



**NYCDOE**

**Quality Review: Final Report**

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



# **Quality Review Report**

**Roberto Clemente School  
Intermediate School 195**

**625 West 133rd Street  
New York  
NY 10027**

**Principal: Aura Rivera**

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

**Reviewer : Jan Lomas**

## 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**

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

Roberto Clemente School, Intermediate School 195, serves 910 students from grade 6 to grade 8.

The percentage of students who are Black is 45.2%, and there are 53.3% who are Hispanic. The remaining small proportions of students are White, 0.8%, and Asian and others, 0.7 %. The percentage of students recently arrived in the country is 8.2% which is similar to City schools, but lower than similar schools. Fourteen percent are special education students, while 17% are English language learners.

Seventy-eight percent of students are known to be eligible for Title 1 funding.

Although attendance has historically been lower than that for City schools, the rate has now risen to 90% which is nearer to the rate for similar schools.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal is well respected and is well supported by her senior colleagues.
- The principal has built a positive culture where many others are eager to contribute, to develop their skills and to continue to grow as professionals.
- The staff team work collaboratively and, with the support of senior colleagues, are developing strategies and approaches which underpin the drive towards school improvement.
- The students are building self-evaluation skills and the capacity to work collaboratively with others.
- Parents are supportive of the school and are being given opportunities to understand students' progress and learning experiences.
- Positive steps forward have been made in using data and its analysis.
- The principal and staff are determined to take the school forward and maximize opportunities for each student.
- Many students enjoy the use of technology in their lessons and this is a developing area of the curriculum.
- The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis.

### What the school needs to improve

- Strengthen all teachers' ability to use data effectively in order to adapt instructional plans to meet the changing needs of all students.
- Build on the capacity of all teachers to use varied of teaching strategies in order to further improve the quality of differentiated instruction.
- Further develop the use of data tools, goals and analysis in order to keep a sharp focus on student progress, particularly that of identified priority groups.
- Continue to improve strategies to engage, motivate and challenge students so that they become actively focused upon their personal achievement and progress.
- Extend the use of qualitative data, such as classroom observation and talking with focus groups, in order to monitor the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning and progress towards key goals.

## Part 3: Main findings

### Overall Evaluation

#### **This is a proficient school.**

Roberto Clemente School is organized into four academies; Latham and Watkins Legal Studies, Performing Arts, Mott Hall and Reuters Business Academy. The different programs seek to interest and engage young people, to raise their aspirations and to focus them upon their own personal achievement. The school's plans and goals recognize the continued need to hone and develop professional practice and differentiated instruction in order to effectively meet the needs and demands of the school population.

The principal is a well-established and highly respected leader who is encouraging the development of staff potential and involvement at all levels in order to meet the school's commitment that all students 'can and will learn'. Her maxim is 'don't be like me, be better than me'. Students know that all staff want the best for them and speak positively about the efforts of their teachers who work collaboratively to support the process of continual school improvement. This collegiate approach to school development is now spreading the understanding and awareness about data and its use across the staff team. Although the principal knows that this is a work in progress, positive and useful steps forward have already been made.

#### **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 proficient.**

The school uses a sufficient range of tools and assessments in order to understand the performance and progress of students on an ongoing basis. These tools include E-lap, Princeton Review reading tests, the Gains report, teacher assessments and formal test results. These create a satisfactory strategic overview by grade, class and subject over time. The structure of team meetings allows for the dissemination of this key information. The principal has also made contact with a similar school in order to share ideas through professional dialogue which allows for comparison beyond the school's own record card. A central focus is to improve teachers' abilities to effectively use data from all sources, including classroom assessments and to ensure that the ownership of data and the overview of performance within the school are better distributed. Whilst proficient overall, there is variability in the collection and use of this data in the classroom and the principal is aware that there is more work to be done. However, teachers are positive about developments and are working well with coaches and school leaders to ensure consistency in approach and to improve the way that data drives instruction.

Special education students are tracked well and are monitored with tools like E-lap which identifies specific objectives that are used to focus planning and instruction. The progress of English language learners is rightly a priority for the school and the results of the New York State English as a Second Language test results have been used carefully to group students. They are then used to differentiate teacher support and instruction. Classroom

observation allows for monitoring of this initiative and specialist English language learner teachers have shared their methodologies with other staff to improve provision for these students. The school examines patterns in performance for different ethnicity and gender groups and follows up issues in classrooms. There is scope to extend and develop the practice of using such data to see if teaching and learning is equally effective for all identified groups. Positive steps have been made to increase the effectiveness of data collection and analysis across the school. The principal is clearly aware that further development will enable the school to focus with increasing precision upon priority areas for improvement in student progress.

**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 Comprehensive Educational Plan is written as a collaborative process. Goals in the plan are usually measurable, focused upon student achievement and rooted in data. Teachers discuss data as part of their ongoing work. They consider strategies and planning helped by coaches and team leaders. Teachers confirmed that this was helping to improve consistency in their collection and use of data and was building a sense of common purpose. The school is aware that continued development is needed to ensure that all teachers use data in an effective and agile way in order to tailor their instruction to the changing needs of students. Teachers identify students whose performance is on the border between one level and another in order to focus their planning to maximize progress. Those students identified as being most ‘at risk’ are given particular attention through the academic intervention services, extended school or Saturday school.

Teachers share data appropriately with students. The use of rubrics helps them to benchmark their work against grade levels and know how to improve. Goals are set for students receiving academic intervention. However, the school does not yet use data to set precise interim targets for all students to assist their motivation and enable teachers to sharply focus their planning and instruction to accelerate progress. The school works hard to involve parents so that they understand more about its work so that they can better support their children’s progress. Parents’ representatives commented that one of the best aspects about the school was the rapport between teachers and parents and that they were kept involved with any issues about individual progress and welfare.

**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 meets the mandated requirements in core areas and a monthly pacing calendar is then adapted by teachers on an ongoing basis. Additional programs such as Accelerated Reading, Wilson, Read 180 and Rewards have been carefully selected to support particular student needs. The four academies and their programs enrich the curriculum, provide links with the outside world and engage students’ interest. One student spoke with enthusiasm about his legal studies and others spoke about interesting

after-school activities such as chess and astro-physics. The use of computers and technology is a developing area which is also popular with students and the iTeachLearn initiative is providing laptops for personal and family use. Budgeting, staffing and scheduling decisions are appropriately made to support the schools' goals and priorities. Teachers are held accountable for improving instruction and student progress. They speak positively about how collaboration is now providing greater consistency in their work. Students enjoy collaborating with each other and generally work well together. However, they are most engaged when the work is well matched to their learning needs and provides appropriate challenge and interest. Strengthening the capacity of all teachers to differentiate effectively and to use a range of instructional strategies is an important focus.

The school is concerned to support the academic and social aspects of students' development and to encourage them to do as well as they can. Students give good examples of motivational strategies they like. One student spoke about the teacher who instills the belief in his class that they 'are a team'. The school continually strives to find ways to encourage all young people to achieve their best, for example, to minimize the number who are reluctant to regularly attend extended day opportunities. This rate has now increased to around 90%. There is an ongoing need for follow through, in order to address residual attendance issues with some individuals and groups such as over-age students.

**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 with well-developed features.**

Staff are appointed through a good interview process which explores the strength of their planning and teaching. There have been significant changes in the staff team in recent years and many of the teachers are in the early stages of their careers. The team is now stabilizing and teachers appreciate the camaraderie that is developing and the supportive supervision they receive. Team meetings underpin a collegiate approach and are a springboard for professional dialogue and joint evaluation. This is supporting more congruence and consistency across departments and the school as a whole.

The school demonstrates its commitment to raising achievement in the core areas of mathematics and English language arts as well as its investment in teachers' development through the use of four coaches. They work closely with teachers to provide guidance and support about planning, instructional strategy and the use of data. Opportunities to observe practice in other classrooms is encouraged and teachers value the feedback from senior staff. Staff appreciate that the principal seeks to develop leadership qualities in others, as reflected in the membership of the extended cabinet. Senior leaders comment that she encourages their professional growth whilst holding them appropriately accountable for their responsibilities.

The principal is well respected by all constituencies in the school and models the commitment and drive towards achievement for all, which she expects from others. One senior leader observed that 'We have a passionate leader who meets us on a personal level so that the professional shines'. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis and parents appreciate timely communications between school and home.

The school has established valuable relationships with a number of outside agencies and organizations in order to support the curriculum and students' personal and academic progress. One example of this is the partnership with Latham and Watkins, a law firm who provide support for the Legal Studies program and opportunities for students to visit the workplace. Another strong example is 'Junior Achievement of NY' who provides mentorship, personal goal development and preparation for entering the world of work, such as the development of interviewing skills.

**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 Comprehensive Educational Plan contains a number of measurable goals, and action plans detail the major tasks needed to achieve these. The use of the plan as a strategic tool is proficient overall, however it does not include timelines to show when these activities will take place nor a key person to oversee each goal. This means that although the plan is revisited and reviewed by the cabinet on an ongoing basis, it is less straightforward to monitor and evaluate progress.

The extended cabinet meets at interim points within the year to consider and compare emerging data and progress towards goals, particularly in English language arts and mathematics which are key priority areas. The school's organizational plan means that accountabilities and responsibilities are clear and the structure of team meetings allows for the dissemination of key issues and information.

An example of the use of qualitative data to check the success of developing initiatives is the discussion that was held between the principal and a group of students about the use of grouping in the classroom as an instructional strategy. This has been a recent focus for staff development and the perceptions and responses of students were used to judge the effectiveness of this approach. Such discussions are a valuable way of evaluating the progress of new initiatives and there is potential for this to be extended as a strategy alongside other qualitative measures, such as focused classroom observation,

Teachers plan together in team meetings and discuss strategies and the outcomes of instruction and assessment. They share issues which need further thought and consideration and bring information about successes to the table, enabling best practice to be spread. The school is aware that strengthening teachers' ability to use data effectively and to translate this into appropriately challenging and differentiated instruction is an area for ongoing development. The collaborative culture which is successfully encouraged is a positive factor enabling the school to move forward towards meeting its goals and aims.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: Roberto Clemente School (IS 195)</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	