



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Jackie Robinson School

Public School 015

**121-15 Lucas Street
Queens
NY 11413**

Principal: Antonio K'Tori

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Reviewer: Clive Parsons

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Jackie Robinson School is located in the Springfield Gardens area of southeastern Queens. It serves approximately 450 students in grades kindergarten through 5. Ninety-five percent of students are Black. The remaining 5% of students are Hispanic, Asian or of other ethnic backgrounds. The school has fewer students who have recently arrived in the country than similar schools and schools across the City. Most recent arrivals come from Jamaica, with smaller numbers from Grenada and Guinea-Bissau. The student population is slightly more mobile than in other schools. Attendance is 92.6% which is the same as the average for City-wide schools, but lower than in other similar schools. The school does not receive Title I funding. Special education students account for nearly 9% of the student population and English language learners less than 1%.

The teachers at the school are as qualified as teachers elsewhere in the City, but are less experienced overall. In 2005, significantly fewer teachers had two or more years experience in the school or, indeed, more than five years experience anywhere. Also in that year, teacher absence was high, running at almost twice the average across the City. The principal and the assistant principal are both new appointments to the school for this academic year.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal has made rapid progress in changing the direction of the school so that the whole school community sees it as improving.
- The school is now a calm and orderly place where students generally behave well, are cooperative and engage well in the activities and opportunities offered.
- Systems and structures are being implemented which enable the school to function effectively on a day-to-day basis.
- There is some effective instructional practice where data is used well to differentiate the support and challenge provided to students.
- The principal is steadily building the capacity of the school team to enable sustainable improvement to be made and empowering individuals to take greater responsibility so that teachers feel more guided with a clear direction and purpose.
- The curriculum is being broadened to increase the range of opportunities made available to the students and to increase their engagement and motivation.
- Resources are now being targeted at the areas that have most need and will have greatest impact.
- There is some effective use of diagnostic testing to focus and target student interventions and programs to eliminate the weaknesses identified.
- The principal's high expectations are raising the expectations of the whole school community so that goals established are becoming challenging, but achievable.
- Professional development for all staff is afforded a high priority and is having a positive impact on the effectiveness of the school.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that the data collected is seen to be necessary and is of direct use to staff to enable them to work more effectively.
- Ensure that all staff are more consistently driven by the high expectations and goals established by the principal and fulfill their roles effectively.
- Develop further the teachers' capacity to use the data collected to differentiate their instruction and to target support and challenge more consistently.
- Ensure that the drive to develop greater responsibility in students for their own learning and behavior is successful.
- Use data more systematically to identify issues and concerns as early as possible so that modifications and adaptations can be made to greatest effect.
- Fully support recently introduced programs with resources, professional development and monitoring and evaluation.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school.

The current principal has only been in place since the start of this academic year. Many of the school's community believe that the school was not producing appropriate outcomes for its students. The new principal rapidly evaluated the school, decided on what actions were necessary and started to implement them with urgency and rigor. He is working effectively to ensure that gaps in the school's effectiveness are filled rapidly while at the same time implementing systems and structures that will ensure its longer-term, sustainable improvement. A key part of this is bringing staff, parents and students on board by expecting and then enabling them all to do their best.

There are signs of early actions having a positive impact on many areas of the school's work. More adults are involved in modeling the high quality behaviors and personal communication expected of the students. All agree that the tone of the school has improved as a result, as have the students' attitudes and behavior. This is resulting in greater demonstrations of respect and trust between students and adults. These developments are providing secure foundations on which to establish greater student achievement.

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 collects much data about the academic performance of the students. Diagnostic tests are routinely used to pinpoint the students' strengths and any gaps that they may have in their understanding. Benchmark tests provide consistent and reliable information several times a year. Teacher-made quizzes and unit tests are used to provide immediate feedback on a student's progress. Professional development and collaborative sessions, supported increasingly well by coaches, provide opportunities to discuss samples of students' work and ensure that the teachers' judgments are accurate.

Sometimes teachers feel that data collection is repetitive and that new data does not give them additional insights into the strengths or gaps in the students' understanding or the progress that they are making. Some teachers would also appreciate additional professional development to support them in using the data more effectively. The principal is very concerned to ensure that assessment systems become used ever more efficiently so that the data analysis is focused, meaningful and of direct use to teachers in the classroom.

The data from City and State tests has been evaluated to identify the performance of groups of students within cohorts. The principal is particularly concerned to raise the performance of boys. He is also concerned to identify how close individual students are to the boundaries between different levels. This is to identify how secure that achievement

is, as well as to identify students who have improved their performance but have stayed within a level. Comparisons with other schools, as well as with the school's own past performance, have been instrumental in leading to the school's own evaluation that outcomes for the students have not been high enough. The principal is concerned to ensure that all students, including those performing at the higher levels, are appropriately challenged to maximize their 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 principal's high expectations are clear to all. They are helping to raise the expectations of staff and students so that the goals being formulated are more challenging but remain achievable. The more secure learning environment is supporting the improvement in confidence and the knowledge that greater success is possible. This in turn is helping to develop the culture and climate of the school so that greater success becomes a reality. Discussion between the principal and teachers establishes individual goals and expectations. Staff feel that are now being guided well, and have a clear sense of direction and purpose. Some staff are not yet consistently driven by these high expectations, however, and have yet to fulfill their roles effectively.

Appropriate systems are in place to identify those students in need of academic intervention and then to target resources effectively. This ensures that the goals established for individual students are matched to their needs. There is effective use of diagnostic testing to support this process, as well as to identify strengths and weaknesses in the students' understanding more widely.

Parents recognize the improvements taking place in the school, together with the raising of expectations and goals for the students. They generally feel welcomed now and judge that the school keeps them informed of their child's progress and raises any concerns or issues that might arise in a timely fashion. The school recognizes that there is room for more parental involvement in the life of the school and would welcome, for example, more detailed suggestions about how it could help parents support learning at home more effectively,.

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 being broadened to increase the range of opportunities available to the students. This is helping to increase their interest, motivation and engagement. Students appreciate the range of additional activities that are now being offered, such as playing in the band and going swimming. Many are even looking forward to the additional Saturday and holiday programs that the principal has introduced in order to improve their achievement. The principal has identified that some programs were not being implemented in full or consistently. Teachers acknowledged that shortcomings in resources and professional development have been contributory factors in the past.

Coherence is now being brought to the curriculum and resources are being targeted to ensure that it can be delivered more successfully and more consistently. Growing understanding of where the school needs to make improvements is beginning to influence assignment of staff and scheduling decisions. The principal has recognized the need to ensure that this continues to happen with any new developments planned to ensure that they are implemented successfully right from the start.

The teachers are increasingly held accountable for the quality of their instruction. There is some effective practice, where data is used well to differentiate the support and challenge provided to individual students. This is, however, not yet sufficiently widespread or happening consistently enough to have the required impact on the students' performance and progress.

The students usually behave well and are cooperative in their learning. They generally engage well and are willing to participate in the activities and routines of the class, but they are not yet encouraged to take some responsibility for their own learning. An improved tone around the school is leading to a more demonstrable respect between staff and students. More adults are involved in modeling high quality behaviors and personal communication for the students. The students confirm that there is an adult on the staff to whom they would turn, should a problem or issue arise. Attendance is afforded a high priority, with timely interventions and contact with families made. Perfect attendance is rewarded and recognized through the school's Hall of Fame.

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 principal has not yet been in place for a sufficient time to enable key appointments to be made to the staff. He has, however, ensured that professional development has been afforded a high priority. This is already having a positive impact on the quality of instruction. Teachers are themselves becoming more reflective about their practice and have begun to identify areas for further development, such as using data to focus and direct their instruction more systematically.

The principal quickly evaluated the key barriers in the school that were preventing greater success for students. Direct observation of teaching and learning has been a key feature in understanding the school's strengths and weaknesses. More effective collaborative work, often with the support of a coach, is supporting more reflective practice. The principal has worked quickly to remove as many of the identified barriers as possible, while at the same time establishing structures and systems that will build the capacity of the school over time to ensure sustainable success.

The principal is also ensuring that the school functions effectively on a day-to-day basis and that distractions from learning and from the time available for instruction are minimized. The school is now a calm and orderly place where teachers can teach and students can learn. However, the drive to develop greater responsibility in students for their own learning and behavior has yet to succeed fully. The principal has quickly gained the respect of the school community. He has the capacity to continue to effect sustainable change to the benefit of the 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.

The principal has made rapid progress in changing the direction of the school. The whole school community sees it as an improving school as a result. The principal identified that although the priorities listed in the school's Comprehensive Education Plan were in alignment with his focus for the school, the actions he is now implementing were required before the priorities in the plan could be addressed successfully. He is steadily building the capacity of the school team to enable sustainable improvements to be made. This is in turn empowering individuals to take greater responsibility for their own actions. This has been established on the basis of a rapid but perceptive and accurate analysis of current practice. The evaluation of student performance and progress data has underpinned this analysis, together with direct observation of the school in action.

Now that the school has been stabilized and is moving in a positive direction, the principal recognizes the need to make sure that the data available and being constantly generated is used to identify issues and concerns as early as possible. This is also necessary to ensure that possible modifications and adaptations are made quickly so that they have greatest impact. The principal is also concerned to ensure that resources continue to be targeted to enable this to happen.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The Jackie Robinson School (PS 015)	∅	✓	+
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	