



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



# **Quality Review Report**

**Richard R Green High School of Teaching**

**High School 580**

**421 East 88 Street  
New York  
NY 10128**

**Principal: Isabel DiMola**

**Dates of review: February 2 - 5, 2007**

**Reviewer: Jo Storrs**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Richard R. Green High School of Teaching is situated on the Upper East Side of Manhattan with 648 students enrolled from grade 9 through 12. The school population comprises 53% Hispanic, 37% Black, 4% White and 4% Asian. About 2% of the students are English language learners at intermediate or advanced level with Spanish the predominant first language. Nearly 11% are special education students in collaborative team teaching classes. Most students travel from The Bronx or Harlem with very few living in the school's immediate neighborhood.

The school originally served students attracted to a career in teaching but the enrollment widened last year. There is a four-year program for all students with grade 11 and 12 students interested in teaching following specific electives and internships around the City. The school is Title 1 eligible with 79% of students qualifying, which is above the average for similar and City schools. Attendance is 86%; higher than the averages for similar and City schools.

The school is housed in an old elementary school building with small classrooms and lacks an auditorium, gymnasium and music room. These deficiencies are further exacerbated as the school is almost 112% utilized. The principal has been in post for three years and was an assistant principal in the school previously. Retention is good, so many of the teachers have worked in the school for many years.

The school is aligned with the 'Foundation of Excellent School's Century Program' and the New York Opportunities Network to provide incentives and opportunities for students to attend college.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal is highly respected and is uncompromising in her vision that every student can achieve excellence given the right opportunities and encouragement.
- The principal and cabinet work tirelessly with faculty and staff to achieve her very high expectations for the school and each student.
- The principal promotes a culture of reflection, critical evaluation of teaching and learning, and transparency in decision-making.
- Instructional leaders have a good grasp of data and its impact on student performance.
- Excellent academic intervention services improve the performance and progress of students in greatest need.
- Most teaching is good and engages students so they are well motivated and confident.
- Excellent supportive relationships are in place across the school to motivate students to do their best at all times.
- Nearly all teachers are enthusiastic and dedicated to professional development and improving students' performance.
- Teachers and staff know students well, respect them as individuals and provide excellent care for students, particularly those needing extra help.
- Students love the school and are very grateful for the way it has turned their lives around.

### What the school needs to improve

- Improve teachers' understanding of formal data to measure and summarize student outcomes, set specific goals and compare progress across subjects and classes.
- Provide more specific intermediate benchmarks within success criteria in the Comprehensive Education Plan and ensure accountability is explicit.
- Build on best practice to help all teachers to differentiate lessons consistently and provide individual feedback to accelerate learning for all students.
- Provide more opportunities for teachers to plan and share best practice during the school day.
- Further improve students' attendance and punctuality for lessons.
- Persevere with strategies to involve more parents in their children's education.

## Part 3: Main findings

### Overall Evaluation

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

The school was established for students interested in pursuing a career in teaching but enrollment widened last year. The principal does not waver from her vision that every student can achieve excellence given the right opportunities and encouragement. She works untiringly with cabinet, faculty and staff to achieve her very high expectations for the school and each student. Excellent supportive relationships exist across the school. Students love the school and are very grateful for the way it has turned their lives around.

The principal promotes a culture of reflection and critical evaluation of teaching and learning. Decision-making is transparent. Instructional leaders have a good grasp of data and its impact on student performance and are helping departments and teachers to use data more effectively. Leaders and teachers demonstrate a thorough understanding of the curriculum and use assessment conscientiously to identify the needs of students in content areas. Most teachers are eager to develop professionally, to use data more effectively and to trial new approaches to enhance learning. Much of the teaching is good and engages students so that they are well-motivated and confident. Students enjoy learning and life at the school. Teachers and staff know students well and respect them as individuals. They provide excellent care and intervention programs that improve the progress and performance of students, particularly those at risk. Parents involved with the school are delighted with their children's progress. They feel the school 'couldn't do more to help their children'. In spite of the school's significant efforts, many parents do not become 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 proficient.**

Administration has very good systems to collect and analyse all test data for all groups of students and understands its impact on student performance. All available data is interrogated to identify the performance of all groups, including English language learners, special education students, students at risk and the gender imbalance in the upper school. This data and comparisons with the school's prior performance inform annual targets to further improve performance and attendance. Targets and the needs of each student are identified and then shared with departments, faculty and staff and intervention programs are established for students at risk. Consequently, results have improved in Regents examinations over the last four years, the school has achieved adequate yearly progress and the graduation rate is higher than the average for City schools.

There are appropriate systems to collect and use class based assessments across the school and several recent initiatives are improving the performance of some students. For example, many students arrive with low skills in literacy and mathematics. Their skills are assessed, learning needs identified, groupings formulated and very good intervention programs established. Progress is checked regularly, programs adjusted and students re-

tested at the end of grade 9. Students still falling behind enter a very good credit recovery program. Most teachers track a full complement of assessment information against standards to check each student's on-going progress daily, in departmental meetings and with instructional leaders. More formal reviews of data are being put in place at faculty level to measure and summarize student outcomes, set specific goals and compare progress across subjects and classes. The progress of all special education students and English language learners is also reviewed collaboratively between teachers and professional staff to identify successes or align intervention programs. If problems arise, diagnostic tests pinpoint specific obstacles to learning and inform additional support. Students at higher levels are tracked and suitable enrichment and challenges established.

**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 school's focus is to support and develop all students, particularly those most at risk. Decision making is transparent. Using data outcomes, the principal and leadership team collaboratively set school targets and plans in the Comprehensive Education Plan to maximize learning for all students. However, success criteria do not provide specific, intermediate benchmarks to measure student progress regularly and accountability is not explicit. Instructional leaders work tirelessly with departments to translate school targets into goals for each student, group and grade. In some departments, these goals utilize a full range of student data, but this is not consistent across the school. Teachers have high expectations of students and work very hard to meet their needs. Particular attention is given to improving the progress and performance of students at risk including special education students, English language learners and students whose engagement is poor. Intervention teams provide excellent assistance for these students through specific programs for individuals or small groups of students.

The principal does not waver from her high expectations for every student. From the moment they enter the school, parents and students understand the school's expectations for attendance, behavior, performance and homework. Students feel the school pushes them to do the best they can. Parents receive regular information about their children's curriculum and performance and meet regularly with teachers to discuss progress. They feel that communication is very good. They are confident to approach the school with problems and know these will be addressed appropriately. Parents attend events concerning their children but other meetings and workshops are poorly attended and very few are fully involved with their children's learning. Those involved with the school are delighted with their children's progress and feel faculty and staff are very approachable and caring.

**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 with some well developed features.**

The school is very responsive to students' needs. Each department designs stimulating curriculum programs to meet mandatory test requirements and the diverse needs of all students. When the school population widened last year, the curriculum was redesigned to provide a four-year program for all students with teaching electives only in grades 11 and 12. Excellent academic intervention plans and credit recovery options were established for students with low skills and poor engagement. Many of these students are now making good progress, their performance is rising and they are motivated to learn. All these factors are enabling all students to make good progress and the principal is encouraging faculty and staff to be reflective about the curriculum and instruction. Budgeting, resources, staffing and scheduling decisions are based on the schools' plans and the specific needs of individual students. The extended day program and a wealth of clubs and activities meet the academic, cultural and social needs of the school population and support students' interests and learning.

All teachers are held accountable for improving student outcomes. Special education students, students on intervention programs and English language learners are well supported to become effective learners. Walkthroughs and formal monitoring by the principal and assistant principals provide evidence of the impact of new initiatives, instruction and the degree of consistency between classes, grades and academic departments. There is evidence of a high percentage of very good instruction that motivates and engages students. This is however not uniform across the school. Not all teachers use data effectively to differentiate instruction or to provide individual feedback to accelerate learning for all students. Teachers and staff know students well. There is a mutual respect and excellent relationships between leaders, faculty, staff and students. Students feel well supported and know who to turn to with their problems. They love the school, enjoy most lessons and find teachers and staff friendly. There are good systems to improve student attendance, punctuality and behavior but most students travel considerable distances and many parents do not fully support the school's efforts.

**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.**

The school has successfully appointed loyal and effective leaders, faculty and staff using a range of appropriate criteria. They work well together. They are dedicated to the school and have contributed to the school's academic and other successes. Everyone feels well supported, respected and valued by the principal and their colleagues and retention is high. There is an effective learning climate for each student that supports their progress and performance. The principal and assistant principals for instruction regularly observe classroom teaching and provide constructive individual feedback. Professional development meets school goals, for example the current focus on improving writing in global history and social studies. It is used to train faculty and staff to meet the academic, intervention and guidance requirements for the diverse needs of students. Training occurs during departmental and external conferences and meetings, but opportunities for common planning, inter-visitation and curriculum development within the school day have been limited this year. Nearly all teachers and staff are eager to further their training to meet students' needs more closely. A range of collaborative teams consisting of the principal, assistant principals, teachers and staff evaluate their goals, results and personal

performance frankly and honestly. The outcomes are used to revise plans and improvements.

The principal is highly regarded by the whole school community. Her passion for the school, high expectations and her support for each person and student are valued. Faculty, staff and students relate well to her. Students feel she is there for them. She drives change and improvements with sensitivity and rigor. Assistant principals, faculty and staff are also respected and, with the principal, are welcoming to students, parents and visitors. They have high expectations of themselves and their care and commitment to students is impressive. The day-to-day organization of the school is orderly, communication is clear and faculty and staff work very well together. All youth development and support services are aligned to stated academic goals. Excellent partnerships with outside bodies such as those that provide incentives and opportunities for students to attend college, are used effectively to achieve academic goals and to support students in need.

**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 has a very clear picture of the school's strengths and areas for further development. They have high expectations and are determined to provide the best possible education that meets the needs of every student effectively. Every department is responsible for the students enrolled in their programs and conscientiously tracks students' performance. Diagnostic assessments or interventions are introduced when required. Teachers regularly assess students' work against standards and goals and adapt their plans and interventions as necessary. However, not all teachers consistently use data as a monitoring tool. Student self-evaluation is increasing in rigor and is used to inform whole school improvement decisions. Successes are celebrated in a range of ways.

There are effective systems to consistently monitor the progress and intervention strategies for special education students and to hold discussions with students, parents and all providers. Most decisions are reached collaboratively and all focus on improving learning. Administration review school data unceasingly. The leadership team has a full complement of members and in March will monitor the progress and effectiveness of goals in the Comprehensive Education Plan and set new goals to drive improvements. The principal and instructional assistant principals are talented leaders with high expectations for the school, themselves and each student. They are dedicated to helping students make sensible choices so they develop as individuals and good citizens. They are fully committed to monitoring and reviewing school and departmental plans, results and programs and take immediate action to secure improvements when necessary.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: 02M580 Richard R Green High School of Teaching</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>	∅	✓	+
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>	∅	✓	+
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>	∅	✓	+
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	