



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Richard R. Green

Junior High School 113

**3710 Barnes Avenue
Bronx
NY 10467**

Principal: Angela Green

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Reviewer: Cheryl Baker

Content of the report

Part 1: The School Context

Information about the school

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well
What the school needs to improve

Part 3: Main Findings

Overall evaluation
How well the school meets New York City's evaluation criteria

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Richard R. Green School (Middle School 113) is a grade 8 school with a population of 503. The enrollment decreased by 658 students compared to the 2005-2006 census due to the phase out the school no longer accepts students in grades 6 and 7.

Hispanic students represent 30% of the population, Blacks represent 65%, Whites and others represent 5% of the population. Five percent of the students are English language learners and 9.5% are special education students. The school is Title I eligible. Student attendance is routinely below 90%.

2005-2006 academic year, the school has been housed in a building divided into four small distinct schools, each occupying a separate floor. Previously, Richard R. Green was one large middle school serving over 2000 students in grades 6 through 8. Serious behavioral issues evidenced by high numbers of suspensions and police incidents led to the decision to restructure the building.

Student performance at levels 3 and 4 on State tests in mathematics decreased from 2003 to 2006 while the percentage at level 1 increased. In English language arts, student performance at levels 3 and 4 increased by four percentage points from 2003 to 2006. Students scoring at level 1 decreased by three percentage points in the same period. The school's scores from 2003 to 2006 ranked below that of similar schools as well as those across the City.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Provides effective administrative leadership that has decreased student behavioral issues and improved the tone of the school, resulting in an atmosphere where it is possible for learning to take place.
- Empowers assistant principals and other school leaders to grow as professionals as they participate in supporting the mission of the school.
- There is an expectation that teachers utilize all of the information available to them to set goals and to plan instruction that is tailored to student's individual learning needs.
- There are mechanisms for monitoring teacher's instruction in order to ensure adherence to expectations for alignment to State standards through regularly administered common formative assessments.
- Holds high expectations for staff to be effective teachers and positive role models for students.
- Capitalizes on the specialized content expertise of administrative staff and coaches to support teachers' professional growth with respect to the tested curricula.
- Partners with local youth development and support services to provide social, emotional, athletic and artistic outlets for children.
- Is straightforward in identifying its successes and needs as a school that is scheduled for closure at the end of the 2006-2007 academic year.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue to raise students, teachers and parents expectations for academic achievement and elevate the urgency of demonstrating proficiency.
- Continue to support and nurture the administrative team in their roles as instructional leaders as well as administrative advisors.
- Set and communicate measurable short and long term goals for academic achievement, measure their attainment through the routine use of objective data and adjust interventions and programs to achieve success.
- Provide training in the analysis of all available data to gain a deeper understanding of the knowledge and performance of all students, classrooms, academic subject areas, ethnic groups and other groups of interest.
- Collaborate with all stakeholders to formulate mechanisms for ensuring that all teachers participate in, and demonstrate mastery of, differentiated instructional techniques especially as related to the delivery of the mandated curricula.
- Continue to work with all stakeholders to increase parental participation and support.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is an undeveloped school, with some proficient features.

The school is led by the principal who was appointed in June 2005, her mandate at that time was to increase safety and to improve the tone and climate of the school as a 'phase-out principal.' School safety reports indicate that the principal has made measurable progress in honoring that mandate and the school is now orderly enough for learning to take place.

Since 2005-2006 the school has reduced the population by one grade per year, beginning with grade six. The administrative and teaching staff has been reduced proportionally. Currently, the principal is supported by two assistant principals, a dean and two coaches who will guide the school in its last year. With student behavior under control, the administration has begun to move quickly to put practices into place that support current New York City Public Schools' initiatives in data-driven decision making and standards-based differentiated instruction.

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.

Prior to the 2006-2007 school year the school did not have specific practices in place with respect to gathering and using data to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor their progress over time. Much work was done to organize and distribute the available data at the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year. Administrators and teachers now keep binders containing all students test scores from the most recent State tests. Teachers are aware of their students' most recent learning levels and relative strengths and weaknesses by strand, but do not yet have information about specific areas of weakness that need attention. The required weekly skills quizzes, instituted this year in mathematics and English language arts, have the potential to provide a deeper level of understanding with respect to individual students. Additionally, the school piloted the use of a reading assessment inventory in September 2006 but results were not complete at the time of the quality review.

School leaders administer the required assessments to special categories of students for the purposes of diagnosis and placement. These and other sources of data for the population at large are not routinely analyzed for differences among ethnic, racial, income, gender or other groups of students.

The school utilizes the Princeton Review and administers the assessment approximately five times per year. Teachers can assess students' scores on-line to gain a deeper understanding of individual student needs however the degree to which this takes place is not consistent in all classes.

The school compares its performance, attendance and incident data with its nearest intermediate and middle schools and the reduction in incidents is a source of pride.

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 undeveloped.

The school as a whole is at the beginning stages of regularly using data to understand each student’s next learning step, setting high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating learning. The school has improved its awareness of students learning levels, identifying those scoring near the threshold score bands, and is aware of the need to increase academic performance during the next test administration. Specific individualized plans for accomplishing these goals have not yet been formulated.

While the process of developing the Comprehensive Education Plan through the collaboration of parents, teachers and school administrators offers the potential to set very public goals for learning, at Middle School 113, the resulting document expresses yearly goals for increasing student achievement in the tested areas but offers no interim measures of progress or clear steps for reaching these goals. Significant parental participation in this process, and in the life of the school, remains a goal. The principals’ annual goals express similar performance targets.

For special populations such as English language learners and special education students, individual plans and interventions are planned by teams of specialists and monitored according to regulations. Four collaborative team teaching classes were created in September 2006 to accommodate the needs of special education students. Instruction of English language learners takes place in a separate classroom. The school has formed an academic intervention team and intends to develop a personal intervention plan for each identified student. Greater participation of teachers in team meetings has been identified as a goal.

Guidance counselors support students in identifying their future goals and high school choices and they assist in the application process. Tutoring for Regents exams is available. Expectations for college attendance are communicated through assemblies celebrating students’ academic and artistic achievements. The school recognizes student achievement through an honor society and schedules higher achieving students into groups for academic acceleration. Parental participation in the life of the school is limited, more often taking the form of responses to student’s behavioral infractions than addressing student’s academic achievement.

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 undeveloped.

Full implementation of the curriculum has been uneven until recently. During the summer of 2006, teachers created an integrated social studies and English language arts pacing guide to improve horizontal alignment of the curricula across the grade. A similar guide

was created for science. Regularity of instruction in mathematics and English language arts is reinforced through the weekly skills tests introduced in September 2006. Concern remains about consistency in literary instruction due to the lack of common novels used across the grade. Beginning in the 2006-2007 school year, teachers have increasingly been expected to differentiate their instruction according to student's identified learning levels although the understanding of this expectation and how to carry it out remains a challenge for most teachers. Instructional groups appear in some classes but activities remain undifferentiated with respect to difficulty, learning style or expectations. Teachers are also expected to incorporate active and engaging learning experiences into their lessons. Some, but not all, teachers are working toward this expectation. Teachers do want their students to achieve at higher levels of performance but are not held personally responsible for improving student outcomes.

To supplement the regular curriculum the school has purchased audio books for students whose reading skills needed support. The school also funds the knowledge project through project arts funds in an effort to expand students' writing skills. As the school has decreased its population, staffing has also decreased. The principal has adjusted the schools staffing to match the needs of the student body within the confines of the teachers' contract. The schools' impending closure has contributed to the loss of some staff who have left for more secure future employment. At present the school is not fully staffed by permanently assigned, appropriately certified teachers in all of the content areas. Scheduling decisions are driven largely by City mandates and available time and space, rather than by the analysis of student data.

Students report feeling supported by teachers and others, including the principal. Those interviewed could readily cite adults who they trusted to provide guidance.

The school tracks attendance using the available on-line tools and communicates the necessity to come to school to students. Student attendance remains below that of schools across the City and that of similar schools. Teacher absenteeism for 2005 was above that of similar and City-wide schools and is presently a particular problem. For the first two months of the 2006-2007 it has not been unusual for more than 20% of the teaching staff to be absent on any given day.

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.

Since she began her tenure in March 2005, the principal has made tremendous strides in bringing order to an institution described as, 'out of control' by students, teachers and district administrators. Her strong leadership, high expectations for student and teacher behavior and genuine caring for her students has transformed the school into a smoothly operating institution where procedures are clear and communicated to all. Having established order, she is communicating her expectations and instituting practices to increase the use of data to understand students' learning needs, formulate plans of action to meet their needs and supporting teachers in tailoring their instruction to address individual student's needs. She has forged strong working relationships with her administrative team and works collaboratively to solve problems. She has earned their respect and that of the students.

Hiring of new staff has been hampered by the phasing out of the school and reassignment of staff has been driven by the need to fill vacancies rather than individual's capacity to analyze and use data.

The focus of professional development for 2006-2007 has been informed by staff surveys which provided information about teachers perceived needs for training in data analysis, differentiated instruction and the effective delivery of the mandated curriculum. Assistant principals and coaches provide training sessions in the tested content areas twice per month during departmentalized common planning time. Most, but not all teachers attend these voluntary sessions. Those that do report gaining helpful and practical techniques that they can incorporate into their instruction.

Self and peer evaluation of instruction is not formally scheduled however some teachers report sharing practices on an informal basis, especially those who are paired to teach science and mathematics or social studies and English language arts.

Supervision and evaluation of teachers takes place according to content area with a designated assistant principal taking primary responsibility for monitoring the instruction of teachers in his or her specialty. The principal and assistant principals make frequent informal classroom visitations and are highly visible in the school.

The school has forged strong bonds with local youth organizations, especially the YMCA, in an effort to provide extracurricular activities that support the social, emotional, physical and creative needs of the student body. These supplement the extended day support required of the school. Increasing student participation in all of these programs remains a goal.

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 undeveloped.

The school has fundamental structures for reporting student progress, such as report cards and parent-teacher conferences. The school does look at the progress of students on State and City tests and has initiated the practice of distributing students State test scores. Action plans resulting from the review of the available data however remain largely aspirational.

The school is aware of the necessity of using information contained in the available data to devise plans with incremental measures of progress aimed at raising student achievement. As yet, the school has not formalized the practice of comparing student progress within and across classrooms. Nor has the school formalized the use of periodic or diagnostic assessments as routine mechanisms for measuring incremental progress and for adjusting instruction for individual students or groups of students.

The potential of the school leadership team with its responsibility to use the Comprehensive Education Plan as a driving force in targeting, measuring, guiding and revising school improvement measures has yet to be achieved.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Richard R. Green School (JHS 113)	∅	✓	+
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		