



**NYCDOE**

**Quality Review: Final Report**

# **The New York City Department of Education**



# **Quality Review Report**

**Jeffrey M. Rapport School for Career Development**

**Public School 754  
470 Jackson Avenue  
Bronx  
NY 10455**

**Principal: Ellis Scope**

**Dates of review: April 23 - 25, 2007**

**Reviewer: Louise Kapner**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Public School 754, the Jeffrey M. Rapport School for Career Development, is located in the south Bronx. This twelve month program serves 488 students from grade 7 through grade 12, ages 14 to 21. The main site houses the majority of the program, (36 out of 46 classes). Standardized assessment students attend in multi-graded 12:1:1, or 8:1:1 classes, student to teacher to paraprofessional ratio. Alternate assessment students who are cognitively challenged, are functionally grouped in 12:1:1 or 8:1:1 classes, including three bilingual classes. Students from PS 754 also attend class and participate in one of nine work sites located throughout the Bronx. PS 754 at the Bronx Guild High School is an inclusion class where students are fully integrated into general education with the support of a teacher and paraprofessionals. Forty nine percent of the students are Hispanic, 49% Black, 1% White and 1% Asian. Fifty four students (11%) are English language learners, the overall majority of whom are alternate assessment students. Male students (74%) comprise the greater part of the population.

The school's newly appointed principal joined an intact administrative team at the beginning of January. She, along with their support, is focused on creating a safe environment where all students can learn.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The newly appointed principal has done a remarkable job in three months to put systems in place that have improved the school tone.
- As a result the school is now developing a clear focus on instruction.
- The school recognizes that student attendance is a key element to student achievement.
- Students recognize the improvement in the school and appreciate the safer environment.
- The school is exploring alternative programs to encourage students to attend and engage in learning.
- The assistant principals' work collaboratively to support the efforts of the principal and are committed to creating a safe school where teaching and learning is valued.
- Parents recognize the efforts of the principal and staff and appreciate being included in moving the school forward.
- Teachers are extremely appreciative of the new system for organization and the renewed focus on instruction.
- The work study program is highly individualized and supportive of fragile students.
- Teachers, paraprofessionals and members of the school community demonstrate a dedicated approach when working with students.

### What the school needs to improve

- Develop consistent classroom management and differentiated learning to increase student engagement.
- Continue and expand communication and activities that support parent involvement.
- Continue to address attendance as a high priority.
- Further involve members of the faculty in collecting and interpreting data to inform instruction.
- Share expectations with students so that they become more involved in their learning.
- Develop formats for monitoring student performance and progress.

## Part 3: Main findings

### Overall Evaluation

#### **This is an undeveloped school.**

Since the arrival of the principal in early January of 2007 the school has undergone a remarkable change. The school climate and student behavior has improved significantly and the school is now calmer and more orderly. Teachers are refocusing on instruction and students are in classrooms learning. The school has implemented a behavior modification program, the “5 P’s”, representing present, punctual, prepared, productive and polite. Students who earn high levels of points participate in special activities and are recognized on a ‘Being on Point’ bulletin board in the main hallway. Assistant principals are seen as valued members of the school organization and are part of the decision making. Teachers, many of whom are long standing members of the school community, echoed that, “everyone helps one another” and a parent said, “You can hear a pin drop” when describing the hallways. A student further supported the positive feeling by saying, “Teachers are always there for you,” and during a casual conversation with a student during dismissal he spoke highly of the principal and the positive changes to the school in the recent past.

Data is being effectively used to support these changes to the school environment. However, while some systems are in place and others are being initiated, data collection, analysis, and use for instruction have not impacted sufficiently. The principal and her cabinet recognize these areas for improvement and are proactive in their approach to improving student outcomes.

### **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 undeveloped.**

The school collects a wide range of data, but it is not used consistently to provide an understanding of the school’s or individual student’s performance and progress. There is value in the monitoring of data focusing on reportable incidents using the online occurrence reports and school-wide information system data. A monthly comparison shows a decrease in daily referrals since implementing a school-wide positive behavior support program. Learning walks enables the principal to monitor instruction and student engagement and identify where support is needed. The school uses the high school scheduling and tracking report and, more recently, is accessing the individual student evaluation report from ‘Automate the Schools’ to provide a comprehensive picture of relevant student demographic and instructional data including attendance, test results and credits earned in high school. Teachers update the Brigance twice a year and maintain the data-folios from the New York State alternate assessment and record results on an assessment worksheet. Proficiency level and sub-category results from the New York State English as a second language test is used for identifying specific needs of students. Plans for students in the eight plus program provide assessment data and on-going interventions but similar information for academic intervention services is not available. At

this time the collection of data is not systemic. Teachers do not regularly access and use data to inform instruction. The school needs to develop a system for collection, use, and tracking of data to understand performance and progress of students. Additional instructional programs that will generate student data are being incorporated into academic programs.

Relevant to this student population, the principal is collecting data on over-age students and their progress towards receiving a high school diploma. The school is in the process of looking at alternative ways to support these students. The school is also looking at students who have been successfully placed in competitive jobs. While this information is qualitative it does not allow for comparison of placements year to year as it is not quantitative. The principal is focusing on school specific data and comparing its own student progress. Comparisons with other schools have yet to be made.

**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.**

Teams of administrators and teachers, paraprofessionals and service providers are constantly collaboratively setting behavioral and instructional goals targeting improvement in the school and in student achievement. Staff is committed to supporting these efforts. A good start is with the analysis of data from the online occurrence reports and school-wide information system. The school focused on reportable incidences that met the highest level of infraction. Introducing a preventive approach for positive behavioral interventions there is a significant decline from 10 to one level four infractions from December to March, and three level five to no level five infractions during the same period. Further review of the data indicated that at 10:00 in the morning there was a sharp increase in student referrals. Rescheduling non-core subjects to the afternoon has proven successful to lowering referrals. By evaluating transcripts and credit reports students' classes are being reprogrammed to provide maximum opportunities to graduate with high school diplomas. Currently the school does not have evaluative measures in place to measure the impact of new programming on student performance.

Academic intervention services are supplemental to the regular instructional program and programmed into the student's schedule. A Saturday academy provides further remediation for all students. Teachers work with small groups of students. Currently the school does not have prescribed procedures in place to track interventions of targeted students. A formalized intervention plan needs to be developed to ensure specific student's needs are being addressed.

Most classrooms display expectations for behavior but there is little display of rubrics for instruction or grading. Overall specific expectations for student work or level of achievement is not consistent or routine. One student shared with me that an "X" from one teacher meant "good" and the "X" from another teacher meant "bad." Parents appreciate the efforts of the school and the help they receive in working with their children. One parent recognized the growing independence of her child and shared, "I thought my child would always need help, but not anymore." However, the school's current parent coordinator is not consistent in her out-reach efforts. Further ways to support parental involvement and communication need to be developed.

**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 with proficient features.**

The school uses mainly mandated programs including Ramp Up, Wilson, and Impact mathematics. The English as a second language teacher uses materials that support acquiring phonetics, word attack and reading fluency skills. Functional academic curriculum for exceptional students and Mayer Johnson and teacher-made clip-art symbols support instruction for the most cognitively delayed students. The work study program is highly individualized and supportive of cognitively delayed students assimilating into the community. Read 180 is being incorporated into the curriculum for standardized assessment students. Learning walks are being used by the principal to gain a greater understanding of classroom practices. This enables the identification of strengths and areas for further development in instruction and classroom management. The use of manipulatives, assistive technology when appropriate and project-based learning engage students. A minimal number of unattended students are in the hallway. Teachers acknowledge that recent changes in the school have now created an "environment conducive to instruction" and they feel accountable for supporting students. Teachers themselves use classroom generated student data to determine what needs to be taught, however the curriculum is not used well enough to generate data to differentiate instruction. There was little evidence of leveled libraries or small group instruction.

The school is beginning to look at and use data to support decision making in budgeting, staffing and scheduling. For example alternative credit-bearing programs for over-age students who are at risk of not completing high school are being explored. Staff strengths are capitalized on and the literacy coach at the main site has recently agreed to become the teacher for the inclusion program at an off-site.

Daily data on student attendance is reviewed and shared with the attendance teacher. Students with the highest rate of absenteeism are being identified and dealt with on an individual basis. The principal recognizes the impact that consistent attendance has on achievement. Staff treats students with respect and in most cases this is reciprocated. Picture symbols support communication with non-verbal students. Students regularly meet with service providers but as one student shared, "my counselor saw my face and knew I needed to speak to her."

**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 recognizes the need to have qualified teachers. Many staff members, former school paraprofessionals, have attained certification through the career ladder program and are highly committed to working with fragile students. The principal uses data on the teaching staff to ensure teachers have up-to-date credentials and to align teaching assignments with qualifications. Assistant principals are responsible for formal observations and the principal is now identifying different foci, such as differentiated learning, for each visit. Teachers see the increased emphasis on instruction and welcome the feedback. Both on-site and off-site visitations are encouraged. Teachers appreciate seeing best practices and programs have initiated from one classroom to another. Many

opportunities are provided and teachers are encouraged to participate in professional development. School-based coaches, district coaches, and consultants provide on-site support. Teachers who attend off-site workshops share the information with their colleagues.

Discussions in teams provide venues to address many relevant areas for the school. A 'Work Force Faculty Conference' brought together teachers of alternate assessment students to look at and design appropriate data collection strategies. A weekly positive behavior supports committee addresses needs of students and school. Weekly administrative cabinet meetings and daily conversations keep the administrators well focused. Many systems are too new to have had a significant impact on students' progress but there are many encouraging signs. The principal is highly supportive of all these efforts and is well respected. She clearly communicates procedures and has quickly established an orderly, well-run school across all sites. She has clearly articulated her goals through her own actions. One teacher said, "The first day she came she lifted the shades on the doors."

Outside partnerships are highly supportive of the school's program. Lincoln Hospital not only serves as a work-site for students but has hired many of them into competitive jobs. A local mental health agency provides a pre-General Educational Development program. School-based service providers are highly knowledgeable and assist students and parents with a wide-range of support including mental health, medical and transitional services. The school shares space with Foreign Language Academy of Global Studies High School. The principal is working on establishing a collaborative relationship.

**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 faces many challenges. They are starting to look at and use data to identify needs, set interim goals, and effectively measure progress towards meeting objectives for all students and across all sites. The decline in incidences and referrals is reflective of this effort. The school leadership team meets monthly and the Comprehensive Education Plan will be reviewed and revised to address the identified needs of the school and students'. As of yet, however, hard-data collection and its use is not consistent. Interim comparisons of student progress and the impact of interventions are not readily available. Soft data is being reviewed on a regular basis and used to revise school plans for this year and for next year.

The importance of data in assessing, analyzing progress and supporting planning for next year is recognized by school leaders and is an area for further development.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: J.M. Rapport School for Career Development (PS 754)</b>	Ø	✓	+
<b>Quality Score</b>	X		

<b>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.</b>	Ø	✓	+
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"> <li>• each student, classroom, grade level,</li> </ul>	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"> <li>• ethnic groups, English language learners, special education students*</li> </ul>	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"> <li>• all other categories of interest to the school*</li> </ul>		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		
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>	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.

<b>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.</b>	Ø	✓	+
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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>	X		

<b>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.</b>	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
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>	<b>X</b>		
<b>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.</b>	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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>		<b>X</b>	
<b>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.</b>	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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>	<b>X</b>		