



**NYCDOE**

**Quality Review: Final Report**

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



# **Quality Review Report**

**The Jesse Owens School**

**PS026**

**1041 Lafayette Avenue  
Brooklyn  
NY 11221**

**Principal: Michele Ashley**

**Dates of review: February 13 - 14, 2008**

**Lead Reviewer: Jan Warner**

## **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**

Progress made since the last review  
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

Jesse Owens is an elementary school with 389 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 76% Black, 19% Hispanic, 2% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 4% English language learners and 8% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 91.9%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 100% eligibility.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- Staff make good use of data from internal tests and standardized assessments to gain a comprehensive picture of student achievement and progress.
- Teachers' planning is effective and consistent because of the teamwork and time devoted to it.
- Data is often used well to differentiate the support and challenge provided to students.
- Students work co-operatively and help each other with their learning.
- The principal promotes student achievement through an extensive range of excellent resources and imaginative staffing and scheduling decisions.
- High levels of professionalism in the school ensure that the learning environment is positive, safe and inclusive and that students learn well.
- Good systems and structures enable the school to function smoothly on a day-to-day basis.
- Teachers and faculty make good use of the information from periodic assessments to revise plans and modify practices to improve student outcomes.
- Students and parents appreciate the positive relationships they have with the teachers and administration, which promote high levels of trust and respect.
- The principal's quiet, yet purposeful leadership has earned her the respect of the whole school community ensuring that all share her high expectations.

### What the school needs to improve

- Continue work to ensure that all students and their parents understand individual goals for making improvement.
- Develop ways of sharing whole-school goals with all members of the school community.
- Further develop links with outside agencies to continue to broaden curricular opportunities for all students.
- Formalize a system of inter-class visitations across the school.

## Part 3: Main Findings

### **Progress made since the last review**

The school has made good progress in addressing the issues identified in the previous Quality Review report.

### **Overall Evaluation**

#### **This school is well developed.**

On entering the school, its high expectations and caring ethos are immediately evident. From the well-presented banners in the corridors to the displays of students' work and achievements, the signals are clear. The school functions smoothly and very efficiently and provides a positive and vibrant learning environment. The principal's vision, concern and quiet dedication to help every student succeed underpin the school's success. As a result the school has been given credit for closing the achievement gap for black students in the lowest third achievement levels, in both English language arts and math.

Students enjoy coming to school, work co-operatively and often help each other. They benefit from the safe and inclusive environment and are motivated by the active teaching strategies used. Positive relationships throughout the community ensure that respect and trust are built up between parents, students and all the staff. Teachers plan and work very well together in order to meet the needs of the students. They share good practice but do not always utilize the informal offers made to visit each other's classes. They use data effectively to inform instruction and use assessments to revise plans to modify practices to improve student outcomes. Monitoring is rigorous and timely and leads to improved planning, goal-setting and intervention. Student progress is constantly under review and the school is always seeking new ways to be even more successful. Students are beginning to understand their individual goals but this practice is yet to be fully embedded across the whole school. Whole-school goals are well established but are not communicated effectively to all parents.

The school has met all the recommendations of the last review. Data is now analyzed in all subjects and is used more effectively to improve instruction so that it matches the needs of all students. Teachers are given more consistently constructive feedback following classroom observations. Parent attendance at meetings and other events has improved. The school's inquiry team meets regularly and is well established. It has identified a specific low-achieving focus group, researched their exact needs and is proactively improving the programs and achievements of these students.

### **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 the student's progress over time.**

**This area of the school's work is well developed.**

The wealth of valuable data collected by the school provides staff with a thorough understanding of the progress and achievement of every student, class and grade. School leaders and staff are constantly updated by the thorough analysis of external tests, internal assessments and running records. This provides teachers and academic intervention services with an accurate understanding of each student's progress and achievement. It also pinpoints any gender or ethnic differences and the specific needs of special education students and English language learners. Comparisons are undertaken to ensure all groups of students and grades are making year-on-year improvements and the school is performing favorably within its group of similar schools. Leaders and most teachers use data effectively but the principal has recognized the need to continue to provide training in ARIS and Acuity so that all teachers are able to access the data and manipulate it independently.

Baseline assessments are used to plan instruction and all pertinent attendance, achievement and intervention data follows each child from one grade to another. Projections are used to identify the specific expected progress of every student and their progress is carefully monitored. The home language inventory is used to identify those whose parents speak another language at home. All students with language difficulties, whether they are identified as English language learners or not, are provided with extra help after school from kindergarten onwards. This early start gives these students a good basis on which to build language acquisition as they progress through the school.

**Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use data to understand each student's next learning steps and to set suitably high goals for accelerating each student's learning.**

**This area of the school's work is well developed.**

There is high level of collaboration across the school. School leaders feed relevant data to teachers and intervention staff about individual students, classes, grades and subjects. The valuable formal discussions with coaches and all advisory and instructional staff that take place give a clear understanding of every student and enable challenging goals and plans to be set that closely meet the students' needs. Students are beginning to share in the goal setting process but are not, as yet, fully competent in setting targets for themselves. The principal uses her highly effective "Daily Bulletin" to keep promoting whole school goals amongst all staff but has yet to find an equally successful way to communicate these goals to parents. Carefully constructed schedules ensure that common planning time for teachers and intervention staff support class-based learning. The principal has increased the number of academic intervention staff to enable cluster teachers to provide support during extended literacy lessons scheduled in the morning. Coaches also support class teachers in English language arts and math to ensure that all the students' needs are met. The school's inquiry team has played a key role in providing additional information to staff to aid planning and goal setting. For example, the team provides practical strategies to improve student performance in math, including creating a girls only group to address differences in test scores.

The academic intervention teachers are now re-focusing their support and are using the Pre-referral Intervention Manual provided to all grade leaders and intervention staff, to assist them further in pinpointing specific strategies to meet individual needs.

A special feature of the school is the high achievement expected across the school. This originates from the principal's quiet, yet determined, focus on high expectations.

Staff, parents and students strongly support this culture. One student said that the principal is always reminding them that they can “change the world” if they really want to. These high expectations are evident across every aspect of the school and noticeably increase student learning and achievement. Examples include performance in math competitions in the higher grades that are celebrated across the school, the displays which highlight students’ achievements and the well-ordered environment throughout the building. The parents respect the principal’s leadership style and appreciate the school’s open-door policy. Parental involvement has improved as a result of the introduction of a variety of initiatives including a retreat for parents, invitations to more student performances, curriculum newsletters, more flexible meeting times and rewards ceremonies for student attendance. The greatest success has come from the use of a parent communication folder, which allows two-way communication and has been particularly useful for the parents of younger students.

**Quality Statement 3 – Align Instructional Strategy to Goals: The school aligns its academic work, strategic decisions and resources, and effectively engages students around its plans and goals for accelerating student learning.**

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

Alongside the mandated curriculum, extra provision during the school day, after school and on Saturdays fills any gaps. The students appreciate the wide choice of enrichment activities on offer during the school day. These include visual arts, dance, ballet, instrumental and vocal music, sports and science. Chess is taught across grades two to five and students enjoy taking part in competitions. However, not all of these activities are open to all students.

Teachers are highly professional and recognize their accountability to the students. They ensure that teaching is challenging and interesting in a calm and productive learning environment. Differentiated group work and active learning techniques are used to respond to the different learning styles of students. Teachers and coaches use item analysis from Acuity to ensure that skill gaps are addressed. Teaching is differentiated for both high and low level learners. Data is used flexibly to group students according to their needs. Some students are moved to higher grades for some of their instruction to ensure that they are fully challenged. The excellent relationships between teachers and students ensure that there are high levels of mutual trust and respect across the school. A parent described the respect she has for the “firm, gentleness” modeled by the principal. The principal makes scheduling and budgeting decisions in line with students needs, for example, by incorporating the 37.5 minutes extra tuition into the school day to ensure all students benefit. The provision of a further well-equipped science lab means that all age groups can have full access to specialized science instruction. Attendance figures continue to rise due to the hard work of family workers and the guidance counselor, as well as the use of incentives.

**Quality Statement 4 - Align Capacity Building to Goals: The development of leadership, teachers and other staff capacity is aligned to the school’s collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.**

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

The administration makes regular formal and informal classroom observations to gain a constantly updated view of teaching and learning in school. A checklist is used to give a focus to weekly walkthroughs and ensure that constructive feedback is provided in a structured way. Checklists are also used to inform the planning of differentiated professional development. The coaches use lab sites regularly to provide examples of good practice and a recent association with another school is providing some inter-school collaboration. All staff work collaboratively to plan and share ideas but do not visit each other's classrooms on a regular basis to broaden their experiences still further. New teachers attest to the fact that they feel fully supported by the effective use of mentors, as well as all other teachers, who make them feel "part of the team".

The theme of team work and co-operation permeates throughout the school and is a focus of advisory teaching. As a result, students work together well and show a caring attitude. The principal's decision to employ a full-time counselor has helped the school to fully meet the emotional and personal needs of the students. There are well-developed structures and systems in place to ensure that discipline matters are addressed efficiently. All the students know the class and school rules and, as a result, behave well and work hard. They feel valued and are consulted about issues such as which extra-curricular activities they would like the school to provide. Although the school has developed links with a variety of outside organizations such as City Lore, The Metropolitan Opera Guild, Urban Voices and Chess in Schools, the principal is rightly seeking to develop the range even further to benefit more students across the school.

**Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.**

**This area of the school's work is well developed.**

Planning, goal setting and on-going monitoring procedures are closely linked and enable the school to measure its success and adjust programs when required. School goals are driven by data and student achievements and are regularly evaluated against predictions using periodic and interim assessments. For example, reading benchmarks and on-demand pieces of writing, with an agreed rubric, are used to monitor progress four times a year and inform future targets. The staff use item analysis and identify patterns of achievement across grades to help them set realistic short-term goals which, improve student progress. Regular cross-grade meetings are also used to ensure the curriculum is aligned effectively. For this reason, the staff has recently adopted a new social studies curriculum to ensure a good flow of knowledge across the grades. As a result they are now able to monitor progress more effectively through the use of a common assessment tool. Teachers use all this information to find out the success of their instruction and to revise plans accordingly. All decisions and modifications to plans and goals are data led and made for the benefit of the students. The thorough monitoring procedures in place and the principal's exceptional drive and determination ensure that the whole school is on track to achieve the vision of raising student achievement.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: The Jesse Owens School</b>	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
<b>Quality Score</b>				X	

### Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather and generate data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor the students progress over time.

To what extent do school leaders and faculty provide . . .	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
1.1 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of each student, classroom, grade level?				X	
1.2 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of special education students?				X	
1.3 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of English language learners?				X	
1.4 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of ethnic groups, gender groups and all other categories of interest to the school?				X	
1.5 a measurement of performance and progress based on the school's own past performance, and among students, classrooms, grades and subject areas?				X	
1.6 a measurement of performance and progress based on comparisons with similar schools?				X	
1.7 training, management systems and structures that support teachers in the use of school data to inform planning and instruction and to track the progress of students?			X		
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>				X	

### Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use data to understand each student's next learning steps and to set suitably high goals for accelerating each students learning.

To what extent do school leaders and faculty . . .	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
2.1 engage in collaborative processes to set rigorous, objectively measurable goals for improvement, and to develop plans and timeframes for reaching those goals?				X	
2.2 focus 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 identify and improve the performance and progress of those students in greatest need of improvement?				X	
2.4 share whole school goals with all members of the school community to rigorously improve the performance and progress of students?			X		
2.5 convey consistently high expectations to students and their parents/caregivers?				X	
2.6 regularly provide students and their parents/caregivers with information about the goals set for each student, and about each student's progress and performance, and how they can improve?				X	
2.7 invite and enable parents/caregivers to provide useful information to teachers and the school about the learning needs and capacities of their children?				X	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>				X	

### Quality Statement 3 – Align Instructional Strategy to Goals: The school aligns its academic work, strategic decisions and resources, and effectively engages students around its plans and goals for accelerating student learning.

To what extent does the school . . .	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
3.1 select core curricular approaches that facilitate and provide meaningful interim data about progress towards goals and focus on raising the achievement of students?				X	
3.2 provide a broad and engaging curriculum, including the arts, to enhance learning both within and outside the school day?			X		
3.3 hold teachers accountable for the progress and learning of the students in their charge, for making instruction interesting and compelling, and for creating a positive safe and inclusive learning environment?				X	
3.4 ensure that teachers use school, class and student data to plan for and provide differentiated instruction that meets the specific needs of all the students in their charge?				X	
3.5 make budgeting, staffing and scheduling decisions strategically, based on data, to meet the school's academic goals for all students?				X	
3.6 ensure that there is an environment of mutual trust and respect between all staff and students to support personal and academic development?				X	
3.7 ensure that there are effective and consistently applied procedures to encourage and monitor student attendance and tardiness?				X	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>				X	

<b>Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building to Goals: The development of leadership, teachers and other staff capacity is aligned to the school’s collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.</b>					
<b>To what extent does the school . . .</b>	<b>Δ</b>	<b>➤</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>◇</b>
4.1 use frequent observations of classroom teaching by the principal and other available information to develop a differentiated strategy for improving the quality of each teacher’s instruction?				X	
4.2 make professional development decisions strategically, based on data, to help meet the improvement goals of students and teachers?				X	
4.3 provide frequent opportunities for teachers to observe each other’s classroom instruction and to meet together in teams to plan, share effective practices, and evaluate one another’s instruction in an open and reflective professional environment?			X		
4.4 develop effective procedures for the induction and support of teachers who are new to the profession or the school?				X	
4.5 align youth development, guidance/advising and other student support services around stated academic and personal development goals?				X	
4.6 consistently implement clear procedures that enable the school to run smoothly and encourage effective student learning, and effectively address discipline related incidents?				X	
4.7 create effective partnerships with outside entities that support the academic and personal growth of the students?			X		
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>				X	

<b>Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for evaluating each student’s progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.</b>					
<b>To what extent do . . .</b>	<b>Δ</b>	<b>➤</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>◇</b>
5.1 the school’s plans for improving student outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?				X	
5.2 the school’s plans for improving teacher outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?				X	
5.3 teachers and faculty use periodic assessments and other diagnostic tools to measure the effectiveness of plans and interventions for individual and groups of students in key areas?				X	
5.4 teachers and faculty use the information generated by periodic assessments and other progress measures and comparisons to revise plans immediately in order to reach stated goals?				X	
5.5 school leaders track the outcomes of periodic assessments and other diagnostic measures and use the results to makes strategic decisions to modify practices to improve student outcomes?				X	
5.6 school leaders and staff use each plan’s interim and final outcomes to drive the next stage of goal setting and improvement planning?				X	
5.7 the principal and school community have a clear vision for the future development of the school and implement procedures and systems to effect change?					X
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>				X	

◇	<b>Outstanding</b>
+	<b>Well Developed</b>
✓	<b>Proficient</b>
➤	<b>Underdeveloped with Proficient Features</b>
Δ	<b>Underdeveloped</b>