



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Roberto Clemente School

Elementary School 015

**333 East 4 Street
New York
NY 10009**

Principal: Thomas Staebell

Dates of review: May 29 - 30, 2008

Lead Reviewer: Daniella Phillips

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

The Roberto Clemente School is an elementary school with 248 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 30% Black, 60% Hispanic, 3% White, and 6% Asian students. The student body includes 16% English language learners and 21% special education students. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 90.8%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 89% eligibility.

The school shares the building with an all-girl, charter elementary school and with a District 75 special education program.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Students at greatest risk are provided for because of the suitable intervention and support they receive.
- Teachers plan lessons effectively, differentiating instruction in reading and math.
- The school collects and analyzes a good range of data to inform teaching and learning.
- The trend towards meeting State standards in English language arts and math is being maintained.
- Staff members have high expectations of students and therefore provide them with appropriate challenges and recognition for improvement.
- There is adequate oversight of English language learners due to the work of the inquiry team in improving the teaching of oral language fluency.
- The school provides an intimate learning environment and varied partnerships that support well children's social and emotional development.
- Budget and staffing decisions are strategic and encourage the school to focus on improving student outcomes.
- Rigorous procedures and positive incentives ensure that students' attendance is very good and continues to improve.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop the goal-setting processes and subsequent evaluation and revision, so there is greater consistency of approach across the school.
- Communicate in writing with parents and staff about student and whole-school goals and progress, so that instructional priorities are clear.
- Encourage teachers to set professional goals and engage in school decisions to increase shared leadership and accountability.
- Target and address the needs of special education students with precise systems for monitoring their progress.

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.

The learning environment at Roberto Clemente is becoming more positive, intimate, and collaborative. Teachers and administrators strive to know students well, and they utilize students' assessment results to guide their instructional and operational decisions. Struggling students receive careful, focused attention and the school maintains sufficiently high expectations for all learners. Parents and staff express pride in the continuing trend towards meeting State standards in English language arts and math, and they refer to the school as "turning around" and having a good future.

The school has made considerable progress in implementing four of the six areas identified for improvement in the last Quality Review. Most noteworthy is how aggressively and creatively the school has tackled issues of daily attendance and student underperformance by enlisting the support of partnership organizations. Further work is needed to strengthen individual and whole-school goal setting practices, and to broaden the curriculum with interdisciplinary projects and expanded arts opportunities. Additionally, school-wide improvement plans require more specificity of measurable targets and timelines for implementation.

The inquiry team models adequately how to analyze data of English language learners, and their focused work enhances the teaching of oral language school-wide. Despite this model, the school does not yet fully disaggregate analysis of student achievement. There is urgency to target and track the learning of special education students, as they comprise the largest sub-group of students in the school.

Teachers plan together collegially and they take advantage of relevant professional development. They work strategically with paraprofessionals to differentiate instruction based on student need. Students generally trust adults in the school and enjoy most of their learning, although they miss the opportunity to study music and expanded arts. As next steps, the principal understands the need to promote teachers' engagement in school decisions and the need to provide more constructive instructional feedback.

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 gathers a good range of reading, writing, and math assessment data to understand what students know in content and skills. In early grades, teachers look at running records and math unit assessments to monitor student performance. By grades 3 to 5, additional structures for data collection are in place, including Acuity periodic assessments, State test results, writing rubrics and monthly conferring notes. With no literacy coach since December, teachers miss opportunities to sharpen their analysis of students' reading and writing performance, beyond tracking changes in reading levels. By contrast, the pro-active math consultant meets frequently with teachers to compare current information about the achievement of students, classes and grade levels with State standards. Together, they assign on-line math work for upper grade students and arrange weekly sessions in the computer lab to provide individualized learning support. Teachers speak confidently about their detailed knowledge of students' learning progress, especially in reading levels and all aspects of math.

The school does not sufficiently detect and address patterns of achievement by gender, ethnicity and special education status. English language learners are a notable exception. Through careful analysis of performance and progress data, the inquiry team identified vocabulary and reading comprehension as skill areas in need of improvement. The team administered an oral language assessment, which then provided teachers with deeper understanding of how students acquire and practice language. Teachers have integrated oral language strategies and exercises in class lessons, with significant gains evident by English language learners. Special education students comprise 21% of the total student population and school leaders note that their academic performance, especially in reading and writing, lags behind general education peers. The principal acknowledges that special education data needs close monitoring to produce improved learning outcomes.

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 proficient.

The school leadership team has established school-wide goals this year to improve student attendance and parent involvement. Evidence of progress includes an overall 1% increase in year-to-date student attendance and a recent, well-attended family math night. These goals are initial steps towards whole-school goal setting and they reflect the staff's genuine commitment to engaging each student and family. However, the goals lack a clear focus on academic achievement and they have no measurable targets or defined time intervals to suggest thoughtful implementation.

For setting individual student goals, teachers meet together and with the math coach and principal to discuss instruction, assessment results, and student needs. They set reading goals based on students' current reading levels, and they plan math goals using curriculum benchmarks. Teachers confer with students about strategies for improving writing, but there are no interim or explicit writing targets. The school conveys high expectations for students in a number of ways. Displays in and around the school celebrate exemplary student work and writing rubrics clarify grades. Many classrooms feature colorful charts of students' current reading levels and their expected progress, which motivates students to achieve more. The school cultivates parent involvement adequately by using interpreters at parent meetings, hosting curricula nights, and inviting

parents to class publication parties. Teachers provide parents with effective verbal feedback about students' learning during conferences and conversations. However, written communications contain limited information about each child's goals and progress, as the school relies on standard report cards. As a result, many parents and students express awareness of only reading level goals.

While below city-wide averages, the school shows solid gains in student achievement, especially for struggling learners. The school expends substantial resources for at-risk learners, by investing key staff in the area of academic intervention. For example, the school conducts a weekly review of attendance and academic progress for students in temporary housing, as these students are highly transient. The staff members are committed to, and generally successful in, supporting students with the greatest learning needs.

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 proficient.

The Teachers College balanced literacy approach and Everyday Math program comprise the school's core curricula. The broad range of school-made and external assessments provides teachers with useful information about students' progress. However, the school lacks detailed curriculum maps and consistent instructional time for science and social studies. Consequently, many students perceive these content areas as unimportant. Teachers plan relevant lessons using the workshop model, with good routines for whole class, group, partner and individual work. Instruction is generally interesting and prominently inclusive of all children. Students trust their teachers and enjoy most of their learning. However, they miss studying music and wish that more arts opportunities would take place during the school day.

The principal manages budget, staffing and scheduling decisions well to improve student outcomes. Paraprofessionals and academic support staff receive training and guidance in pushing into classes, which results in effective small group and differentiated instruction. Similarly, both the special education and general education teachers in collaborative team teaching classes share equal responsibilities for planning and teaching, which maximizes individualized attention for students.

Student attendance shows steady growth with positive incentives and consistent procedures in place. One impressive new initiative to encourage Friday attendance is an end-of-week distribution of donated canned foods to all students. Already, the school has seen a rise in Friday attendance, as well as strong parent support for the school's outreach. The attendance team meets frequently and pursues an ambitious agenda based squarely on student attendance and lateness data.

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 proficient.

The principal supports strategic professional development opportunities for staff. For example, all four collaborative team teachers participated in a series of inter-visitations. These experiences have increased the teachers' shared accountability for student learning. There is a growing spirit of collegiality in the school and even in the building, as the principal plans thoughtful collaborations with the city-wide special education program housed in the facility. Teachers value internal expertise and they seek greater opportunities for inter-visitations across grade levels. The principal acknowledges the importance of encouraging teachers to set professional goals and to engage more in school decisions.

Most members of the school community note progress in the handling of student discipline and they credit the dedicated principal with implementing clear procedures for follow up. However, disruptive incidents continue to occur with regularity, especially at transitional times like recess, and it is too early to evaluate the effectiveness of recent efforts. Parents appreciate the intimate school setting and varied partnerships that support their children's social and emotional development. The principal embraces productive relationships with outside agencies and community-based organizations, such as Virginia's House of Hope, Grand Street Settlement's Project COOL, and St. Vincent's Hospital. The school supplements its own ability to serve students' social and emotional needs by enlisting support service providers. These partnerships are powerful in improving children's lives and their motivation to stay in 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 underdeveloped with proficient features.

School leaders and teachers use data generated from a range of assessments to understand what students know and plan for instructional revisions. Teachers increasingly make use of assessment and observational information and think about logical next steps. A good example is a successful initiative where the occupational therapist observes first graders as they write in class, and then selects students for targeted work to strengthen their fine motor skills. Other evidence of instructional revisions includes how teachers have adjusted the grades 2-5 reading log and reflection forms, in order to know more about students' reading experiences than simply book titles and pages read.

However, improvement efforts are not yet comprehensive or flexible enough to serve changing student needs. The Comprehensive Education Plan offers little substantive guidance for the school, as the document notes "5% increase in student performance" as the same generic goal for all content areas. Even the work of the well-regarded pupil personnel team is not yet robustly monitored. There are few set targets, periods for gauging improvement, or mechanisms to ensure that multiple students receive the team's attention and resources. Notes from the team's meetings suggest that the same student dominated discussion took place at six consecutive meetings, which reduces the impact and effectiveness of this support structure. The principal and school community agree about key priorities for future growth, including the need to create action plans with measurable goals and timelines for implementation.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Roberto Clemente School	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 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		
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 and tardiness?				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, 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	
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