



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

**Richard Rogers School of the Arts and
Technology**

Elementary School 166

**132 West 89 Street
New York
NY 10024**

Principal: Richard Ronga

Dates of review: March 10 - 11, 2008

Lead Reviewer: Sue Hall

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Richard Rogers School of the Arts and Technology is an elementary school with 599 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 18% Black, 28% Hispanic, 46% White, 7% Asian students and a small number from other ethnic groups. The student body includes 10% English language learners and 9% special education students. Boys account for 48% of the students enrolled and girls account for 52%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006 - 2007 was 93.1%. The school is not in receipt of Title 1 funding.

To whom it may concern

Since the publication of this report further information has been obtained from a representative group of parents which suggest that certain judgments relating to the management of the school and the quality of communication between the school and the parent body may not be adequately reflected by the wording of the report.

These changes do not alter the overall outcome of the report

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school provides a broad and engaging curriculum including additional activities in the arts.
- There is a high degree of staff collaboration that results in a reflective approach to school improvement.
- The principal, vice-principals and coaches share a clear focus on supporting students of all abilities.
- The school has high expectations of behavior and academic progress.
- Students behave well and have positive attitudes to learning.
- The school and students are well supported by a strong partnership with parents.
- There is a good program of professional development that influences the quality of instruction.
- The school has good facilities that have a positive impact on the range of curriculum opportunities offered.

What the school needs to improve

- Extend the way the school gathers and uses data to further understand what each student can do and to compare progress for English language learners and for Ethnic groups and gender.
- Ensure that staff make best use of data to compare standards and progress against past performance and against similar schools
- Ensure staff share goals more clearly with students and parents in order for them to understand exactly what needs to be improved.

Part 3: Main Findings

Progress made since the last review

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

Overall Evaluation

This school is well developed.

The Richard Rogers School is committed to continuous improvement and has developed a climate of learning where the needs of the student are at the heart of all decision making. Senior staff members share a clear commitment to the school. The principal, assistant principals and coaches share an infectious enthusiasm for their roles and work well with colleagues to ensure the school continues to move forward. A particular strength is the collaborative team-working culture where everyone is involved and consulted in decision making. Students enjoy their time in school and benefit from a broad and engaging curriculum with particular strengths in the arts. Good school facilities include a large auditorium and gym, and small dance and music studios, which have a positive impact on the curriculum offered.

Staff members continually question what is working well and what needs to be improved. Since the last quality review, there has been good improvement in the support for special education students and English language learners. The school now also collects more data on the progress of all students. A data specialist has started to develop ways in which the school can make greater use of technology to analyze data more efficiently. Staff recognize the need to check more rigorously the progress made by all including English language learners and those from different ethnic groups and to understand whether boys and girls make equal progress in all areas. Staff also note there is more to do in using and comparing this data with that from similar schools and with students previous learning. Therefore, while students are clear about what reading levels they are achieving, they are often unclear about specific goals for improvement in other areas.

High expectations of academic progress and of good behavior support achievement well. The behavior and attendance of students is good and they particularly enjoy practical tasks and afterschool arts activities. Staff know the students well and use day-to-day assessments effectively to differentiate instruction. This ensures that students including those who are gifted and talented and special education students, all receive instruction that meets their needs. The inquiry team are making good progress in their focus upon the needs of students who require the most support. Staff work well with math and English language arts coaches to identify where additional instruction or support may be necessary. Professional growth is a high priority and there are good opportunities for professional development. With the principal's extensive links with other schools, there are good opportunities for staff to visit a range of other providers as well as for intervisitations within the school. There are good links with a range of agencies, especially to support the arts. The school benefits considerably from the strong support of the parent body which, through a not-for-profit organization, raises considerable sums of money to fund various projects throughout the school.

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 satisfactory range of data from formal and informal monitoring of progress. The principal is particularly passionate that the school not only collects data from formal assessments, but views the student "as a whole child". Senior staff share this commitment and the school is successful in recognizing the progress made in a wide range of academic areas and in students personal development.

Student work is an important source of data and portfolios help identify the next steps for learning. Growing use is made of new mandatory assessments that give a clear picture of individual and group progress. Other measures of progress include Early Childhood Literacy Assessments and New York English as a second language tests. A vice-principal, as the school data specialist, collates test information and, for instance, has helped produce graphical illustrations of the reading levels of every student.

Staff share information with special education support staff who carry out specific assessments as necessary. Teachers also collect other data and meet in grade teams to discuss progress. Such information indicates generally strong test scores. However, staff readily recognize there is "a way to go" in both extending assessment systems and in using such data to compare and contrast the progress made across the school, including for instance by boys and girls and those from different ethnic groups. Senior staff realize that more could also be done to compare students' past performance with current progress and contrast this with data from similar schools. This is largely because the systems to collect and use the data available are not yet consistent and embedded across the school.

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

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

Shared decision making and collaboration are strong features of the way the school operates. Staff, students and parents are all part of the planning and goal-setting process through the school leadership team. The principal, as an enthusiastic communicator, ensures everyone is consulted and informed in planning and goal-setting meetings. Math and literacy coaches work well with colleagues to identify both short- and long-term goals for individuals, classes and grades.

The annual planning process takes account of the work of the pupil personnel committee meetings and the inquiry team. Open school week and invitations to parents to attend activities, including publishing parties, help convey high expectations to students and their parents.

Students are set individual goals and a graphic organizer identifies, for instance, short-term math goals, which are re-assessed every two weeks. Long-term goals are re-assessed every month and tracked via specific assessments. Students also help to set

their own goals in certain areas. However, while students are clearly able to identify what reading levels they are achieving they are unsure of other goals and specifically what they need to do to improve. Parents are informed of overall goals in discussions with the staff, although they are often unclear about the school's vision or specific goals for both their own child and the school overall. They are therefore often unsure how best to help and believe that at times senior staff could listen to parental concerns more.

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 has an effective curriculum with particular strengths in the arts. Excellent links with a variety of external agencies including Ballet Hispanico, whose staff work regularly with the students, helps them broaden their horizons and enjoy learning. Many students also enjoy music instruction and are successful in mastering a range of instruments. The school-wide Renzulli Learning Systems Enrichment model uses technology to educate students. After-school activities support learning in a range of areas with the school being particularly proud of the championship chess team. The very popular parent-sponsored after-school enrichment program is valuable in supporting learning.

Teachers are clearly held accountable for the progress of the students in their charge and have created a positive, safe and supportive learning environment. The strong emphasis on literacy and math and a hands-on science program means that teachers match instruction to the needs of the individual well. Staff make good use of a range of information and especially day-to-day assessments and student portfolios to differentiate instruction through whole-class and group teaching.

Budgeting, staffing and scheduling decisions are carefully considered and aligned to the school's academic goals for all students. For instance, the school puts additional resources into supporting those who score in the bottom third on tests and the Wilson program is effective with struggling readers. There is a high degree of mutual trust and respect between staff and students which supports personal and academic development. Staff, students and parents all indicate they like the school and are happy to be associated with its many successes. Attendance is above average and carefully tracked.

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 well-established program of formal and informal monitoring of teaching and learning by the principal and senior staff accurately identifies the quality of instruction. School walk-throughs and informal monitoring are strong features of such work. This supportive and collaborative approach is effective in developing differentiation strategies and enhancing professional skills. Professional development is viewed as a high priority and there are good opportunities for visits to other schools, to work with professionals in the arts world and for intervisitations. Consultants and coaches also model good practices.

The good range of collaborative activities ensure the school is a reflective community continually focusing on what else could be improved. The inquiry team is effective in working on areas identified by the school as priorities for improvement and changing the focus as required. Teachers new to the school are well supported. They are offered targeted support through the work of mentors and coaches.

The staff consistently implement procedures that enable the school to function smoothly and which encourage learning. Behavior is good and the few discipline-related incidents are dealt with well. The links to a considerable number of organizations help support academic and personal growth. While the school does not have many staff with specific responsibility for guidance, all staff share responsibility for informal monitoring in this area and there is good work by the school psychologist and academic intervention staff in supporting identified students.

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 sets clear and achievable interim goals for improving student and teacher outcomes that are measurable and have clear time frames. Periodic assessments are built in to the school calendar and ensure a continuing review of programs, including interventions for individuals and groups of students. Staff react to information from monitoring well and plans are revised appropriately in order to reach stated goals.

Strategic decision-making is good and practices are modified to improve student outcomes. Staff use each plan's interim and final outcomes to drive the next stage of goal setting and improvement planning. For instance, the need to make improvements for special education students and English language learners arose from the previous quality review and via the Comprehensive Education Plan. This resulted in the provision of extra staffing to support students through additional push-in and pull-out teaching.

The school has maintained long-standing strengths in programming for gifted and talented students and has improved instruction for a range of others including those with learning difficulties to ensure equal access to a rigorous school program for every student.

The principal, vice-principals and school coaches all share an enthusiasm for the school and determination to maintain the focus on the needs of the child. This includes through the successful work of consultants, coaches and team leaders which enables the school to continue to move forward.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME:	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
Richard Rogers school for The Arts and Technology					
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