Scale

The Quality Review Statements and sub criteria will be assessed using a five-point scale:

Outstanding
Well-developed
Proficient
Underdeveloped with areas of proficiency
Underdeveloped

The Quality Review Statements and corresponding criteria have been revised and are now more explicit and truly speak to the performance and progress of individual students within their subgroups.

New and Noteworthy:

In Quality Statement 1, there is an expectation that a school is measuring its progress based on comparisons with “similar schools.” This refers to your school’s peer horizon.

Quality Statement 2 expects that schools are using ARIS for customizable reports. This area also clearly establishes that a school will be measured by how well each child within the school performs and that this information is expeditiously disseminated to parents.

Quality Statement 3 has added the importance of the arts and references differentiated instruction.

Quality Statement 4 is all about a school’s ability to build capacity and there is a new sub criteria that clearly measures mentoring for new teachers.

Quality Statement 5 references periodic assessments and how the information rendered from them is tracked and used.

3) Bottom Lines

Know your data.

Know your children and their individual progress. Remember what I said about making sure that you are treating each child as a “case study.”

Establish your Inquiry Team early and use the Team to build capacity within your school.

4) FYI

Be aware that the reviewer will look to see if the issues raised/identified in last year’s Quality Review Report have been addressed. S/he will determine if the school has made good/some/little progress in these identified areas.

Accountability and SAF Support

The Office of Accountability will provide staff development sessions to all Principals several weeks before their scheduled review date. Training for first year Principals will be scheduled, as well, and will be more extensive.

I will schedule a PD for all Principals in our network who would like to discuss and review the updated Quality review criteria. Please let me know if you are interested in attending a half-day PD session for this purpose.

If you are interested, the Network Team and I will conduct a “mock” review with you and your staff prior to your actual review date. These will be scheduled as soon as the Quality Review dates for the schools within the Network are made available.

I hope this information is helpful to you and your staff as you begin to think about the 2007/2008 Quality Review process.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or any member of our network team.

Thank you.