



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Progress High School for Professional Careers

High School 474

**850 Grand Street
Brooklyn
NY 11211**

Principal: William Jusino

Dates of review: May 19 - 21, 2008

Lead Reviewer: Corinne Brown

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Progress High School for Professional Careers is a high school with 989 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 33.4% Black, 64% Hispanic, 1.3% White, 0.7% American Indian and 0.5% Asian students. The student body includes 14.4% English language learners and 11.6% special education students. Boys account for 44% of the students enrolled and girls account for 56%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 82.7%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 80.6% eligibility.

Special education students are served in 19 collaborative team teaching classes that operate across all disciplines. English language learner students receive targeted instruction at their language acquisition level in 10 bi-lingual classes across all disciplines, 12 English as a second language classes and two transition classes for those with advanced proficiency.

The Grand Street campus comprises this school and its sister high schools, The School for Legal Studies and The Business, Enterprise and Technology High School. They share facilities and events, such as a science and technology fair, broadcasts from the Metropolitan Opera House, a state of the art auditorium and extensive sports facilities. These include an athletics track, several tennis courts, team pitches and gymnasias. The "Learning for Young Families Through Education" (LYFE) center provides day care for pre-school children of students who attend the school. Students also have access to free medical and dental care on site. The wider community participates in events and uses campus facilities.

The principal opened the campus schools in 1995, along with principals for the other two schools, to rejuvenate education at the site and promote community involvement. Central to this ongoing effort is the integral partnership with the Puerto Rican Organization for Growth, Research, Education and Self-Sufficiency (PROGRESS) Inc., a not-for-profit organization that promotes cultural and community identity, harmony and development.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The community culture of respect, cooperation and trust reflects the principal's strong leadership and warm relationships with all stakeholders.
- The school uses data wisely at all levels to inform decision-making, drive instruction and seek continual improvement.
- Dedicated teachers work hard to engage students with interesting lessons in organized, stimulating classrooms that celebrate student success.
- The school offers a wide curriculum, including specialized programs, arts and sports.
- Students benefit from valuable partnerships that enrich the curriculum and embrace the wider community.
- This safe and caring school supports students' social, emotional and academic development well, which parents appreciate.
- The collegial staff are loyal, mutually supportive and welcoming to new teachers, with all benefitting from a wide range of professional development opportunities.
- Early identification and timely interventions mean students in need make good progress.
- The school strives to involve parents and the community in the learning partnership through effective communication and inclusive events.
- The administration leads the staff well within a comprehensive goal-setting cycle geared toward improving student outcomes.

What the school needs to improve

- Further develop and synthesize data collection so that all staff input and access information on students at a single point.
- Make certain that all written feedback to students indicates clear next steps for improvement.
- Ensure that all lessons offer suitable challenge to each student through varied tasks, questioning and homework.
- Intensify collaborative efforts to increase and maintain student attendance and decrease tardiness.
- Formalize measurement of progress toward goals, based on data analysis, by including quantifiable interim checkpoints.

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.

Progress High School epitomizes an inclusive approach, stressing responsibility and promoting cooperative learning. The school is an integral resource in the community, which uses its facilities well. One parent reflected that the school, “instills hope in the community,” and is “a safe haven.” The three campus schools cooperate and share facilities harmoniously. Cross-school events, such as the science and technology fair, showcase student efforts and draw in the community. Opera broadcasts and other events widen community horizons.

Respectful relationships and evident trust underpin collaborative efforts by all stakeholders to improve student outcomes. The school’s use of data is systematic and effectively supports decision-making. All staff maintain carefully detailed records to understand student progress, although not in a single time-efficient system. Cooperative goal setting at all levels results from transparency of information. The school monitors goals regularly, but not with adequate specificity to enable immediate response if required. It readily identifies individuals and groups who require additional support and so targets effective interventions. Teachers are loyal and enthusiastically engage students in the wide curriculum. Lessons interest and encourage students in their responsibility as learners, but do not consistently offer enough individual challenge. Teachers are supportive, but written feedback to students does not always indicate clear next steps for improvement. Comprehensive development programs extend teachers professional growth, whatever their experience. Students and families benefit from excellent communication and support as well as enriching cultural and sports opportunities. The school culture and programs attract good student application numbers and promote low dropout rates. However, current procedures to raise attendance rates are not as effective as they might be.

The school’s immediate response to the areas identified in the previous Quality Review continues to be significant and effective. It understands better how to articulate the good daily work in each classroom and meeting. The inquiry team reflects the school’s systematic use of data and effective teamwork. The team represents each discipline so clearly articulates its findings with all staff. Focusing on reading comprehension skills within grade 9 students, the team identified its target group of 20 students through analysis of data noting common deficiencies. Data shows acceleration of skill acquisition overall through using specific strategies. The team works well and meetings define clear next steps.

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 proficient.

The school collects a wide-ranging array of varied data and so clearly understands student and group performance and progress. Termly monitoring encompasses baseline assessments, diagnostic and interim assessments. Six report cards per year formally summarize individual achievement and enable frequent comparison of progress. Within classrooms, students maintain folders of their work and teachers keep careful note of grades, conference notes, survey results on multiple intelligences and running records. Teachers have a comprehensive ongoing picture of student progress. Their data shows clear attention to the performance of subgroups, English language learners' and special education students' needs. Reviews of scholarship data each marking period inform interventions and discussions with teachers. Administration maintains a tight overview of performance, so teachers complete pass/fail justification reports. Assistant principals identify patterns in subgroups, subjects, grades, and classes relative to their responsibilities. In this way, they carefully monitor the progress of special needs students and English language learners. There is an upward trend for special education student achievement and English language learners make exemplary proficiency gains. The school interrogates all available data and generates its own, checking accountability, attendance and suspension data. It notes trends over time, so compares attendance data over a ten-year period with other schools. The school evaluates discipline, scholarship and other data within the campus and across its network and peer schools to validate its performance and share best practices.

Teachers maintain records within classrooms in uniform binders, introduced this year, so developing more consistency in ongoing practice. Not all teachers use the valuable "Snap Grade" program, so do not have a clear ongoing, overview through ownership. Administration currently provides hard copy of aggregate and disaggregated data.

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.

The school uses the data it gathers to set relevant goals at all levels. The Comprehensive Education Plan and principal's performance review align with goals set across the school. Relevant stakeholders, such as the school leadership team, collaborate effectively and so ensure that goals focus on long- and short-term objectives. Students and guidance counselors devise students' learning paths. Department meetings set overarching goals for content areas, which teachers take to class or unit level. Rubrics for work are clear and written in student-friendly language. At the classroom level, teachers and students do not rigorously monitor overall goals as generally they lack specificity. Similarly, written grading of student work does not consistently include next steps for improvement.

The school readily identifies students and targets groups who require particular support through skilled use of data. Minimal holdovers result from timely interventions. The focus on grade 9 incoming students, with summer programs and cohesive literacy intensive support, means that students show good academic gains. The school requires parental participation and strives to engage this through frequent communication. Parents value the safety, support, open access and ongoing interaction with staff that enables students to succeed. One parent commented, "They're there for us all the time." The school makes high expectations for learning and behavior explicit through comprehensive outreach. As such, it enjoys a positive community profile, with students as proud members of the national honor roll society.

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.

The standards-based curriculum contains embedded assessments. The workshop model and balanced literacy provide apposite structure that engages students overall. Students are attracted by advanced placement and specialized programs that enhance the wide curriculum. Internships develop skills through pre-med, business and pre-teaching courses. The college advisory program and electives encourage students' responsibility and raise their aspirations. The school offers a full program of credit recovery, Regents' preparation and tutoring to support individual achievement. Students benefit from extensive sports, arts and other opportunities such as band, wrestling and dance. As a result, students' results continue to improve.

Teachers hold themselves fully accountable for student progress. The administration methodically reviews teachers' results and data use. Stimulating classrooms and hallways celebrate student success and teachers generally engage students through interesting lessons. The best lessons address students' need and learning styles with suitable challenge. As this is inconsistent, students do not always make the progress of which they are capable. Careful budget management, scheduling and staffing supports learning effectively. Technology motivates students and enhanced literacy provision for English language learners means that they make excellent progress. Positive interpersonal relationships characterize all interactions in the school and reflect the community culture of cooperation. The principal sets the respectful tone in the building and his consultative style gives voice to students through the student government. Students value the school's trust shown through lack of scanning. Student attendance, averaging 82.8% to April this year, shows a slow upward trend. The school wishes to improve and maintain this through rigorous collaborative effort by all staff.

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 has an excellent understanding of teachers' strengths through frequent observations and snapshots using clear rubrics. It supportively builds their

professional capacity through surveys, individualized plans and good professional development opportunities. Exposure to areas outside their responsibility develops leadership and empowers staff and administration. The United Federation of Teachers center provides useful assistance, as well as coaches and external courses, which teachers turnkey to others. Comprehensive support encourages and promotes growth for all staff, including those new to the school or profession. The mutually supportive staff welcome new teachers, informally network and so support effective formal mentoring programs. Peer assessment is growing. Staff retreats and whole school strategic training enhances staff skills that show benefit in the classroom.

Students develop holistically because of the comprehensive school focus on academic, social and emotional growth. Guidance counselors work seamlessly with staff to ensure exchange of relevant information and systematic support. External agencies and support services, like the Leadership Program and Living through the Young Family Education (LYFE) center, enhance student wellbeing and achievement. The school enjoys extensive support from partnerships with PROGRESS Inc., universities, colleges and health providers that enrich the curriculum and motivate students. The school generally runs smoothly because of the positive, respectful culture and clear boundaries. Students identify with the school aims and expectations, with sports and other activities giving outlets for their talents and energies. A successful peer mediation program contributes to the marked decrease in principal suspensions since last year, although a few students present challenges at times.

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.

The school engages in a clear planning cycle that references data at all points. Although it regularly monitors goals, it does not formally measure progress toward the goals through using quantifiable interim checkpoints based on data. Staff track student progress through the mid-term and final exams and assessments and so evaluate the impact of instruction and interventions. Teachers identified English skill sets development as a requirement in grade 9 to good effect. Staff adjusted instruction and recording immediately to encompass greater student use of graphic organizers and laptops. The school changed collaborative team teaching staff mid-year as a result of data analysis. It tracks results from marking periods, identifies areas of concern, and successfully addresses them. Strategic decisions to focus on incoming freshmen through summer programs and intake assessments are showing dramatic positive impact. This reflects the school's good use of data and experience in future planning.

The school's comprehensive cycle of review, revision and planning involves all stakeholders at appropriate levels. The cohesive administration mirror the community's proactive desire to improve student outcomes further. They share the clear long-term school vision to successfully prepare students for college and excel in meeting individual students needs through while embracing technological advances.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Progress High School for Professional Careers	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
Quality Score				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		
Overall score for Quality Statement 1			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 demanding, 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	
Overall score for Quality Statement 2				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?			X		
Overall score for Quality Statement 3				X	

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.					
To what extent does the school . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
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?			X		
4.7 create effective partnerships with outside entities that support the academic and personal growth of the students?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 4					X

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.					
To what extent do . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
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	
Overall score for Quality Statement 5					X

◇	Outstanding
+	Well Developed
✓	Proficient
➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features
Δ	Underdeveloped