



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Joseph Pulitzer School

Intermediate School 145

**33-34, 80 Street
Queens
NY 11372**

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Joseph Pulitzer Intermediate School has 1982 students from grade 6 through 8. Over 70% of students are Title 1 eligible, which is above the average for similar and City schools. The school student population comprises 84% Hispanic, 10% Asian, 4% Black and 2% White and fewer than a quarter percent American Indian. Forty percent of the students are English language learners and 3% are special education students. The school's roll is stable. Students wear uniform.

Attendance has been at about 93% for several years and is improving slightly, and for this school year currently stands at 94.5%, which is above similar and City school averages. The school is divided into five academies each led by an assistant principal.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Parents strongly support the school and the students thoroughly enjoy the broad ranging education it provides.
- Leadership is strong and together with a highly motivated cabinet and staff, the school has the capacity to continue to improve.
- The school collects a wide range of performance data, which is used to inform planning.
- The program to support English language learners is strong.
- The process of school improvement planning is well developed and results in a clear, useful working document.
- Students in greatest need are supported well.
- Students are actively engaged in their learning and teachers have high expectations for them to succeed.
- Staff recruitment is successful and professional development relevant, valued and of a high quality.
- Attendance systems are effective and attendance high.
- All students and staff know and adhere to the school procedures and policies that help the school to run smoothly.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue to improve the ways in which the cabinet helps teachers to understand the value of data and how best to use it to improve in their teaching and to generate a stronger understanding of students' progress.
- Continue to focus on the identified further improvements needed in teaching to continue to raise students' progress and performance.
- Ensure that school improvement plan includes interim and longer-term goals and points of evaluation.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well-developed school.

This is a very popular oversubscribed school. Standards of achievement are improving and are above those for similar and citywide schools. Students and parents are extremely proud of their school. The students find senior staff and teachers easy to talk with and receive strong support for their learning. The curriculum is much wider than simply meeting the mandated requirements. The program for English language learners is strong. The students attend a very broad range of day and after school programs including science fairs, ballroom dancing, drama, cartooning, band, sports and many educational visits.

Leadership is strong and supported extremely well by an able cabinet and staff that put students' interests and high achievement foremost. The school uses a wide range of data to enhance planning, but is only starting to deepen the staff's understanding of the power of data analysis for school, grade and department planning. The school has successfully restructured into five separate academies that work smoothly and efficiently as part of the larger school. There is good planning at whole school, academy and departmental levels.

Students throughout the school engage actively in their work. The school's approach to teaching focuses on students' active participation in their learning. The students enjoy their lessons and are responsive learners. Teaching is largely good, but the school recognizes that there is still work needed to refine teachers' approaches to differentiation to match work more closely the needs of all students. This is a current professional development theme. Other professional development is relevant, well received and of a high quality.

All students wear school uniform. Attendance is high. The school runs smoothly with staff and students knowing and adhering to the procedures and policies of the school. The students with the greatest needs are known and supported effectively. In view of the leadership qualities and caliber of staff, the school has the capacity to continue to improve.

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.

The school collects a wide range of performance data from diagnostic tests, published tests and self-generated assessments. Students' performance is measured and 'hard' and 'soft' data collected. Analysis of different assessments, such as the New York State test results, occurs at appropriate points through the school year and helps drive instruction.

Through their data records, teachers monitor the students' achievements to assess where individual support is needed, identifying trends in success and plan further teaching of

specific topics. The identified areas are further raised at department and grade meetings, where teachers share their findings and good practice.

The school has a comprehensive understanding of the achievements of all its students. It analyzes the information by ethnicity and looks for trends in achievement. The data are also used to enhance teaching. This process is particularly well developed for the teaching of English language learners and for special education students, where it is used well to provide individual support and improve achievements. A wide range of information and data contribute to the annual goals in the students' individual education plans, but the school does not use interim or short-term goals as effectively to promote better learning.

The school analyzes its data by class and by teacher to show improvements in scores from one year to the next. The senior staff discuss the findings with individuals and within department meetings across academies and within grades. This draws to the attention of teachers the high value of data analysis. It also leads to improvements in teaching and the design of parts of the courses of study. The staff on the school data team recognize that there are still important areas of data interrogation and analysis to tackle. The school uses data widely, but more detailed analysis is required. The school recognizes that its newly introduced program of data analysis for teachers is an essential step to promote better understanding of students' learning and effect further changes in instruction.

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 well developed.

The principal, leaders of each academy, school coaches and lead teachers work well together and gather a great deal of information, from which they plan and set specific goals for each new school year. A staff survey is undertaken, with the outcomes analyzed by academy and informing the debate alongside the evaluations of the previous years' goals.

The cabinet works well. Its experience and knowledge contribute to searching discussions about the different avenues that the school might take on its journey of improvement. The school's Comprehensive Education Plan is a working tool for improvement. Its goals and plans drive everything. It sets out clear strategies, which it further translates into goals for each academy and backs these up with professional development. Academy leaders use these goals with their teachers to ensure there is a full understanding of the priorities for improvement. Most of the goals address outcomes within the school year. It does not set more distant markers as clearly.

The school gives strong attention to those students who are most at risk and in greatest need of improvement. There are several teams and layers of support available to all students through each academy. High levels of collaboration and recording of information point to care and welfare of students as a high priority. The individual education plans for special education students, set annual goals. They do not, however, include shorter-term goals to help teachers monitor progress more closely through the year and to provide more frequent feedback to the students, on the successes that they achieve.

The staff have high expectations of their students. Most students make good use of their School Organizer. The most conscientious use it well to record their weekly and monthly

goals. The teachers and parents communicate frequently to exchange information that helps students to make progress.

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 well developed.

The school offers a broad and interesting curriculum. It meets the mandated requirements and through the subject programs, provides teachers and leaders with a wide range of useful data. The extra-curricular program is extensive, as is the range of visits to support academic studies and social development. The arrangement of five academies further broadens the curriculum because each has a specific focus of study. For example, the recently developed dual language program in the International Academy enables students to work towards bilingual and bi-literate mastery.

The teachers understand their accountability to improve their teaching. Lesson planning is good, but the senior staff recognize that teachers need further professional development to secure good levels of differentiation in every class. The school has an effective policy to ensure that students participate in their learning. As a result, they work well in groups, pairs and individually.

The school uses its budget effectively as evidenced by the wide range of resources, specialist teachers and the broad curriculum. Staffing decisions and scheduling are driven by the needs of the students and the school’s goals. The cabinet works tirelessly to build even more capacity for activities and professional development beyond the school day.

Students thoroughly enjoy their lessons and are engaged and motivated to learn. The teachers know and respect the students. The students’ needs are met well through the academy structure, the advisory sessions and the teachers’ commitment to their academic, personal and social wellbeing. The students are extremely positive about their school and if they have concerns, have adults to whom they willingly turn for support. Attendance is high but even so, is always a high priority.

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

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

Leaders have high expectations of staff. The process for hiring teachers is thorough and secures a detailed understanding of the qualities of each applicant. Prospective teachers must demonstrate that they have high expectations of students, that they are flexible and can show what they can offer beyond their strong subject knowledge. The induction program for new staff school is comprehensive and valued by those staff. Professional development is based firmly on the school’s goals and on issues that arise during the school year. It reflects well the leaders’ understanding of the information and statistical data collected across the school on students’ performance.

The principal and five assistant principals observe teaching frequently. They record their findings in similar ways and give clear commendations and recommendations to teachers.

Information gathered from lesson observations is used to improve teaching with individual staff. Where common issues arise, they are addressed in small groups across the school or within academies. To secure further improvements in teaching, the school builds peer observations and meetings to discuss teaching into its monthly program of professional development.

Subject and academy teams collaborate well and evaluate results thoroughly. They use the information well to plan regular revisions to teaching. The cabinet meets frequently to discuss the findings from other meetings across the school and to consider support or changes in the continued effort to make further improvement. The principal is well respected by staff, students and parents and together with an able cabinet and strong staff has the capacity to improve students' performance still further. The school runs smoothly and students and staff know and follow its procedures. Partnerships with outside bodies and support services are used well to support the school's academic goals.

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 well developed.

The school's goals are regularly re-visited and modified, using the wealth of information accumulated and analyzed by the administration. The cabinet discusses school goals regularly and makes necessary interventions or changes in emphasis to whole or specific school issues. The absence of substantive longer-term goals prevents the school from taking a more closely defined medium to longer-term strategic position.

The different teams, who consider performance and qualities of teaching, contribute also to revisions of plans. The data team, cabinet and subject teams use comparative data astutely. They evaluate the students' performance by class, subject and grade to adjust plans where needed.

The school's goals derive from the evaluation of its successes with previous years' targets, together with findings from additional data analysis. The improvement plan successfully identifies strategies to be used for school improvement. It shows the key areas for professional development and the criteria by which success is to be judged. It is these processes, steered precisely by the cabinet, that drive school improvement.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Joseph Pulitzer School (IS 145)	∅	✓	+
Quality Score			X

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

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

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

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