



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Andrew Jackson School

Public School 145

**100 Noll Street
Brooklyn
NY 11206**

Principal: Marilyn Torres

Dates of review: May 29 – 31, 2007

Reviewer: Sue Alton

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Andrew Jackson School has an enrollment of 1035 students in kindergarten through 5th grade. The population is comprised of 93% Hispanic, 5% Black and a very small number of students from other backgrounds. Four percent are special education students and a further 34% are English language learners. Attendance is 92.9% and is above similar schools and slightly above City schools. Ninety-three percent of students are title 1 eligible which is higher than similar and City schools.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal is respected by students, staff and parents and provides very strong leadership.
- Administration and cabinet are very effective and have good capacity to lead change.
- There is a strong sense of teamwork among all staff.
- Data is used well at class and grade level to identify students with the greatest need of improvement and to plan intervention programs.
- Students' behavior is very good and relationships between staff and students are very positive.
- Accountable talk is used well to improve students' communication skills and to enhance learning.
- Professional development is very effective and is appropriately focused on improving students' achievement and the needs of teachers.
- The curriculum is carefully planned and includes creative elements which enhance learning and responds closely to the needs of the students and their community.
- Partnerships with agencies and other organizations are very good and these have brought considerable additional support and resources
- Parents value the school and are very appreciative of the efforts made by the staff to involve them and to communicate with them

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that teachers use data more consistently to plan differentiated instruction and activities, targeted at the needs of individuals and groups
- Establish systems for leaders and faculty to identify specific measureable goals for all grades, individuals and groups within plans.
- Develop timescales for interim as well as long term evaluation of progress.
- Establish processes to systematically record progress towards goals and the associated changes to subsequent planning
- Develop a process of goal-setting which will identify greater challenge for higher achieving students

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school.

There is a strong sense of teamwork at Andrew Jackson School which is focused on learning and achievement. The principal provides strong leadership and is well supported by her assistant principals and cabinet. Students enjoy learning and feel safe. They respect their teachers and their behavior is very good. Parents value the communication they have with the school, the social activities and the caring ethos. Several parents commented on the time the teachers give outside of school to help their children, including being easily available and giving out their mobile phone numbers. Other parents commented on the school being like a family. An example of this is the dedication of one teacher who visited a child who was in the hospital every day for two months.

The partnerships the school has with other organizations and agencies have increased opportunities for students and contributed to a more creative curriculum. Where learning is differentiated within the classroom, all students make good progress. However, this process is not integrated in all lessons.

The school has made good progress in the short time it has been using data systematically to raise achievement. This is because the administration, teachers and cabinet are proactive about change. Professional development has supported this process very well. The school recognizes the need to integrate the good systems it already has and its plans for development into a more strategic recorded process of monitoring and evaluation. This will also include short term as well as long-term timescales and goal-setting.

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 student progress over time.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The school uses a range of data to provide up-to-date information on the performance of individuals, classes and grades. This is part of a formal process between administration, cabinet and teachers. Teachers also consider this information informally and take action accordingly. However, this is not always recorded as part of a systematic monitoring and evaluation process which feeds into the Comprehensive Education Plan and other plans.

The performance of English language learners and special education students is tracked at regular intervals. Most students are Hispanic and although the school tracks the performance of different ethnic groups, the information this process provides is limited. This is because the school has not yet carried out a deeper analysis of this group, but has focused on using data to support all students as individuals. The principal has anecdotal information on underachieving groups within an ethnic group.

The progress of all other categories of interest to the school is tracked, for example differences between boys and girls. As a result, staff plan appropriate action to address their specific needs. An example of this is when books were purchased with a specific focus to encourage boys to read more. There has also been an increased focus on the use of technology to motivate boys.

The school has a falling enrollment. Many new students have had little or no education.

The school is working proactively to address the needs of these students and their families and rightly, is considering how to use data more effectively to establish a baseline of achievement in order to track more effectively the progress of these students

The school compares its progress with other schools using information generated by the City. This includes the progress of groups, peer groups, similar schools and its own past performance. The principal has used this information to identify the schools which are similar. She is in communication with them to compare strategies and use of data.

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use available data to understand each student’s next learning step. Through collaborative planning and student and parent engagement, they set high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating each student’s learning.

This area of the school’s work is proficient.

Administration and cabinet set goals collaboratively for each grade and for the school. However, in the Comprehensive Education Plan, these goals tend to be general for a group of grades. Timescales refer to the year end and no interim timescales are included. Goals do not take into account the differing abilities within each grade. They focus on all students graduating and making a percentage improvement. Specific measureable goals for all grades, individuals and groups are not identified systematically within plans. Additionally they do not have timescales for interim or long term evaluation of progress.

The school conveys high expectations to all students and parents. There is also the school-wide expectation that all students will move to the next grade each year.

Data is used well at class and grade level to identify students with the greatest need of improvement and to plan intervention. Goals are set for individual students, groups, classes, grades and academic subjects. The school carefully tracks the progress of students who are underachieving and receiving intervention. As a result, the administration determined that the success of English language learners speaking English was not being transferred to writing. This led to an increased focus on writing.

Administration and cabinet use data to track student performance within and across grades through teacher conferencing and informal observations. Teachers meet to discuss a range of data generated by the school to inform their planning. However, changes made to plans, timescales or goals are not always used systematically to adjust long term planning.

Parents are very supportive of the school. They value the efforts made by the staff to communicate with them and the family activities which are provided, for example film night and summer trips. One parent commented, “Teachers here aren’t like teachers, they’re like second parents.”

The whole school community and its partners work together effectively to discuss goals and plans to improve the performance of students. All staff are actively focused on improving student progress and performance and constantly review their practice.

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instruction: The school aligns its instructional activity and resources, and student engagement around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.

This area of the school’s work is proficient

The curriculum is selected to align with the mandatory curriculum. It is carefully planned and reviewed to include creative elements which enhance learning and respond closely to the needs of the students and their community. New programs have been purchased which have a focus on using data to provide instruction and to track progress. Exciting curriculum opportunities have been introduced including, the use of teleconferencing and the involvement of theater groups.

All teachers are accountable for improving instruction and progressing students towards their goals. They aim to plan and differentiate instruction to meet the needs of students, but this is not consistent across classes. An example of where differentiation is used successfully is in a book club activity. Here students work in groups with texts related to their reading ability, with clearly defined outcomes for the activity. This differentiation allowed students from different groups and with different performance levels to achieve the learning goals.

Budgeting decisions are data driven and firmly based on the needs of students and raising achievement. The school is proactive in raising additional resources through bids and fundraising with partners. Scheduling decisions are made as a result of data analysis. Some examples of this are the organization of common preparation time, professional development and curriculum initiatives.

Students’ behavior is very good and relationships between staff and students are very positive. Students feel safe and enjoy learning. As one student said of his teacher, “She loves math like I do!” Many students can talk about their goals and what they need to do in order to graduate. In lessons, accountable-talk is used well to improve students’ communication skills and to enhance learning.

Attendance has a high profile. Parents comment on the creative approach to improving punctuality, by giving jobs to students before school. Students know it is important to attend and enjoy the rewards for 100% attendance. Currently, attendance is 92.9% and is above similar schools and slightly above City schools.

Quality Statement 4 - Build and Align Capacity: The development of instructional leadership, staff, and capacity are aligned around the school’s collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.

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

Staff members are selected on their expertise and willingness to learn about and use data. Professional development is very effective and is differentiated to meet staff needs and to address priorities in the Comprehensive Education Plan. Staff members are being trained in data use. They describe how professional development has increased their confidence and provided opportunities to develop their skills, through the training itself and opportunities to share ideas with teachers within the school, New York City and other parts of America. An example of this is the decision to establish a data room where all information will be stored in one base.

The principal frequently observes lessons and walk throughs are well established at all

levels. Teachers observe and support each other and issues arising from observations are used as a focus for discussion and to plan professional development. They may also be included in the Comprehensive Education Plan.

Teachers plan and review goals and interventions together in classes and across grades, using data to support the process. These discussions lead to changes in plans and support programs. This process is not yet systematically recorded.

The school runs smoothly and procedures are clear and understood by all. The principal is highly respected and provides very strong leadership. She has significant capacity to manage continuous improvement. She develops her staff very effectively, encouraging them to take on leadership roles. As one teacher said, "She includes us . . . we appreciate being involved."

Partnerships with agencies and other organizations are very good and have brought considerable additional resources to the school. One parent commented, "Partnerships encourage children for their future. They get a chance to see what they can do." An excellent example of the school's work with partners is the outstanding library facility which students, parents and staff value highly and has contributed to an enhanced enjoyment of books and reading by students.

Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has built-in structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year, recognizing weaknesses in its improvement plans and teaching practices, and flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerated learning.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

Administration, cabinet and teachers are focused on continual improvement. The Comprehensive Education Plan is developed collaboratively each year between the administration and the cabinet, with suggestions from teachers. This plan is supported by more detailed action plans. However, the goals stated relate to overall goals for grades, including a percentage increase from the previous year. These goals focus on the expectation for all students to graduate and do not take into account the differing performance levels of some students, which may affect these goals. An example of this would be special education students.

Although plans contain long-term goals for the end of each year, they do not include interim goals or processes for review. All staff are involved in tracking and evaluating the progress of students, classes and grades throughout the year, making adjustments to interventions as necessary. However, no adjustment is made to interim and final goals as a result of this process. The interim progress of specific groups of students, including the progress of better performing students, is not tracked.

Although using data to raise achievement has been in place for a very short time, much has been achieved. This is because administration, cabinet and teachers work closely together to bring about change. All staff are committed to improving their systems to use of data to set goals, track the progress of individuals and groups in order to raise achievement.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Andrew Jackson (PS 145)	∅	✓	+
Quality Score		X	

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 student progress over time.	∅	✓	+
1.1 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • each student, classroom, grade level, 		X	
1.2 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ethnic groups, English language learners, special education students* 		X	
1.3 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all other categories of interest to the school* 		X	
1.4 Performance and progress are measured based on comparisons with similar schools, with the school's own past performance, and among students, classrooms, grade levels, academic subject areas, ethnic groups, and other groupings of interest within the school.		X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 1		X	

* These criteria are partially aspirational as of now because schools do not have routine access to all of this data. The NYC DOE plans to provide schools with enhanced access to the necessary data in 2007.

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use available data to understand each student's next learning step. Through collaborative planning and student and parent engagement, they set high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating each student's learning.	∅	✓	+
2.1 Using data, school leaders and faculty engage in a collaborative process to set demanding, objectively measurable goals for immediate and long-range improvement, and to develop plans and timeframes for reaching those goals.	X		
2.2 Goals and plans focus on the school as a whole and 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 Particular attention is given to improving the performance and progress of students in greatest need of improvement.		X	
2.4 High expectations are conveyed to students and parents/caregivers. Students and their parents/caregivers are regularly invited to provide information about each student's performance and how to improve. This information is central to setting challenging goals and developing, evaluating, and revising plans.		X	
2.5 Goals and plans for improving student performance and progress drive the activity of all members of the school community: leaders, staff, students, parents, and other partners.			X
Overall score for Quality Statement 2		X	

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instruction: The school aligns its instructional activity, resources, and student engagement around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.	∅	✓	+
3.1 The school selects the curriculum based on how well it aligns with or implements the mandated curriculum and on the curriculum's capacity to generate meaningful interim data about progress towards goals and to support the school's high expectations and improvement plans.			X
3.2 Teachers are accountable for improving instruction and student outcomes. They plan and differentiate their instruction based on the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.		X	
3.3 Budgeting decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.		X	
3.4 Staffing decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.		X	
3.5 Scheduling decisions about the use of teacher and student time are guided by the needs that emerge from examining student data and by the focused plan the school develops to improve student outcomes.		X	
3.6 Instructional programs actively engage students.		X	
3.7 Staff know and respect students and respond to their academic needs, as well as their personal needs that affect academic performance. Each student knows and trusts an adult on the staff who is concerned about him or her.			X
3.8 Student attendance and engagement are high priorities. High rates and patterns of absences trigger immediate intervention.		X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 3		X	
Quality Statement 4 – Build and Align Capacity: The development of instructional leadership, staff, and capacity are aligned around the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.	∅	✓	+
4.1 Leaders, faculty, and staff are selected based on their high expectations for student performance and progress and based on their commitment and capacity to use data, compare outcomes within and across classrooms and schools and develop and revise plans and methods to improve performance and progress.		X	
4.2 Professional development decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes. Professional development is designed to help leaders, faculty, and staff use data, self- and peer-assessments, and collaboration with peers to achieve goals for improved school and student outcomes. Professional development and self- and peer-evaluation are aligned and overlap.			X
4.3 The principal frequently observes classroom teaching and has a considered strategy for improving the quality of each teacher's instruction. Teachers frequently observe and support each other's classroom instruction with the goal of improving student outcomes.			X
4.4 Planning, evaluation of results, and revision of plans takes place in teams. Leaders and faculty inform each other of their goals and results, candidly evaluate themselves and each other, and use what is learned to drive improvement.		X	
4.5 The principal is respected and has capacity to effect change.			X
4.6 The school runs smoothly. Procedures are clear, communicated to all, and are generally followed.			X
4.7 The school aligns youth development and support services around stated academic goals. Partnerships with outside bodies are routinely used to achieve academic goals.			X
Overall score for Quality Statement 4			X
Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has built-in structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year, recognizing weaknesses in its improvement plans and teaching practices, and flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.	∅	✓	+
5.1 All school plans and other interventions include frequent interim goals and diagnostic assessments of progress designed to reveal in objectively measurable ways whether the plan is being effectively implemented and reaching stated goals.	X		
5.2 Comparisons of student progress within and across classrooms and schools are used in making interim diagnostic assessments and measuring the progress of plans and interventions.		X	
5.3 Information generated by periodic assessments and diagnostic measures of progress and comparisons is used to revise plans immediately in order to reach stated goals. Interim and final goals are modified when data objectively demonstrate that revision is required.		X	
5.4 Each plan's interim and final outcomes drive successive phases of goal setting and improvement planning, and each successive phase is characterized by agile and flexible realignment of practices and resources to improve student academic outcomes.		X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 5		X	