



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Jordon L Mott School

Community Intermediate School 022

**270 East 167 Street
Bronx
NY 10456**

Principal: Shimon Waronker

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Reviewer: Peter Williman

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Jordon L Mott is a middle school serving 702 students for grades 5 through 8. The student population has 78.3% Hispanic students, 17.4% Black students, 3.6% Asian and other and 0.7% White students. Special education students account for 12.9% of the student population and 37.2% are English language learners. The school receives Title 1 funding for 81.6% of students and this proportion is above that of City and similar schools. Attendance has risen to be in line with that of City schools and above that of similar schools.

A 'turnaround' principal was appointed in 2004 and subsequently the school has introduced an organization of seven mini-schools to develop greater student security, an empowering professional culture and a collaborative school community.

Empowerment schools have more flexibility to make key decisions and control the resources for their school community. Empowerment schools are free to develop or purchase professional development services, choose which schools to affiliate with, and benefit from reduced reporting and paperwork requirements.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal has used data very effectively to underpin his strategy for school improvement.
- The school collects and collates a comprehensive range of appropriate data and as a result is able to review student progress frequently and to compare class performance effectively.
- The principal has an explicit vision and clear capacity to secure the school's further development and communicates this effectively to all partners in the school.
- The principal exercises strong but democratic leadership and demonstrates a good knowledge of the capabilities of both staff and students.
- The innovative development of mini-schools within the larger school has resulted in the significant empowerment of teachers through increased collegiality in decision-making and use of data.
- Good leadership and management have created a secure, orderly and safe environment in order for teaching and learning to begin to impact on achievement.
- The monitoring and promotion of good attendance is a very high priority and as a result the school's statistics have risen above the averages for City and similar schools.
- Good budgetary decisions enable effective professional development, distribution of resources and strengthening of staffing to support students in greatest need.
- School statistics demonstrate the school has greatly enriched its partnership with parents and significantly gained their confidence and support.
- The principal is well supported by the leadership team and the cabinet.

What the school needs to improve

- Consolidate the understanding and competency of all staff to use data effectively to underpin differentiated teaching and learning.
- Complete the creation of the mini-schools and ensure a consistency of quality of educational programs for all students.
- Use the data from City and other assessments to set explicit medium- and long-term measurable goals for individual students, classes and grades.
- Extend the analysis of data to provide a longitudinal overview of student, grade and whole-school progress to identify the value added to learning.
- Identify more explicit success criteria in long-term planning in order to refine judgments of progress of plans.
- Track the achievements of ethnic groups within the school in order to compare progress and inform goal-setting for these groups.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school.

The Jordan L Mott School has progressed through a remarkable journey since the appointment of the current principal in November 2004. From a point of being a dysfunctional, violent and, as one member of staff described it, 'chaotic' school, the principal's strategies, increasingly supported and developed by the leadership and faculty, have created an ordered, secure environment in which most students are effectively engaged in learning and in which there is a 'buzz' from success.

The creation of a mini-school/academy structure has personalized schooling for students in enabling them to identify with an organization and to be provided with a curriculum relevant to their aspirations. This is a strong success story but one which is yet to be fully complete. Data is beginning to be used effectively to guide instruction and raise achievement through the work of the academies. The school recognizes that greater use of data is the next step in its journey to accelerate learning. Attendance is used as a barometer of success and, through careful monitoring and diligent action, has risen significantly. The school has progressed well but has the capacity in the quality of leadership and faculty to maintain and increase the momentum of its development.

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 gathers a wide range of data and uses it well to monitor the progress of individual pupils. The cabinet has worked hard to put systems in place to ensure that data is not only available but regularly communicated to and reviewed by relevant groups. Data is effectively presented in tabulated form to demonstrate and enable clear comparisons of individual student progress, class performance and subject standards in English language arts and mathematics over the year. This data is presented to the administration each quarter of the year although the principal and the mini-school teams meet weekly, ensuring ongoing scrutiny. The data from City, State and appropriate commercial assessments is effectively augmented by teachers' quarterly assessments and observations. Correlation of attendance and reasons for absence or tardiness adds an important dimension in this school to understanding and monitoring progress.

The progress of English language learners and special education students is monitored well, but insufficient analysis is undertaken to clarify performance by ethnic groups. Student achievement data is currently analyzed and reviewed within each of the seven mini-schools/academies, which, in the main, contain a cross-section of grades. As a result, insufficient overview and comparison of student progress grade by grade is undertaken. However, a good start has been made in the current Comprehensive Education Plan to make comparisons of improvement in the overall achievements of the academies explicit through a formula calculation.

Data recording and analysis is as yet not sufficiently developed to enable a longitudinal comparative overview of the pace of progress of individuals and cohorts of students, by which the school may judge the value added to learning through instruction. The interns assigned to the school have undertaken valuable action research to identify and create programs for students failing to make good progress in mathematics, which currently is a specific priority for development. Some comparison of school progress is made with other network schools but this remains informal.

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 history of dysfunction prior to the current principal’s appointment has necessitated that the prime goals have been those of securing safety, order and student attendance in a gang- and graffiti-free environment. The 2006-2007 Comprehensive Education Plan is a foundation on which to scaffold data-driven instruction, but proactive use of data to set goals is a work in progress. Consequently, data is used effectively to monitor student progress and to define goals in terms of those aspects of learning requiring attention. These tasks are collaboratively undertaken through the cabinet and academy team reviews. The school does not as yet set statistically demanding targets against which to measure progress at whole-school, grade and class levels. The formula analysis referred to in the previous section together with a rubric in the current Comprehensive Education Plan is planned to establish a foundation of benchmarks against which to set appropriate targets.

Almost all of the academies use the Princeton Review data appropriately to plan lessons. The academies focus collaboratively on a weekly basis in English language arts and mathematics. There is less evidence that teachers generally and consistently use the data in specific lessons although there is some very good practice. For example, in a mathematics lesson, a weakness in students’ knowledge of equivalence of fractions and decimals was well targeted through hands-on activity, group discussion and teacher conferencing.

The principal consistently conveys an urgency to raise achievement in his contacts with students and parents and this is generally supported by teachers and staff. Students are encouraged to use the school laptop computers effectively, for example, to access the Princeton review data and address their areas for improvement. In the best practice, an academy has explicit contracts stating the expectations held of students, teachers and parents. Rewards and consequences for students sharpen the expectation. Many teachers use conferences with their students to good effect. The school has increased the engagement of parents in the work of the school and there is growing confidence and support from the community.

Each academy has its own focus and culture, whether it is to accommodate the potential of honors students or to meet the needs of bilingual students. As a result, there is a loyalty, aspiration and commitment within almost all mini-schools and by most students and staff to raise achievement. One mini-school has yet to function fully as an integrated academy and this is a challenge to future school development.

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instruction: The school aligns its instructional activity and resources, and student engagement around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.

This area of the school’s work is proficient.

The school generally uses instructional activity and resources effectively to engage students in learning. This is an area of significant improvement in the past two years. Each mini-school is empowered to design their own curriculum within the requirements of State standards. Curriculum maps and adherence to curriculum pacing calendars enable progress to be monitored effectively. Choice, specializations and response to need are offered to students through the curriculum bias of each mini-school towards a specific provision. For example, the Skills, Technology and Results Academy (STARS) and the Dual Language Academy address technology and bi-lingual students respectively.

The principal holds the academies to account effectively through his weekly meetings with them and shares the thinking on planning. The school has a recently-established project to coordinate and integrate the curriculum to address potential issues of equality of opportunity. This is work in progress to increase accountability across the school, so the impact cannot yet be seen. The introduction of the technique of data review using computer projected images has focused group discussion and planning very effectively. Curriculum elements requiring attention are identified well for individual students, groups and classes, but this is not generally translated into comprehensively planned differentiated instruction.

The budget and logistical decisions are directed very effectively to support the implementation of school goals. For example, the staffing of the mathematics and science mini-school has been augmented by seven social and guidance support teachers to address issues of achievement as part of the school’s goal to improve the academic intervention service. The principal’s decisions on staff effectiveness, the needs of the school and subsequently hiring policy are driven by student data. The dean schedules appropriate opportunities for academy teams to plan collaboratively.

Attendance is a very high priority for the school. The cabinet closely scrutinizes detailed recorded data on a daily basis. The principal has appointed a full time attendance teacher and two family workers to make immediate responses and, as a result of the priority, recent attendance has risen significantly to be above the averages for City and similar schools. Students and staff are developing trusting relationships which mean that students know where to go for help if required.

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 instituted a clear policy to engage leaders, faculty and staff who are committed to the principles of collaborative planning, evaluation and data analysis. The principal’s enthusiasm for high standards is infectious. The quality of the administration team and the appointments that have been made to faculty and leadership are strong indices of this policy. The balanced policy of empowerment of staff, set against accountability within encouragement to be aspirant in their careers, ensures high expectations are conveyed and generally met. For example, the dean was promoted from

a subject role of twenty years standing but is now senior principal intern. The principal sets an example by the value he places on his own mentors to raise his game.

Professional development is integral to the routine of the school. The principal's weekly meeting with the academies provides a significant platform to share ideas. The challenge to leaders and faculty to analyze and respond to data are good training opportunities. Planning, evaluation of results and previous actions are scrutinized well by the principal. The close cooperation and team work within the academies is a strength in planning but also enables good opportunities for peer observation as an addition to formal observation by the administration.

The principal knows the capabilities of staff very well through perceptive observation and the frequent contact in cabinet, mini-school and faculty meetings, together with feedback from the leadership team members. He is well respected for his leadership of the school and the positive changes he is making. His openness, receptiveness to ideas and acceptance of his own potential to make mistakes, combined with volubility and infectious humor, ensure he commands support from leadership, faculty, parents and students alike and as a result the school generally runs smoothly. His analysis of the school is of high quality and he is able to communicate this skillfully and often visually. The school support services are effectively focused and together with the after-school program provide reinforcement to raise student achievement. The school is now beginning to strengthen its links with partner organizations by, for example, involving them in the school improvement team and this integrates the school with its community.

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.

Student and school progress is effectively evaluated through monitoring of the Princeton Review and the periodic assessments. The principal has had a long-term vision with interim goals for whole-school development in order to arrive at a position in which the focus is able to be specifically on student data at various levels. The school and instructional environments have been insufficiently secure to enable the realistic setting of statistical goals through which to review the progress of plans until recently, and therefore this aspect is undeveloped.

However, effective analysis of the comparative progress of students and classes is routinely undertaken to measure both the progress of short- and medium-term plans and the effectiveness of interventions. The organization of the school into academies creates problems in making comparisons with similar schools and this is not a developed feature. Information from the Princeton Review and periodic class and academy assessments are used appropriately in most academies to make adjustments to instructional plans in order to continue to raise student achievement. The principal, with the cabinet at whole-school level and with academy teams at mini-school level, reviews and revises plans and the use of resources on an ongoing basis. However, the school recognizes that in the more secure environment, planning may be developed to be more sophisticated and responsive to accelerate the pace of learning.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Jordon L Mott School (CIS 022)	∅	✓	+
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.	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
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.	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	
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.	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	
Overall score for Quality Statement 5		X	