



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Magnetech 2000 Junior High School

Middle School 231

**145-00 Springfield Boulevard
Queens
NY 11413**

Principal: Emmanuel Lubin

Dates of review: October 18 – 19, 2007

Lead Reviewer: Linda Hill

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Magnetech 2000 is a middle school with 807 students from grade 7 through grade 8. The school population comprises 94% Black, 5% Hispanic, 1% White and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 2% English language learners and 19.7% 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 90.7%. The school is not in receipt of Title 1 funding.

The principal has been in position for just over a year, but otherwise staffing remains stable with little turnover. Following notification in June 2007 another institution took over some of the school's facilities, including the science areas.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The well-respected principal has a clear understanding of the school's areas for improvement and the means by which those improvements can be made.
- The dynamic principal is imaginative and innovative in drawing in extra funding and resources to support the vision and work of the school.
- The strong and unified instructional team is highly committed to supporting the principal in effecting change through the improved use of data.
- Leadership identifies and supports teachers' professional development, to meet their needs and ensure high quality delivery of the curriculum.
- Careful and effective monitoring has led to much higher than average attendance.
- Teachers use effective and attractive classroom display to convey high expectations to students.
- The school works successfully with outside entities thereby enhancing its reputation and improving progress.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that regular interim monitoring leads to immediate revision of plans to meet the goals of the school.
- Ensure that all staff understand how to use data consistently to adapt plans and differentiate instruction better to meet the needs of individual students.
- Develop a wider range of instructional practice to provide an increasingly enjoyable and engaging experience for all students.
- Monitor the impact of formal and informal peer classroom observations to spread the best practice and improve the quality of instruction.
- Increase student engagement by creating greater opportunities for students to contribute their ideas to the development of the school's program.

Part 3: Main findings

Progress made since the last review

The school has made (little, some, good) progress in addressing the issues identified in the previous Quality Review report

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

The school knows itself well. Even though the principal has only been in position for a little over a year, he has reviewed the strengths of the school and its areas for development in a highly effective way. He has introduced a comprehensive and appropriate series of initiatives and strategies, particularly relating to the use of data, which are enabling the school to make rapid progress. The school now needs time for these changes to have an impact. The school has already identified for itself the areas for improvement outlined in this report.

Although the school is proficient overall, there are already several well-developed and much improved features since the last Quality Review. The school has introduced initiatives that have improved data analysis and, as a result, has allowed the school to successfully determine the best support for students who are in greatest need of improvement. The administration and the newly established inquiry team are committed to embedding these routines to improve the work of the school and raise achievement. The school encourages and facilitates collaborative working, including planning and team teaching, so that common goals are shared effectively. Professional development, which has improved since the last Quality Review, effectively supports teachers' work in the classroom. Yet, while principal's observation of teachers is systematic and formalized, peer classroom observation is not as widespread. The school does not make sufficient use of data at individual teacher level to provide well enough differentiated learning experiences.

It is testament to the hard work and vision of the principal and cabinet that all members of the school community value and support the changes being made. The school's reputation is enhanced in the neighborhood.

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.

Several aspects of data gathering and use have improved since the last review. During this academic year, the school has introduced robustly effective methods for collecting meaningful data leading to a clearer picture of where students are in their learning. Leadership also now collects and analyzes comprehensive data relating to all students, including those already at Level 3 or 4 and is mindful of those who might regress as well as those who need to advance. Effective cabinet meetings contribute to this level of focus

and provide opportunity for reflection on the next steps for improvement. New testing systems allow close tracking of the full range of students on a four-week cycle. These systems provide an analysis of what students can do and they illustrate clearly the areas of student learning that need improvement. To raise achievement, school leaders have identified aspects, such as report writing skills, for a whole school focus by analyzing the data produced. Currently, the English language arts faculty is ahead of others in using the system. However, professional development for all staff to gain access to the new system and its resources is already underway so as to establish a constantly updated understanding of performance and progress of all pupils across the curriculum. The new testing and tracking system also provides appropriate resources to address students' areas of weakness, so the next planned stage of development is to match the resources to individuals and groups so that more personalized and differentiated instruction can take place.

Students are only in the school for two years, and the school makes too limited use of data based on the past performance of individual students to track their progress. Leadership is beginning to compare the school's data to similar schools in a practical manner. For example, the principal and assistant principal have visited other similar schools to bring back examples of good practice, such as the "Four Square" writing method, to boost the performance of their own 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 school has made very good progress in making this a well-developed area since the previous Quality Review. Good support systems concentrate on boosting the academic performance of all students. A useful 10 week intervention, support and monitoring system means that individual students can be brought back on track rapidly and effectively. Where the data shows that groups require a different input to make more rapid progress, such as in math, the leadership makes appropriate changes to the curriculum so that gaps in learning can be reduced. Teachers make excellent use of display to enhance learning. Such resources show students how to achieve high expectations by providing clear rubrics.

Members of the school community including staff, students and parents are well informed about whole school goals and there are high expectations for success. The school provides very good information to parents and caregivers in a variety of forms including an open school night where teachers share the curriculum clearly. Staff make themselves available by email, cell phone and through face to face consultation so that parents and caregivers can gain access to information about their child in a manner and at a time that suits them. Parents and caregivers report that responses from staff are timely and say they "have never encountered a more approachable principal". Parents and caregivers can find out how well their child is progressing through the four-week testing cycle as well as the usual report cards. The school is striving to improve its contact with parents still further. Staff feel that the collaborative and supportive approach advocated by the principal and leadership is giving the opportunity to plan more strategically. However, robust time frames for improvement goals for all students are not yet fully established by all teachers.

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 principal and leadership take a strategic approach toward accelerating student learning through their new data gathering mechanisms and the changes they make based on their data analysis. This has led to alterations to the academic program and to the ways in which staff work together. An example is the joint planning sessions for English language arts and social sciences, so that the goals for improvement have now become more coherent and better understood by staff.

Leaders use qualitative and quantitative data in a strategic, innovative and creative way to ensure budgets, staffing and scheduling reflect the identified areas of need and development in the school. The principal's efforts have resulted in the school being awarded several grants to support its work, leading to more rapid progress than might otherwise have been expected.

The school has used its budget wisely to help enhance the curriculum program. The arts are well represented through the full time vocal coach and instrumental, theater, dance and step teachers. While relationships between staff and students are good and improving, not all students feel that their views are fully taken into account in deciding the program of extracurricular activities provided. The school plans to use its student resource more fully.

Tasks, resources, teaching approaches and activities are insufficiently differentiated to engage all students well enough. Too many lessons are over-reliant on the teacher with little wait or thinking time before pupils answer questions, for example. Too few lessons have a range of resources tailored to the individual student and there are too few opportunities for group and pair work.

The school uses very good procedures for monitoring and addressing attendance and tardiness, evidenced by the very good attendance record of the school. Parents and caregivers are immediately notified if their child is absent or late. The recently introduced reward system is also reducing tardiness.

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.

Rapid progress since the last review means that this is now a well-developed area. Professional development of staff is clearly linked to the needs of individuals, as well as to the school's established goals. Regular walkthroughs by the administration in conjunction with the formal lesson observations are well established and systematic and result in targeted professional development for teachers. Teachers are given areas to improve and the opportunity to respond to feedback on their lessons. Formal and informal observation, along with a comprehensive survey of staff professional development needs, has led to a clear program of training and development. Consequently, the school is providing training in the use of data and information technology. Staff appreciate the professional development opportunities they are being given.

Lead math and English language arts teachers work closely to support others. The improvement in collaborative teamwork means that teachers share professional views and development informally. Although, the school does not have a fully established program for all teachers to visit one another's classrooms to see the best practice.

Stable staffing means that there are very few new teachers to the school. Despite this, the school provides thorough induction and support for new teachers through the work of its induction committee.

School leaders create very effective partnerships with outside entities to drive the school forward. Parents report that the reputation of the school has improved because the principal acts as a good role model for all. Dismissals are well ordered, but students feel that disruption can still occasionally adversely affect learning in some lessons when other students distract their attention.

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 school has only just introduced a new system for regular interim assessments. This has not had time to embed fully, but is much improved from its underdeveloped status in the previous Quality Review. Good procedures to monitor long-term progress are in place through the work of the cabinet and instructional team who are modeling and leading development well. Currently the school does not have full interim time frames for tracking individual student progress in all subjects. In the past, too much time elapsed between assessments to show where students are in their learning. The school is addressing this by rolling out training to staff in the new assessment and resource package. However, much has been done since the last Quality Review in making teachers accountable for student progress. Processes are now in place to allow continued development linked to the formal and informal monitoring systems.

The school is rightly focusing robustly on improving evaluation and monitoring of student progress. The principal's stated aim that all students will reach their full potential and that there will be "no Level 1 students" in the school is fully understood by all, including pupils and parents. Introducing the "RICH" system where the whole community is striving to have respect and be influential, committed and honest means that the school has a clear and challenging vision for future development led by the principal's clear modeling of these aims. Not only is this a vision, it is already becoming a reality.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Magnetech 2000 (MS 231)	△	▷	✓	+	◇
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 . . .	△	▷	✓	+	◇
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 . . .	△	▷	✓	+	◇
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		