



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Sports Professions High School

High School 514

**2545 Gunther Avenue
Bronx
NY 10479**

Principal: Janet Gallardo

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Reviewer: David King

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

High School 514 achieved school status in September 2005 and currently has 272 students in grades 9 through 11. The school is temporarily located on a small site in a park, in a series of mobile teaching blocks which currently provides a small, manageable community for students and teachers. They are due to move to a permanent site in September 2008.

The school is located in the northern part of the Bronx but the students are required to travel from the South Bronx in order to attend. Two-thirds of the students are Hispanic and one quarter is Black, with the remainder being White or Asian. Seventy-one percent of the students are male, with 29% female. Special education students comprise 12% of the roll and English language learners a further 11.8%. Both of these figures have doubled with the new intake of freshmen. Sixty-two percent of the students are Title 1 eligible.

The major focus of the school is to prepare students for sports-related professions such as journalism, medicine, management and coaching. The school's name has attracted a large number of applications from boys expecting to play sports, which creates some difficulties given the school's present location. There is a thriving rugby team and many sports-related themes are promoted such as the importance of teamwork and co-operation. The acronym TEAM is publicly displayed 'Together Everyone Achieves More'.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal provides strong leadership and a clear sense of direction.
- There is a pervasive atmosphere of friendliness, warmth and support.
- Students are challenged and given the confidence to achieve their full potential.
- Data is used in a variety of forms to inform and decision-making.
- Realistically challenging goals are set for all students.
- Teachers pay close attention to the needs of special education students and English language learners.
- The leadership team challenges and supports teachers in developing instructional practice.
- The principal provides appropriate capacity by making carefully considered staffing decisions.
- There is an effective professional development program to help staff consider and improve their practice.
- The principal and assistant principal regularly observe teachers and encourage teachers to observe each other.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure students in grade 9 understand what is expected of them and make progress in line with those in grades 10 and 11.
- Use learning objectives to support differentiation in the classroom.
- Use data to monitor the progress and performance of the various ethnic groups.
- Use data to build up a picture of value-added progress from point of entry to graduation.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a well developed school.

This is a new school which is providing a high quality of education for its students and giving students every opportunity to succeed. The culture is very positive and the atmosphere is very welcoming. The principal is a strong leader with a clear vision for the school and her high expectations are conveyed clearly to students, staff and parents. The students are keen to do well and want to learn, the staff are committed to getting the best out of the students and respect the leadership being shown, although there is a small degree of frustration at the limitations of the site.

The principal and assistant principal maintain a high profile around the school and a great deal of formal and informal classroom monitoring is taking place. The staff know the students well and they are very responsive to their needs. Data is used well to support student progress and to implement new schedules where necessary. The self-esteem of the students is constantly being raised and the needs of the lower-achievers are met well.

Parents are very satisfied with the work that is being done and feel confident that issues concerning their children are dealt with promptly.

The major area for improvement is the challenge presented by the current freshmen and the subsequent challenge that a further new intake will present on the restricted site. The principal is fully aware of the issues and is planning ahead.

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 regularly collects data on the performance and progress of each student. Assessments are carried out at regular points during the year and the data produced is analyzed in order to provide intervention and support programs. The principal also makes use of the data to monitor teachers' performance. The school is using a range of data to predict the performance of the June 2008 graduating class and currently around 75% of the class are on track to succeed. For those falling behind there is summer school and extra after-school sessions which are generally well attended. Results for global history are lower than desired so a Regents prep school is being set up. In science, 75% are on track with the main reason for lower than expected achievement being the failure to meet lab requirements. This has now been addressed and all students are getting regular lab sessions.

Data is being used as an accountability tool for high-risk students in need of support and the school has identified those who need to catch up a level. Tracking systems are in place and parents are contacted at the end of assessment periods to talk over concerns.

Staff operate in close proximity to each other so they also engage in regular discussions about student progress.

The school is making comparisons with previous years and noting the impact it is making by analyzing data from the middle schools. It does not yet analyze data according to ethnic and gender groups but has identified the need to do so. Attendance data is used alongside academic data and the school is developing ways to track the progress of its students by analyzing patterns from middle school through into high school. The principal is eager to begin analyzing the value-added aspect of the school's work so that the administration can evaluate the long-term progress of individuals and groups of learners.

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 school is fully aware of the performance of its students and is setting challenging goals for them. One such goal is for each student to achieve ten credits by the end of sophomore year. Procedures for reporting to parents are excellent: they are kept informed of student progress and involved in any interventions where necessary. They understand what the school expects of their children. However, the youngest students have not yet responded to the school's high expectations to the same extent as students in grades 10 and 11.

English language learners are monitored closely with additional reading and in-class support provided to meet their specific needs. Through the effective use of questioning and text analysis, their understanding of English is showing improvement.

There are three marking periods per term and the expected minimum standard is 85% in assessments of this type. Any incidences of students falling behind are followed up with case conferences where all the factors which may have contributed to poor performance are discussed and new schedules and interventions arranged. Teachers hold regular grade level meetings at faculty and across faculty level where data is shared and progress discussed.

The principal and assistant principal also keep up-to-date records of teachers' performance and are constantly reviewing individual, group and whole class 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 well developed.

The school follows the New York standards curriculum and the staff use their discretion over presentation. Instructional practice is predominantly examination driven, although some teachers do try to introduce creativity into their lessons, for example by using technology and incorporating group work into lessons.

Data is used to target student needs and there are regular meetings at grade level, which is assisted by grade teachers' close proximity. This means any dips in progress are

spotted quickly and intervention strategies put in place. The higher-achieving students get the opportunity to do college level courses on Saturdays.

Differentiation of work remains an issue that the principal and assistant principal have identified and they are planning professional development programs to help improve the quality of instruction. These programs are intended to ensure that all teachers plan work that is appropriately challenging to meet the needs of all students in the same class.

The small numbers of enrolled students mean that a committed staff is often stretched in trying to meet the needs of all the students on a limited budget. The availability of technology resources is inconsistent across the school, although there is evidence of technology being used in science and the acquisition of a mobile lab has benefited students. This ensures that all students receive access to lab work in science.

The students enjoy school and learn best where lessons offer a 'hands-on' approach that engages all students. They feel that the teachers prepare well and that they are encouraged to work to their full potential.

Attendance is monitored very closely. Any absences are followed up immediately and there is a good system for contacting parents about any concerns. Because some students live a distance from the school, there is a steady drift of late arrivals into school during the first lesson of the day. Procedures for recording late arrivals are good.

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.

The principal is committed to building a staff which is a mixture of experienced and newer teachers. She has attended hiring fairs and has recruited staff through sharing the school's vision and probing into the backgrounds and interests of potential candidates. She has a hiring committee at the school to reinforce her procedures for selection. All staff are encouraged to observe each other teach and there is a buddy system for new staff to assist them in settling into their new environment.

Professional development programs are driven by the needs of the staff and the school. There are plans for the staff to look at differentiation and strategies for managing grade 9 where there has been some low-level disruption in classes. There is a sustained emphasis on the need for consistency in practice across the school. The staff are eager to receive professional development to support them with 'No Child Left Behind' initiatives.

The principal and assistant principal undertake regular classroom observations and provide detailed feedback to every teacher with praise and a reference to areas for maintenance or development. The goal is to observe all staff at least once a term. Newer teachers are provided with more support. The gap between observation and feedback can be quite lengthy and staff would like to receive the information a little more promptly so that they can begin to address the issues raised.

The principal has a clear view of where the best practice is found and which teachers need additional support. She is well respected by the staff, has high expectations for performance and is approachable. The school runs smoothly and routines are understood by staff and 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 well developed.

The principal and her staff are constantly striving to raise levels of performance to help them achieve the vision for the school. Many decisions are reached collaboratively and always with the needs of the students in mind. Staff have a thorough knowledge of student progress and engage in regular discussions about individuals and groups to make sure that programs and interventions are suited to specific needs.

The principal has implemented a detailed Comprehensive Education Plan. The plan is monitored at regular intervals throughout the year and revised annually. Plans are also revised when new information comes to light and student schedules are being continually re-evaluated.

The school is flexible in its approach to scheduling and learning is organized to respond to the needs of students. This is effective in providing challenge for the higher achievers and support for those in need of extra help.

The school recognizes the need to ensure that grade 9 students fulfill the school's expectations for behavior and effort and make similar rates of progress as students in grades 10 and 11.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Sports Professions High School (HS 514)	∅	✓	+
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