



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Jacob H Schiff School

Elementary School 192

**500 West 138 Street
Manhattan
NY 10031**

Principal: Ms E Pacheco

Dates of review: December 12 - 13, 2007

Lead Reviewer: Colin Henderson

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

Jacob H Schiff School is an elementary school with 465 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 6. The school population comprises 7% Black and 93% Hispanic students. The student body includes 46% English language learners and 16% special education students. Boys account for 54% of the students enrolled and girls account for 46%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006 - 2007 was 94%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 90% eligibility.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The influential leadership of the principal provides a strong focus on school improvement.
- Consistent concentration on improving reading skills is raising students' performance, especially boys.
- Staff work well together to share good practice and improve students' progress.
- Their 'Pledge for Success' helps students to behave well, enjoy school and show respect for staff and for each other.
- The administration works in close collaboration with consultants to help staff use data to raise student outcomes.
- The pupil personnel committee helps students in greatest need to improve key deficiencies in their learning.
- Very effective procedures ensure that students attend school regularly and on time.
- The school encourages a good partnership with parents to support their children's learning.
- Students achieve well in math because of effective teaching and good support for students.
- The extended day program is effective in supporting students and helping them raise their performance.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue to improve the quality of instruction by using teaching strategies that engage students consistently and meet their learning needs.
- Extend the use of assessment data in core curriculum subjects to track students' progress in each class and as they move from grade to grade.
- Improve the use of technology to support teaching and enhance students' learning.
- Refine action plans to show how progress towards long term goals will be evaluated in the short and medium term.

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 proficient.

The school under the purposeful leadership of its energetic principal has introduced procedures that focus strongly on raising the performance of its students. Many of these initiatives are recent and are not consistently established in practice to ensure that they are fully effective. Working closely with consultants and with the support of the administration and the literacy coach, most teachers focus with increasing effectiveness on students' English language skills. They target reading skills and encourage students to read more, particularly boys. Some teachers use frequent assessments such as reading quizzes to check on students' progress. This is not consistent in each class. Staff gather a wide range of data and meet frequently to review the progress of each student. The effective pupil personnel team uses data to identify those students whose are not making sufficient progress. It provides timely interventions including the successful extended day program.

Effective procedures help the school to run smoothly and encourage students to attend regularly. The student council's pledge is a daily reminder for all students of the school's high expectations of their work and behavior. It helps students enjoy school and to establish mutual trust and respect. There is a strong team approach amongst staff. They share good practice and many benefit from classroom observations from the principal and her cabinet. These improve their instructional skills although teaching is not consistently good in every grade. Students enjoy their lessons, especially math, because of good teaching and interesting number problems. They are excited when teachers use interactive technology to support their learning.

The principal and her parent coordinator encourage parents to work with the school to support their child's learning. Parents are kept well informed about how well their child is doing and what needs improving. The principal meets regularly with each teacher to set predictive end of year goals for each student and check if students are on track to achieve them. She provides a strong focus on improving students' outcomes and uses action plans to set whole school goals such as improving students' skills in English language arts. The school does not set specific measurable long term goals in its improvement plans or show how it will rigorously evaluate to check if students' performance is rising quickly enough.

The inquiry team has agreed to focus on improving students' use of academic vocabulary and has identified a group of English language learners to be involved.

Progress made since the last review

The school has made some progress since the last review, especially in improving boys' reading and developing management roles, although there are still some inconsistencies in teaching and in using data to set measurable goals.

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.

Teachers gather a wide range of data to check carefully on the performance and progress of each student. They use benchmark assessments in reading and math to determine student groups and continuously update their data, especially in tracking students' reading skills and knowledge. Teachers are beginning to analyze the data carefully to identify specific weaknesses in students' literacy skills and use learning activities to improve them. Grade teachers, with the support of reading, English as a second language teachers and the literacy coach have become more effective since the last review in using test data to improve the performance of English language learners.

The school consistently uses data to check how different groups of students are progressing and to check for any deficiencies particularly in comparing the performance of bilingual and monolingual English language learners. The data on special education students is checked consistently to ensure that they are on track to achieve their goals. The school has introduced new procedures to quickly identify students who may need referring for specific special education support.

The principal has improved the use of detailed class assessment sheets, particularly in the older grades, to track students' progress over time and to set predictive targets based on past performance. She compares the school's performance with other local and network schools although there are very few with a similar ethnic makeup of students.

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 principal, in close collaboration with her data specialist, uses data to check carefully on the progress of each student. She meets with each class teacher early in the school year to set predictive goals for each student in English language arts and math. Class teachers maintain folders containing detailed ongoing information about students, such as reading levels and math scores. They use this information to discuss regularly with the principal the progress of their students. Frequent checks are made to see if each one is on track to achieve their goal. The school is developing its use of data to ensure that goals for improvement are specific and linked to students' needs. The plans and use of interim checks are not always rigorous enough to ensure that the goals are adjusted to remain challenging and based on current data.

Very effective procedures are in place to ensure that the students in greatest need are quickly identified and timely intervention is given. The meetings of the pupil personnel committee are particularly successful in involving key academic and guidance staff to agree on the most effective means of supporting these pupils and setting a clear date to review the outcomes of the intervention. This rigorous approach results in the improved performance of these students.

The school has high expectations of its students. Staff work hard to share these expectations with parents and to inform them about the goals set for each student. The enthusiastic parent coordinator encourages parents to take an active role in supporting their children's learning by running weekly family literacy sessions and workshops to show the teaching strategies and the resources used. This contributes well to helping parent understanding and students to progress.

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.

Data is used increasingly to realign and plan the curriculum including the monthly meetings of a group of staff to rewrite the curriculum map. This is planned to improve the integration of subjects and provide more consistent opportunities for students to extend their English language skills. The school provides a broad range of activities, including music for all students. It has extended the provision for science this year, although does not yet use the assessment data to set improvement goals. The effective extended day program contributes well to students' progress. With the help of consultants, an increasing number of teachers are using data to provide activities that meet the different needs of students. Teachers create a safe and harmonious working environment, with some using technology well to motivate students to learn. Most teachers organize activities that engage students fully in their learning although this is not consistent in every classroom.

The principal has been effective in working with her staff to create a caring and supportive learning environment that promotes students' academic and personal development. This is valued highly by students and parents. One parent commented that, "the teacher knows my daughter really well". Organizational procedures are very effective. As a result, students clearly enjoy being in school and this is reflected well in their good attendance.

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 principal works closely with her cabinet, coaches and consultants to observe classroom teaching frequently. They have introduced some school-wide instructional initiatives that focus strongly on improving students' English language skills. The school has a strong collegial approach and staff are encouraged to observe each other and

share good practice. Very good communication and an open and friendly approach help staff to evaluate their skills, especially new teachers. As a result teaching has improved since the last review although there is still some inconsistency in the use of effective teaching strategies. The principal has surveyed staff to gather data that she plans to use to provide professional development to further enhance teachers' instructional skills and extend students' learning. .

The school has created effective partnerships with outside entities such as Fordham and New York Universities. This is providing a strong focus on meeting the needs of the school's high population of English language learners. The good links with the Robin Hood and Carmel Foundations encourage students to extend their English and Spanish reading skills. This is helping to improve performance, especially that of boys. Effective support for students' personal development is given through links with such local organizations as The United Way and the Inwood Coalition.

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 principal has a clear vision for improving the school and she shares it well with all members of the school community. She has an enthusiastic 'hands-on' style and is putting systems in place that are improving teaching and targeting students' performance and progress consistently, especially English language learners. As a result, many students with deficiencies in their English and Spanish language skills are making better progress. The school is using data well to frequently evaluate the progress of individual students and to accelerate their learning by the good use of interventions and support programs, including the extended day. The principal and her cabinet meet with teachers to check that students maintain their progress throughout the year.

The leadership team plans for the school's continued improvement through using action plans that give a clear direction for all staff to follow. These plans provide staff with a clear focus but the school does not use current student data to set challenging, measurable goals that clearly show year on year progress by groups of students or by grades in different content areas. The school has gathered a wealth of data to check on students' progress. Its use of the data to set specific long term goals and draw up action plans that systematically evaluate students' progress towards these goals in the short and medium terms is not consistently established.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Jacob H Schiff Elementary M192	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 make 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		