



**NYCDOE**

**Quality Review: Final Report**

# **The New York City Department of Education**



# **Quality Review Report**

**Roberto Clemente School**

**Public School 38**

**232 East 103 Street  
New York  
NY 10029**

**Principal: Norma Caraballo**

**Dates of review: January 25 - 26, 2007**

**Reviewer: Jo Storrs**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Roberto Clemente is an elementary school in East Harlem with 385 students enrolled from pre-kindergarten through grade 6. The school population comprises 68.7% Hispanic, 24.7% Black, 4.7% Asian and 1.9% White. Thirteen per cent of the school's population is English language learners with Spanish as the predominant first language. Currently almost 13% of the students are special education students; most in collaborative team teaching classes and 3% in a self-contained class. More than half of the 39 teachers have taught in the school for more than two years but some are new with less than a year's teaching experience. The school is Title 1 eligible with 88% of students qualifying. This is slightly below the average for similar schools but above the average for City schools. Attendance was 91.2% in 2005, which was in line with similar schools but slightly below the City average. It is improving this year.

The school was redesigned and renamed Public School 38 in 1996. The School Quality Review Initiative continues to support the school's drive to raise student achievement. Three temporary housing facilities feed into the school. The school has formed fruitful partnerships with community-based organizations such as '92nd Street Y', 'Learning Expansions through the Arts' and 'Education through Music' to broaden and enrich the curriculum and students' experiences.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal has very high expectations for the school and every student.
- Cabinet members are dedicated to meeting the needs of each student.
- Data is analyzed and used very well by leaders and most teachers to drive decision-making and improvements.
- The inter-linking curriculum is broadened and enriched by partnerships with community based organizations and other agencies.
- The extended day provides valuable support for students at risk.
- The intervention team provides excellent assistance for students at risk.
- The literacy and mathematics coaches supply valuable support to improve instruction and students' performance.
- Where instruction is good, students concentrate well in lessons and enjoy learning.
- The teachers work hard and are committed to the achievement of the students.
- The school respects and values each student as an individual.

### What the school needs to improve

- Maintain a focus on developing students' literacy and mathematical skills.
- Further develop strategies to involve parents, carers and guardians in their children's education.
- Use the outcomes of assessments to track progress and differentiate tasks to match students' needs more closely.
- Continue to improve the specific feedback teachers give to students so students know precisely what they have to do to improve.
- Provide positive feedback to faculty and staff and ensure that professional development meets the needs of teachers.
- Build on the good practice to continue to improve attendance and punctuality.

## Part 3: Main findings

### Overall Evaluation

**This is a proficient school with some well-developed features.**

The principal has very high expectations for the school and every student. She works tirelessly with cabinet members to ensure that data is systematically collected and analyzed to set high goals for improving instruction and performance. Students' at risk are identified as soon as possible after entry to the school; they receive excellent support from the intervention teams and the extended day program. Because of all of these factors, there has been a steady improvement in students' performance in State and City tests. The curriculum is carefully matched to each student's needs. There is a suitable focus on literacy and mathematics with coaches providing valuable support and training for teachers. Links with science, art and social studies provide interesting themes that make the curriculum more meaningful for students. Other subjects, such as music and gymnastics, are promoted through effective partnerships with community based organizations and other agencies. These enrich students' experiences and broaden their skills and understanding of the world.

Teachers work hard to meet the diverse demands of every student, including those with very challenging behavior. They are very supportive towards each other and are committed to helping students make progress and perform well. Where instruction is good, students concentrate well in lessons and enjoy learning. Leaders, faculty and staff respect and value each student as individuals. Relationships between teachers, staff and students are excellent so that students enjoy coming to school and most are eager to do their best. Parents involved with the school are pleased with their children's progress. However in spite of the school's significant efforts, many are not involved with their children's learning.

### 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 student progress over time.**

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

There are excellent and consistent systems to collect and use data at all levels across the school. The principal is highly focused and uses data effectively to establish high expectations for each student. She works tirelessly with the cabinet to provide for each student's learning needs. They evaluate and compare test data and the performance of individuals and groups of students against goals, prior performance, similar and City schools. All this data is shared with the leadership team to establish school goals to improve academic results and attendance, in the Comprehensive Education Plan. Individual learning needs are identified and academic groups established using prior data and the assessment of students' literacy and math skills in September. The outcomes are discussed with faculty and professional staff to identify specific student goals and to set up intervention and remediation programs, where required. Teachers track data from each student's on-going work against their prior performance and discuss their progress at

weekly grade meetings. Coaches attend grade meetings regularly to review students' progress and to realign instruction where necessary. At the end of each unit of work teachers share each student's performance with the principal to check progress or adjust targets and instruction. Administration uses this information to compare students' performance with their prior performance and progress in other subjects. Students falling behind are identified and diagnostic tests administered by the academic intervention services.

The progress of special education students, English language learners and students with behavioral and emotional needs is reviewed at regular collaborative meetings of teachers and the academic intervention teams. Successes and students at risk are identified and goals and intervention programs adjusted when necessary. Data is used consistently and effectively by leaders, staff and nearly all teachers so that decisions and improvements enable students to make good progress. All data is shared and discussed systematically at cabinet and leadership team meetings. The on-going drive to improve students' motivation, academic progress and performance has resulted in test results gradually rising. The school is maintaining a focus on developing students' literacy and mathematical skills as there was a slight dip in test results in 2006.

**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.**

The outcomes of quantitative and qualitative data analysis are discussed systematically at collaborative meetings of faculty, staff, cabinet and the school leadership team to identify school priorities. As parents have been reluctant to be involved with the school in the past, administration set priorities within the Comprehensive Education Plan to maximize learning and performance for all students. Specific long and short-term goals and time-bonded action plans were formulated using data analysis and focus on each student, grade, academic subject and group of students. Success criteria and the people responsible for each goal are clearly identified. Parents are now represented on the school leadership team, sub-committees have been established and parents are receiving training to undertake their future roles and responsibilities. Particular attention is given to improving the progress and performance of students at risk including special educational need students, English language learners and students with poor behavior or attendance. Intervention teams provide excellent assistance for these students who make very good progress. Specific programs provide focused support for individual or small groups of students during the school day and the extended day programs also provide valuable support.

The school's high expectations for attendance, classwork, behavior and homework are provided for parents in a comprehensive booklet and are reinforced at orientation meetings. Students know that they must work hard and behave well. Parents receive helpful outlines of classwork and regular informative reports. They discuss their children's performance at parent/teacher meetings. The school runs an 'Open-door' policy so parents can drop into the school when they can. The parents involved with the school are pleased with their children's progress and support. The school, grade, class and individual student's goals and plans steer the work of the principal, cabinet, faculty, staff and help students to make good progress. In spite of the school's efforts, many parents are not

involved with their children's learning and do not take advantage of the workshops and other activities provided by the school.

**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 school meets its high expectations through implementing the mandated curriculum with an appropriate focus on developing students' literacy and math skills. Breadth is added to the curriculum using meaningful links in other subjects such as art and science. Partnerships with community organizations and other agencies, trips and visits enrich class based learning. Literacy and math coaches work with faculty to plan lessons and improve instruction. The balanced literacy approach and the workshop model for math are used and generally meet students' needs. Most teachers use data effectively to differentiate instructional programs so that students are fully engaged and learning is accelerated. This is not consistent across the school so some students lose interest and progress is interrupted.

The budget, grants, Title 1 funding and all resources are linked carefully to school and students' goals and used effectively to benefit all students. Staffing decisions are based on students' needs, for example extra teachers and staff are provided to enrich the arts and music curriculum for all students. Additional support is provided for students at risk in general education, special education students in self-contained or collaborative team teaching classes and for English language learners. Scheduling decisions enable flexible groupings and utilization of faculty to enhance students' academic progress. School goals target resources so, for example, the purchase of extra guided reading books is helping to improve boys' reading. Teachers and staff know students well and there is mutual respect and good relationships between faculty, staff and students. This means that students feel well supported valued as individuals and know who to turn to with their problems. They enjoy coming to school and find leaders, teachers and staff friendly. The school has good systems to improve student attendance and punctuality. Attendance is improving but remains an area of focus as not all parents support the school's efforts to ensure their children are punctual and attend school regularly.

**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 proficient.**

Leaders, faculty and staff are selected using a range of criteria that meets school and student needs. Teachers and staff support each other well and most are dedicated to meeting the individual needs of students. They are well-versed in the collection of data and many use it effectively to give students specific feedback. However, some teachers are new to teaching or do not understand how important it is to ensure students know how to improve their work and to reach grade levels. While professional development generally meets both the school's goals and the academic requirements of students, it does not always meet the needs of individual teachers and staff. Equally, there are increasing

numbers of students with challenging behavior and not all faculty and staff feel confident to manage these situations.

The principal and assistant principal regularly observe classroom teaching formally and informally. They provide teachers with helpful advice to improve instruction and students' progress but do not always identify strengths in teaching. There are some opportunities for inter-visitations and for teachers to share good practice to improve instruction and students' outcomes, but these are limited. There are a range of collaborative teams that systematically evaluate students' progress and performance and use the outcomes, generally effectively, to revise plans and improvements. The principal is respected for her commitment to the school and the high standards she sets for each student's performance. She effects change from a careful evaluation of data and with the help of cabinet members. Parents feel she is always available to students and is approachable and helpful when they have concerns. The day-to-day organisation of the school is orderly and communications are clear. Interesting displays value students' work and projects. All youth development and support services are aligned to stated academic and personal student goals. Good partnerships with outside bodies support the academic progress of students, for example providing help to improve the health and fitness of students and their families.

**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.**

The principal and cabinet review all school, class, grade, group and individual plans, tests and other assessments to identify how effectively student performance has been raised against stated goals and grade standards. They compare the progress of students within and across groups, classes and grades and take action to secure improvements when necessary. Most teachers monitor students' progress and achievement effectively and compare this with prior performance and expectations to align instruction more closely to student's needs. This is not yet consistent. The principal regularly meets with teachers to check progress and to review students' work. If a student is falling behind, new plans and goals are agreed or diagnostic assessments undertaken and appropriate interventions set up. Most decisions are reached collaboratively and all focus on improving learning. Parents' views are surveyed through questionnaires and inform school goals. In March, the new leadership team will analyse the outcomes and all other school data to monitor the progress and effectiveness of goals in the Comprehensive Education Plan and to set new goals.

There are effective systems for leaders, faculty and staff to consistently monitor the progress and intervention strategies for special education students and to hold discussions with students, parents and all providers. Parents receive regular progress reports related to independent education plans and attend formal meetings with faculty and staff. Those parents involved with the school feel confident to approach the school if they are experiencing problems. The school is effectively led and the constant evaluation of performance helps students to learn effectively. Teachers and staff enjoy working with students and modify student goals and plans when necessary. The school community provides every opportunity for students to perform well.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: Roberto Clemente School (PS 38)</b>	∅	✓	+
<b>Quality Score</b>		X	

<b>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.</b>	∅	✓	+
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"> <li>each student, classroom, grade level,</li> </ul>			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"> <li>ethnic groups, English language learners, special education students*</li> </ul>			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"> <li>all other categories of interest to the school*</li> </ul>			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
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>			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.

<b>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.</b>	∅	✓	+
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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>		X	

<b>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.</b>	Ø	✓	+
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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>		X	
<b>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.</b>	Ø	✓	+
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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>		X	
<b>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.</b>	Ø	✓	+
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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>		X	