



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

James B. Colgate School

Elementary School 12

**42 - 00 72 Street
Queens
NY 11368**

Principal: Patricia Perry

Dates of review: April 2 - 4, 2008

Lead Reviewer: Catherine M. Powis

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The James B. Colgate School is an elementary school with 1202 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 0.5% Black, 42% Hispanic, 8% White, and 49% Asian students. The student body includes 38% English language learners and 7% 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 96.2%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 74% eligibility.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal is very well respected by the whole school community and provides very good operational and instructional leadership.
- Leaders and faculty use a wide range of data effectively to build a very good knowledge of each individual student.
- Teachers work well collaboratively and collegially to plan the curriculum and informally share best practices.
- Professional development opportunities are differentiated to meet the needs of all teachers.
- The school has developed excellent partnerships with outside agencies to support instruction and provide enrichment.
- The school uses its budget effectively to provide additional resources, programs, and professional development to support instruction.
- A newly created teacher resource center, equipped with technology, motivates the teachers to access and manage student data to support curriculum alignment.
- The school has an excellent attendance rate that is reinforced by student attendance incentives.
- Students are very well behaved and have excellent relationships with each other and with the teachers in a safe and nurturing environment.
- The school benefits from a strong partnership with parents who support the high expectations for their children.

What the school needs to improve

- Utilize data more effectively to consistently track the progress of classes, grades, special interest groups, and subgroups.
- Establish more consistent use of interim goals to more rigorously and effectively monitor the school's progress towards meeting their annual goals.
- Build on existing good practices to further develop strategies to differentiate instruction that meet the needs of all students, especially high achievers.
- Strengthen ways of communicating with parents/caregivers about the progress of their children toward reaching their goals.
- Formalize opportunities for teachers to visit each other's classes and learn from best practices.

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.

James B Colgate School is a large elementary school with classrooms and corridors full of stimulating materials and very attractive displays of student work. This rich learning environment supports high expectations. The principal focuses on student improvement through an atmosphere of collaboration and collegiality. Teachers meet frequently to share practices and discuss student performance and progress. They hold themselves and their students accountable. Since the last Quality Review, they are starting to build a range of teaching strategies to further differentiate instruction. Students engage well in their lessons and are willing to articulate what is expected of them, and how they can succeed. As a result, individual students make progress toward their goals. Further work is required to ensure that class, grade, and school-wide subgroup progress is tracked and monitored more strategically. A variety of workshops give parents and caregivers information about curriculum expectations.

Another notable improvement since the last review is in the use of technology. Smartboards are becoming a tool for teaching, and computers are more accessible to teachers in a resource center and two computer labs. High priority is given to ongoing professional development that supports the goals of the whole school community, and is differentiated to meet the specific needs of individual teachers. Outside partners, school literacy and math coaches, and data specialists provide high quality professional development and support. Two data specialists contribute to the work of the well-established inquiry team to examine progress of a group of low performing students.

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 uses a wide range of assessments to generate student data. Teachers are confident in collecting and analyzing classroom data. This is used effectively in conjunction with a detailed profile of State assessments to track individual, student, and grade progress. The school's progress report reveals that special education students and English language learners, including those who have recently arrived in the country and those who are now confident English speakers, are lower performing students. As a result, there are interventions for special education students, including collaborative

teaching and specialist services. The inquiry team focuses effectively on a target population of English language learners. These students receive support through targeted interventions and their progress in reading and writing is closely monitored.

Teachers use grade meetings and common planning time to analyze data to determine grade level progress. Student data profiles are passed on to the next grade in September so that teachers have an understanding of the previous grade performance and progress of their students. The school does not yet have a comprehensive strategic view of how to use assessments to track progress of all subgroups and categories of special interest, such as the high achievers, whose scores show a decline in achievement over the last year.

The principal effectively uses the progress report peer horizon and the State's annual school report to make comparisons in performance and progress with similar schools. Ethnicity groups are disaggregated, identifying the lowest performing students within the Hispanic subgroup. She recognizes the need to build on the analysis of these comparisons, especially in sharing with the school community how other schools effectively use interim assessments to track progress by subgroups and gender during the year.

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.

School leaders and teachers share a school wide goal setting agenda that is effectively driven by data. Goals to enhance data driven and differentiated instruction are being further developed through curriculum planning, pacing timeframes, and professional development opportunities. The focus of teacher planning has improved because of the increasing effectiveness of staff in the use of data to identify skills deficits for individuals and groups of students. The school successfully uses data to inform the work of the academic intervention teachers who provide extended day classes, push-in and pull-out programs for special education students, English language learners, and other students identified as the lowest one third in performance.

High expectations for student academic and personal growth are school wide. Parents wholeheartedly support the school by becoming "learning leaders" and active members of the parents association. They participate in school and class activities, and access the school-recommended online assessment tutorial at home to work with their children in math and literacy. Students also share these expectations and enjoy coming to school. The school is less effective in sharing school goals with the whole community and providing information about individual goals. Work has begun to address this through the formation of a curriculum committee but it is too early to assess the impact of this work in communicating a goal-setting agenda.

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 principal allocates resources very effectively to support the improvement plans for the school. Classroom libraries are regularly evaluated and re-stocked so that books are matched to the range of reading levels appropriate for the class. A guided reading resource center provides materials that effectively support classroom interventions.

The school responded to the learning environment survey, which revealed that parents would like more enrichment programs to complement the curriculum. As a result, the curriculum is enhanced through cross-curricular themes to further develop skills. A stock market class allows students to apply their math skills. All kindergarten to grade 5 classes receive art instruction each week. Extended day programs offer dance, theme-based science, mathematics games, and homework help. Active Learning Leads to Literacy offers arts based and kinesthetic approaches to teaching early childhood literacy skills.

A wide range of data is collected and used by teachers to provide appropriate targeted instruction. Teachers use a differentiated approach by grouping students and planning tiered assignments. Varied instructional strategies embrace different learning styles. Students are very engaged in work with partners, accountable talk, working at a smart board or laptop or using manipulatives. Writing and math portfolios reflect the high expectations of teachers for their students. More work is needed in these areas to ensure consistency throughout the school.

Data analysis revealed that performance of high achievers was declining. The school has adjusted class placement and is building upon existing programs to enhance the differentiated approach to further challenge the high achievers.

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 plans professional development very effectively to meet the needs of individual teachers and the areas of improvement identified by the school. The collaborative atmosphere offers teachers the opportunity to decide what their individual learning needs are. Teacher surveys inform the plan for professional development by teacher, by grade, and by whole school. Best practices and ideas are identified at faculty and grade meetings. Teachers are very open and honest in reflecting on their practice and support the work of each other very well. A more formal program for teachers to visit each other’s classrooms would develop more consistency.

Two school literacy coaches, one math coach, and external consultants support teacher growth. There is a well-planned mentoring program for new teachers. Interim teaching goals are identified and ongoing in-class support and collaborative evaluations between teacher and coach are made throughout the year.

Regular classroom observations by the administration team identified results in working with teachers to improve how they use group work. Another focus this year is to bring about improvement in guided reading. A partnership that provides two staff developers, one upper grade and one lower grade, supports this focus. Other outside partners work to enhance the academic and personal growth of students. Symphony Space conducts a year-long program aligned with the social studies in grades 2 through 5. A Learning through Expanded Arts Program enriches the curriculum for kindergarten and grade 1. Western Queens New York Child Study Center provides on site evaluation and counseling to select students and their families.

Two guidance counselors provide good services to all students but with an emphasis on those in greatest need. As members of a very effective academic intervention team, the counselors work together with teachers to constantly prescribe, monitor, and evaluate interventions for academic as well as personal growth of individual students. Parents are actively engaged as partners in this ongoing process of evaluation and support.

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 Comprehensive Education Plan sets clear plans to reach annual goals of the school. The document is not fully embedded as the school's ongoing strategic action plan, and is not yet consistently updated to use as a tool to monitor improvement toward annual goals. Teachers know students' academic and personal needs by using a variety of diagnostic and formative assessments to monitor achievement of interim goals and evaluate the quality of their instruction. Item skill analyses from the new periodic assessments are reviewed systematically. Teachers meet regularly to review data and make immediate adjustments to the first tier of academic interventions in the classroom. Task-specific rubrics in English language arts and unit tests in math are used to evaluate whether students have met their goals. Grade level comparisons are made during common planning time and adjustments to the curriculum and pacing calendar are determined throughout the year. For example, data analysis revealed a cohort of students in grade 4 who scored a high Level 2 on the State English language arts assessment. The school formed a reduced-sized class of 15 for these students, and coupled with an increased amount of guided reading, conferencing, strategy lessons, and time to read and write student achievement is improving. There is a collaboration to evaluate student progress regularly between classroom teachers and specialized teachers for English language learners and special education students. However, practice is not consistent throughout the school.

The school is building upon an evaluation of school-wide trends over time and comparative data, for example, by sub group for high achievers, to inform objectively measurable goals. The two newly appointed data specialists are crucial in the further development of this process. Structures are already in place to support a developing culture where trends and evaluations are shared with all stakeholders. There is a clear vision for future development in a collaborative culture of school improvement and structures are in place to ensure sustained growth.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: James B. Colgate 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