



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

**Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis High School for
International Careers**

**High School 529
120 West 46 Street
New York
NY 10036**

Principal: Edward DeMeo

Dates of review: January 10 - 11, 2008

Lead Reviewer: Jan Warner

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis is a high school with 694 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 26% Black, 62% Hispanic, 5% White, and 5% Asian students. The student body includes 6% English language learners and 13% special education students. Boys account for 40% of the students enrolled and girls account for 60%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 82.1%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 58% eligibility.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school has well developed systems for understanding the performance and progress of students.
- The needs of all English language learners and special education students are transmitted to all staff and students assessed to be in greatest need are the first to receive support.
- Staffing and scheduling decisions are based on strong evaluations of individual students' performance and the most suitable programs.
- The school provides a strong focus on continuous improvement in order to raise achievement.
- There is effective use of departmental testing to focus and target student interventions and support to eliminate the weaknesses identified.
- Teachers receive good professional development that meets their needs and are given regular opportunities to work together to share good practice.
- The school has developed strong links with local businesses and other entities in order to offer more programs and internships to students.
- A wide variety of clubs and activities which reflect students' interests are on offer to enhance their learning.

What the school needs to improve

- Further improve the use of data by ensuring that teachers receive training to help them manipulate the data independently in order to better inform instruction.
- Continue to build the capacity of the school team and the way it functions, in order to empower individuals to take greater responsibility within the school community.
- Ensure that plans have targets which are measurable and time limited.

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 emphasis the school places on a business ethos creates a purposeful learning environment. Students receive a broad and balanced curriculum, which includes a wide variety of clubs and electives. Well-developed business links ensure that internships are available and career opportunities are created. The cabinet uses data successfully to place students in suitable programs, to track progress and monitor attendance. Teachers are beginning to use data to inform instruction in order to meet the individual needs of the students but their skills still need to be developed further in this area. Those students in greatest need are well catered for in an expanded special education department and all support services are well aligned. The teaching staff receive good quality professional development to support them in improving student performance. The principal is aware that they now need to work in a more collegiate way in order to build further capacity and take on more responsibility. There are clear goals to improve teaching and learning but targets are not yet measurable and time limited. The improvements that have been introduced since the last Quality Review include the introduction of internal diagnostic assessments of students in all subjects and a more effective use of data at all levels. The introduction of a more collaborative approach towards the sharing of specific responsibilities has also taken place. Both students and staff work well together and a learning community is being developed where success can be celebrated at all levels. The school is focused on continually driving up standards and is working to ensure its students are given every opportunity to succeed. The inquiry team has been set up to generate data about students who are not achieving at grade level in order to inform future training for all staff according to its findings.

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 data at all levels and disseminates patterns and trends to all the staff. Student scholarship data reports as well as results from mid-term and final assessments are shared and reviewed by administration in order to set academic goals. Students are assigned to advanced placement courses according to the results of State tests. Departments use common mid-term assessments in order to identify rates of progress and areas of weakness. Item analysis of these tests has resulted in program

modifications and specific exam preparation classes. As a result, 90% of the current graduation cohort is on target to graduate in a timely manner. All students' literacy and mathematical ability levels are tested on arrival and the results are published to all staff along with a list of all English language learners and special education students for instruction modifications. The results of the NYSELAT for English language learners are disaggregated into beginner, intermediate and advanced levels in order to further inform instruction and target the support provided. The progress of special education students is closely monitored by further diagnostic testing and all data is monitored for gender and ethnicity. The school has recently received recognition for its advanced placement program work with African and Latino males and has received a grant as a result. A women's support group has been set up to address specific gender issues. The principal makes comparisons with other local schools and with the school's performance over time. Training for staff has been provided on utilizing data to improve teaching and student performance. Weekly department meetings are also used to evaluate assessment data and align the curriculum. However, teachers recognize that more training needs to take place before they will be able to use data independently and make it part of their everyday routine.

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 introduction of common planning time for all departments has enabled teachers to focus on assessment tools that help them to effectively monitor progress and identify underachievement. For example, in social studies it was recognized that freshmen students perform less well when answering essay-type questions in exams. As a result, some time in double English lessons has been planned to focus on writing in the context of a history exam. Data concerning attendance and achievement by period has also been studied in order to see where scholarship classes are having the least impact. Two departments are piloting the case study approach in order to acquire more in-depth information about student progress. This approach is being used to facilitate further adjustments to teaching and better inform the setting of goals for improvement. Goals are discussed and plans made but a more collegiate approach amongst faculty to this process is still being developed.

The academic intervention strategies provided are continually evaluated in order to ensure maximum effect. The progress of students with individual educational plans is reviewed six times a year and specific courses for low attaining students are provided. As a result, more students are attending and accruing credits. The whole school community is kept informed of school-wide goals and targets through regular staff meetings and auditorium assemblies. The students speak of the high standards they are set and how assemblies are used to reinforce the drive for better grades. Parents and students sign a contract at the beginning of each semester which details the courses to be studied, progress, and what they need to achieve in order to succeed. The school is in constant contact with parents in order to keep students on track. One student said, "They are never not in touch!"

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 school follows the mandated core curriculum but is mindful of the fact that the content needs to be tailored to the student population. For example, the English curriculum has recently been re-written to accommodate a change in the student population over time. The school is rightly proud of its emphasis on business courses, the number of electives on offer and the number and variety of clubs run by the teachers. The students confirmed that their opinion is sought regarding which courses and clubs they would like to be provided. As a consequence, new clubs have been started this school year such as community service club and two new programs in the field of hospitality and tourism. The business enterprise elective is the pride of the school and students taking this course have recently had success in both national and international business competitions. Outside providers are sought to run courses that cannot be easily provided on site. An advanced theatre study course is held in a local theater and another program offers physical education classes that cannot be accommodated on the premises. The English language learners and special education departments share specific strategies and plan to accommodate student needs with teachers of general education classes. In this way teachers are beginning to differentiate their teaching. However, the school recognizes that further training is required to help all teachers to use data more effectively when planning to meet the needs of individual students in their classes.

The assistant principal in charge of scheduling uses data very effectively and works very closely with both the teachers and the student counselors to ensure that every student is provided with a program of studies tailored to their needs. The principal makes staffing decisions accordingly. He has hired more teachers than ever this year in order to provide smaller classes for the students in need of the most help. More special education teachers have been employed to accommodate the rise in numbers of students with individual education plans. As the school is relatively small, a real sense of community has been built up amongst the staff and students who know each other well. A senior student referred to her teachers as being "more like friends". The fact that teachers run most of the clubs on offer helps to forge even closer relationships. Student attendance is encouraged with incentives in the form of an inter-grade competition and action is taken to ensure that any absence is followed up immediately. Two family workers and an automated telephone system alert parents at all times to any absence or tardiness. The swipe system utilized in the school enables all staff to be notified if any pupil has cut their class. However, a pattern of absenteeism from lessons has recently been identified requiring planned remediation.

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 and his team make numerous classroom observations. Prearranged visits and less formal walkthroughs are all followed by a discussion with the teacher observed.

Suggestions made are followed up and appropriate training is offered. The staff are given every opportunity to attend training outside the school and details of courses on offer are emailed on a regular basis. Professional development in the school is well planned and delivered by a team of staff who ensure that it is relevant and targeted to promote successful learning. Weekly joint planning time allows departments to share good practice, reflect upon results and align programs accordingly. Inter-class visitations are not formally scheduled but do take place on an ad-hoc basis. Induction for new teachers is well developed and includes a very comprehensive staff handbook, a buddy system and a mentoring scheme. The mentor scheme is run in conjunction with the integrated service centre and both mentors and those mentored receive tailored support to meet their needs.

All student services are well aligned and weekly pupil personnel team meetings are held to discuss specific students' needs. The computerised system in the school enables both the counselling and academic staff to communicate very effectively in order to constantly update each other around issues of progress, attendance, lateness and discipline. The senior students were quick to express the view that the school had changed for the better over the past three years and is now a safer and calmer place. They agreed that the fact that a business school ethos pervades the school with suitable rules such as the use of planners and the wearing of uniform helps to promote a well-ordered environment. The school has developed a very wide network of support with community organisations and businesses such as Lehman Brothers, Marriott Hyatt and Deloitte Touche. Such links help the school to provide study support at weekends and after school, internships, mentoring schemes and additional funding.

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 instigated a goal setting system around the aims for improving teaching and learning across the school. He has used the "understanding by design" method for documenting these goals in order to model this approach to staff. Goals such as the improved use of formative assessment are shared and targets set. However, these targets are not measurable or time limited. With regard to the revision of plans, the principal is aware that many strategies and systems are used by the teachers but are not always easy to identify and document. The principal understands that more training is needed so that members of staff will be more effective at revising plans to promote academic progress for all students. All the interventions in place are tracked using specific diagnostic tools and strategic decisions are made to modify practices. There is a more collegiate approach to decision making in the school which has been developed in order to help the staff to drive improvement planning and take responsibility for raising standards. Teachers are not, however, given the opportunity to widen their remit beyond the classroom into such areas as professional development, assessments and a greater understanding of programming and budgeting. All subscribe to the vision for the school as they have had a part in developing the school's mission statement. The school principal and the community are clear that the main focus for the students is to develop their academic and social skills within the context of a business environment.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME:	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