



**NYCDOE**

**Quality Review: Final Report**

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



# **Quality Review Report**

**The Juan Pablo Duarte School**

**Elementary School 132  
185 Wadsworth Avenue  
New York  
NY 10033**

**Principal: Xiomara Nova**

**Dates of review: October 25 - 26, 2007**

**Lead Reviewer: Janet Warner**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Juan Pablo Duarte is an elementary school with 906 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 4% Black, 93% Hispanic, 1% White, 1% Asian students. The student body includes 66% English language learners and 15.1% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 92.3%. The school receives Title 1 with 100% eligibility.

The school is housed in three separate buildings – East Wing, West Wing and Annex.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal ensures that professional development is accurately aligned to data in order to help meet the improvement goals of students and teachers.
- The school offers a broad and engaging curriculum to all pupils.
- The cabinet and staff work well together to set rigorous goals for improvement.
- School, grade and class data is used effectively to inform planning and instruction and to track the progress of all students.
- The school provides a bright, learning-rich environment.
- A cohesive plan has been put in place to ensure that pupils receive quality instruction at all times including the extended day.
- There is an environment of mutual trust and respect between all staff and students.
- On a day-to day basis the school runs smoothly and procedures are clear.
- The vision and determination of the principal and her cabinet gives clear direction to the school's work.

### What the school needs to improve

- Further develop differentiated instruction as members of staff have access to more data and training.
- Ensure that all members of staff are given every opportunity to share good practice by visiting each others' classrooms.
- Provide opportunities for regular coordination between teachers and support staff.
- Continue to develop effective lines of communication so that the school goals are established effectively across the whole community.

## 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.**

The Juan Pablo Duarte School functions as a true community. Parents, students and staff work together for the benefit of all concerned and consider themselves one 'family'. This ensures a safe, orderly school in which staff use their expertise to produce very good instruction that meets students' needs. Parents support the school in all it does and support all events enthusiastically. Students enjoy their lessons, behave well and make good progress.

The cabinet has worked well together with the staff in using data to inform planning and to monitor progress. All staff utilize periodic assessments to track individual students and adapt their teaching accordingly. The principal and administration monitor teaching and learning well, giving constructive feedback to ensure that instruction matches the needs of the students. The school identifies areas for professional development very well through consideration of its overall goals.

The school has set up an inquiry team and is making progress with efforts to identify a target group for further research purposes. The issues raised in the previous Quality Review have been addressed through further analysis of data according to different groups of learners and by extending the range of teaching methods and strategies used to boost learning and engage students.

The principal has a very competent cabinet and administration team who are working hard to continue to develop all aspects of assessment. This team continues to involve all the staff in this process in order to keep them well informed. The principal is aware of the challenge this poses in a school with such a large staff and is continually striving to ensure all lines of communication are utilized to full effect. Members of staff share good practice on a regular basis, but are not always given the time to observe each other's classroom instruction. A program for intervisitations is being put in place.

### 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 school has established very effective systems for gathering data that give a clear picture of the achievement of individual students. The data specialist teacher gathers

assessment data from NYSESLAT and state scores which she records using a spreadsheet. Individual scores are color coded according to level of progress in order that all the information is very accessible. Comparisons between grades, classes and individual students can be easily made. All teachers are aware of how many points each student needs to reach the next level and targets are set accordingly. The cabinet and staff therefore have a very clear view of the effectiveness of the school as a whole. The data is also disaggregated according to language proficiency, special education students and gender. The principal and her cabinet are also using the data from ARIS to effectively compare the school's performance with that of similar schools. In addition, the principal has established a very good working relationship with a neighboring school with a similar student population which enables regular discussions around achievement and teaching and learning. The progress of special education students is effectively monitored using individual education plans and annual reviews as well as through the use of data.

All members of staff have received training on the use of data. Each has a useful binder which contains the beginning of year assessments and is used to record progress, identify skill gaps according teachers assessments and plan groupings. For kindergarten through grade 3 students, the assessment tool ECLAS 2 is used and recorded using palm tops. Staff are receiving training in the use of this new assessment tool throughout this academic year. All data can be uploaded easily and effectively and is accessible to all teachers leading to a constantly updated system for tracking progress.

**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.**

Teachers use the wide range of data they gather to plan very effectively the next steps in learning for individual students. The school has systems in place to ensure that the levels of proficiency of the high percentage of dual-language learners are closely monitored in order to promote successful learning and ensure that the school meets its ELA targets. To this end, data for English language learners is broken down into proficiency levels according to modalities so that the type of instruction received is more accurately matched with students' learning styles. Further, subgroups within those identified as beginners, intermediate and advanced have now been identified. Item skills analysis data is used very effectively in math. The principal has regular individual meetings with her staff to discuss the groupings made at class level and the planning process to meet those students' needs. In both dual-language and full immersion classes an emphasis is placed on a language-rich classroom environment and vocabulary acquisition. As a result, special education students and Hispanic students in the lowest third achievement group make very good progress.

The school has established close working relationships with parents and is running a series of weekly workshops in order to ensure that they fully understand what levels mean in different areas and how they can help their children to move on from one level to another. The guidance counselor is always involved with the induction of new students who have often only just arrived from their native country. As well as asking parents for background details, an after-school program is provided for new arrivals to alleviate some of the cultural shock and help them adjust to their new school. There is a strong parent teacher association in the school and, on average, 85% of parents attend teacher/parent conferences.

**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.**

All assessments built into the Everyday Math program and the reading and writing components of Balanced Literacy are recorded meticulously in student portfolios. In this way, progress can be tracked both within classes and across grades. Students are involved in self-assessing according to established targets. The administration monitors all entries made in order to ensure that instruction is successfully matched to individual students’ needs. Students are also involved in developing rubrics across subjects. Lessons are planned and instruction is differentiated according to the data collected. Data from ARIS is not yet fully available so is not currently being used to inform instructional strategies. Practical teaching aids are used to great advantage and multisensory approaches are built into lessons for pupils with specific needs. All classrooms have colorful displays and teaching aids. As a result, students show positive attitudes toward work and standards of behavior are high. The administration considers the implications of assessment data when making strategic decisions, for example employing a specialist for English language learners and two coaches to help teachers further develop differentiated teaching strategies.

The curriculum allows all students to study the arts as well as the mandated subjects. There are dedicated art and music rooms in the school. Students receive at least one lesson of music and art per week with younger pupils following a specific ‘Music and the Brain’ program. In addition, students participate in a wide range of activities outside of normal lessons including art club, computers, chorus, chess, enrichment and sports clubs.

Systems to ensure good attendance are well established. All absences are monitored on a weekly basis and an attendance team and family worker follow up when necessary. As a result, attendance has improved and is higher than average for the city. Parents and students are proud of the school, with most students choosing to wear its uniform. A student commented that the school was “too good to have anything bad” to say about it”.

**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 has well developed systems for monitoring the quality of instruction and for enhancing teachers’ skills. The administration considers strategic aims and uses information from monitoring systems to provide professional development that is focused on helping to raise achievement. The principal and administration observe teaching, both formally and informally, on a regular basis giving constructive feedback to ensure that skills are further developed. All pre-observation discussions are linked to the yearly focus in order to enhance teachers’ planning. In addition, time has been allocated on a weekly basis for shared preparation so that teachers can share good practice and be involved in professional development relevant to each grade. Although inter-class observations are not systematically planned, a ‘buddy’ system among teachers involves informal inter-class observations. All new teachers receive very good advice and support through the ‘gradual release of responsibility’ model employed by the coaches in the school. Support is also

given through inter-class visitations and help from specialist teachers. A new teacher commented that she had received "fantastic support from everyone".

Student support services work closely together to ensure that the personal and academic needs of students are met. At risk students are referred to the pupil personnel committee which carries out both informal and formal diagnostic assessments to determine what extra help students may or may not require. The quality of instruction received by students who receive extra help during the extended day is monitored through 'differentiated instructional plans' which are overseen by the data specialist teacher. However, in a school with such a large number of staff, it is not always possible to ensure that there is time for regular coordination between teachers and support staff.

Well-established systems of reward including 'student of the month' and 100 percent attendance awards ensure that students feel valued. A 'peace builder' and peer mentoring program effectively promote good behavior and a respectful attitude among students. Strong and very effective partnerships with outside entities also support the academic and personal growth of the students. These include Arts Connection, a 'Turn Around for Children' program linked to the local hospital and a healthy eating program linked to a local restaurant.

**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 well developed.**

The principal's clear and well-defined vision for the school is promoted across the school: "To develop a school community dedicated to achieving academic excellence and whose mission is a rigorous, standards driven instructional environment that addresses the needs of all students." All members of the community are working toward the same ends and parents agree that the school provides an excellent service for their children through the commitment of its leadership and staff.

Goals and plans are regularly revisited and revised in response to teachers' ongoing assessments as well as the results of periodic assessments which are completed at least three times a year. For instance, last year, after evaluating the results from the ELA, NYSESLAT and math tests, a restructuring committee was formed and worked on revisiting goals set by the Comprehensive Educational Plan, assessing progress and modifying goals and plans for this year. However, timeframes for revisions are not specific and goals are not always measurable.

The cabinet meets together regularly to discuss pacing calendars and set goals for the next stages of learning. The principal is aware that further work needs to be done to ensure that lines of communication between the administration and the staff continue to improve so that staff members are more involved in the goal setting process. In this way, all members of the school community can fully subscribe to decisions made.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: The Juan Pablo Duarte School (PS 132)</b>	△	➤	✓	+	◇
<b>Quality Score</b>				X	

<b>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.</b>					
<b>To what extent do school leaders and faculty provide . . .</b>	△	➤	✓	+	◇
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	

<b>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.</b>					
<b>To what extent do school leaders and faculty . . .</b>	△	➤	✓	+	◇
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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>				X	

<b>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.</b>					
<b>To what extent does the school . . .</b>	<b>Δ</b>	<b>▷</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>◇</b>
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	
<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?				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 outcome§				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	