



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Clara Barton High School for Health Professions

**High School 600
901 Classon Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11225**

Principal: Richard Forman

Dates of review: October 2 – 3, 2007

Lead reviewer: Frank Knowles

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

Clara Barton High School is a high school with 2379 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 88% Black, 9% Hispanic, 1% White and 2% Asian and other students. The student body includes 6% English language learners and 8% special education students. Boys account for 26% of the students enrolled and girls account for 74%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 88%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 63% eligibility.

Clara Barton High School is a Career and Technical Education (CTE) school specialising in courses in the health professions. In addition to the usual high school programs it provides professional certification programs in Licensed Practical Nursing, Nurse Assistant, Medical Coding and Billing, Dental Technology, Dental Assisting and Vision Technology.

The school operates at well over its capacity of 1635 students.

The new principal took up his post in January 2007.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school utilizes an extensive range of data on student performance to align programs effectively to student needs and to drive development.
- Students, parents and staff are aware of the high expectations the school has of students and students respond to these challenges very well.
- The school has a very broad curriculum, carefully planned to lead to an excellent range of academic and career-related programs.
- The wide range of strategies use to improve attendance have had a significant effect in a short period of time.
- Professional development is well targeted to the individual needs of staff, making good use of observational and other data.
- The school has an exceptionally wide range of partnerships with other organizations to support high-achieving students and those on CTE courses.
- The school's review of plans makes good use of data on student performance to realign approaches to meeting goals, where change is necessary.
- The principal has brought a clear vision for the future of the school and for the high achievement of all students.
- Staff, parents and students appreciate the high visibility of the principal and administration around the school and their approachability.
- Despite the considerable constraints placed on the school by its overcrowded buildings, it runs very smoothly.

What the school needs to improve

- Devise ways of analyzing assessment data to give better indications of the progress of different groups of students to feed in to planning and reviews.
- Develop a more rigorous system for aligning students' special education programs and services to their specific individual needs.
- Increase the amount of differentiated instruction in classes, making use of available assessment data.
- When setting goals for students, ensure they are as individualized as possible and communicate to the students what they need to do to achieve them.
- Include interim goals in whole-school and department plans so that they can be used as milestones in reviews.

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 proficient.

Clara Barton High School is a successful school, which provides an exciting and relevant curriculum for its students. It is moving forward well to reach higher levels of achievement for them. A strong focus on professional development and an enthusiastic and committed faculty mean that collaborative working is embedded in the life of the school. The new principal's strong focus on rigorous classroom instruction has brought about improvements in practice.

Staff share considerable amounts of data about student achievement and take part in its interpretation and analysis. This is an improvement since the last review and, at class level, this successfully influences instruction. The school analyses achievement data by groups extensively, but does not focus sufficiently on student progress. This means the school is not always in a position to identify patterns of progress among different groups of students. Staff review school and department plans regularly and this results in modifications to programs and instruction. The absence of interim goals means that this review is not as systematic as it could be.

The school has tackled the areas for improvement from the last review vigorously. It has made great strides in improving attendance and improved the achievement of special education students through a more rigorous approach to instruction. Staff are working collaboratively in their utilization of assessment data and access to training networks has improved. The school has made some progress in using data to differentiate instruction in individual classes but more differentiated approaches are still needed. The school has done all it can to find solutions to its overcrowding although this remains a major barrier to development.

The school's inquiry team has grown out of a previously existing data management team started in April 2007 with a similar brief. It has already identified two potential cohorts for action research by the inquiry team, and a decision on which to use is imminent.

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 has an extensive range of data on student achievement and uses this well to identify areas of underperformance. A new on-line assessment system for younger

students has increased significantly the amount of detailed information available to the school. Staff utilize this to diagnose specific areas of weakness that need remedying for each student and use this to modify instruction for classes. Because of this, the school has a good understanding of the areas in which special education students need additional support. The school also has a very strong focus on raising the achievement of English language learners and in recent years the numbers tested out of English language learners support services has risen dramatically. The school continues to assess the achievement of these students when they join mainstream programs. Staff utilize this data to consider where further services might be required to support those students who might fall behind. The school also keeps track of the achievement of different cohorts of students. It has recently focused on the ninth grade to reduce the number of students held over in that grade, for example. Analysis has also identified that boys do better in some programs, contrary to the usual trend. The school's long record of data shows improvement over the last few years. In addition, the school tracks its graduates through college to give an indication of its success.

The school has strengthened its approach to the utilization of data in the last year. Staff training in data interpretation and the hiring of a data coordinator mean a lot more analysis takes place. Staff use the outcomes of this analysis to plan classroom instruction and to place students in appropriate programs. The school's data allows staff to identify the progress of individual students and take action where it is needed. However, the analysis of student progress is not yet systematic enough to allow the school to identify the relative progress of different groups of students and to follow up any differences.

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 has a strong focus on high achievement and all its plans and goals reflect this. Staff utilize assessment data to identify areas where development is needed and teachers plan action collaboratively in departments. Department and whole-school plans contain clear measurable goals. Teachers focus clearly on the goals for their classes and for areas of specific interest to the school, for example those tested out of English language learner programs and the development of literacy skills in grade 9. Students also recognize their class goals are not simply the achievement of a pass grade but that better students should be aiming for higher percentages. Students do not yet have individualized goals, however, and they are not always aware of what area of work they have to improve to achieve them.

The school's climate is one of very high expectations of its students and staff. Parents, students and faculty have a clear voice in agreeing the school's goals. The school promotes these goals and expectations widely through posters in classrooms and hallways, and through newsletters. Parents and students are very clear of the need to achieve well through a class contract signed at the beginning of each year, through parent conferences, and through consistent reinforcement in class. Students welcome and rise to the challenges the school sets out. Teachers are quick to inform parents if they have a concern about a student's progress, and sometimes to inform parents of particularly high achievement.

The school is now identifying the support needs of special education students more rigorously and more are taking up summer school places. Analysis of assessment data

indicates improved achievement for these students, for example in the increased numbers passing Regent's examinations. The alignment of support programs to the needs of individual students is still too general, however. Discussion of potential support does not cover the full range of services available, within and outside formal special education programs. Opportunities are missed to group students with similar specific areas of weakness that could be specifically targeted.

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 school's approaches to learning focus on rigorous instruction that engages students and raises achievement. Students welcome the way teachers share information about different learning styles and use these to support their learning. Teachers identify specific support needs through the on-line assessment of younger students and this has sharpened the school's focus on remedying specific weaknesses. Special education teachers attend department conferences to raise the profile of special education approaches. Instruction in classrooms, however, does not show sufficient differentiation to match the learning needs of all the class.

The school has an unusually extensive curriculum. It provides a very broad curriculum for all, and adds depth through Gateway and honors programs and through advanced placement classes in a range of subjects. All students take a preliminary class to support them in their choice of programs in the health professions. The range of courses leading to professional qualifications in health is excellent, and the school places great emphasis on keeping the quality of these courses high to ensure it retains its certification to run them. In addition, students take part in an extensive range of career-related visits to health and other organizations and a wide range of internships in hospitals and medical centers. Students welcome the very wide range of extracurricular activities the school provides.

Teachers are held strongly accountable for the outcomes of their classes through conferences with the relevant assistant principals and the analysis of assessment data. They work collaboratively in a climate of mutual trust, sharing good practice extensively. The school has gained additional funding to enable new courses to be developed. Thoughtful approaches to resource allocation support high achievement.

One of the school's most recent successes is a very strong drive on improving attendance. An unusually wide range of incentives and disincentives have improved attendance, currently running at 88%, to within striking distance of the school's target of 90%. Data analysis revealed a persistent issue with attendance in grade 9. In response, orientation sessions in August, rigorous checking on students with places who did not arrive at the start of the year and changes in scheduling have all been successful in remedying low attendance in this grade.

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 school takes professional development seriously. All teachers take part in at least one significant professional development activity during the school year. The induction of new teachers involves extensive support and mentoring. Teachers taking on new or more advanced programs receive careful support through a sequence of classroom observations, for example in math. Professional development is well matched to staff needs. Data analysis, classroom observation, staff surveys and individual requests all contribute to decisions about the choice of appropriate opportunities.

The principal and other members of the cabinet undertake regular formal classroom observations and provide clear feedback to teachers on strengths and areas for improvement. Collaborative working and involvement with the on-site teachers' centre have resulted in a wide range of intervisitations to share good practice and to support development. Teachers discuss their observations at subject and grade conferences.

The school is good at recognizing students who are achieving well and realigns programs to meet their needs. For example, it arranges early entry to Regents examinations. While it recognizes the needs of special education students, intervention services are less specific to identified need than they could be. The school's partnerships with other organizations are unusually good. Students benefit from an exceptional range of career-related opportunities in the health professions and begin building college credits while still at Clara Barton High School through its relationships with colleges and universities.

Despite the very overcrowded building, the school runs smoothly, largely through staff good will and efficient management. Complex scheduling is necessary and works well but has the disadvantage that all staff cannot always attend a single meeting. Senior staff robustly tackle congestion in hallways through regular sweeps.

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 proficient.

The climate of the school is one of continual development. Departments regularly review progress towards their goals using assessment data at the end of each marking period and modify instructional approaches as a result. Assistant principals regularly review teachers' plans in individual conferences. The cabinet also reviews whole-school plans regularly, and, for example, recently reversed a decision to change a history program. This was because data showed the new program was not as successful as expected, and the cabinet was able to identify the reasons for the low performance. Similarly, the analysis of assessment data leads to reviews of the success of interventions and the realignment of support, where this is needed. However, the absence of interim goals or milestones in plans means that the school is not able to evaluate its progress towards its final goals by checking success against them.

The principal, who took up his post in January 2007, has a clear vision for a school that includes the creation of small learning communities and improved instructional practice with more differentiated approaches. He has gained rapid acceptance as a principal who engages well with staff and students and is highly visible around the building. One teacher summed up the principal's open door approach by saying "I've been in his office more times in the last eight months than in whole of the rest of my career here."

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Clara Barton High School for Health Professions	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	