



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

**Thomas A. Edison Career and Technical
Education High School**

**High School 620
165-65 84 Street
Queens
NY 11432**

Principal: Anthony Barbetta

Dates of review: May 14 - 16, 2008

Lead Reviewer: John Hudson

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Thomas A. Edison Career and Technical Education High School is a high school with 2655 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 28% Black, 25% Hispanic, 6% White, and 41% Asian students. The student body includes 2% English language learners and 5% special education students. Boys account for 65% of the students enrolled and girls account for 35%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 91.5%. The school is not in receipt of Title 1 funding.

The principal has led the school since September 2007.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Administration and faculty make effective use of standardized and school-based assessments to update their understanding of student progress.
- Administrators use well-established systems to evaluate student progress across sub groups, classrooms, grades and subjects.
- Teachers make good use of data to identify students' next learning steps and set benchmarks to monitor progress towards demanding goals.
- The school community shares very high expectations for student achievement.
- Leaders hold teachers to account for the quality of their instruction and the performance of students in their charge.
- Teachers visit each other's classrooms, evaluate each other's performance, share best practice and plan effective instruction.
- Leaders and teachers consistently implement procedures that ensure the school runs smoothly and supports effective learning.
- Students feel safe and well cared for in an environment of mutual trust and respect between staff and students.
- The school makes good use of regular assessments to monitor the effectiveness of plans and procedures and revise them as required.
- The highly respected principal, supported by the school community, drives the school towards the realization of an ambitious vision.

What the school needs to improve

- Target professional development to individual teachers to further improve their performance and accelerate student progress.
- Share school goals with all members of the school community and gain their assistance in accelerating student progress.
- Encourage parents to provide information about their children, which will help teachers meet students' needs and promote their learning.

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.

The principal has a very good understanding of his school and students. Administration and faculty use standardized and a variety of school-based assessments to update their understanding of the progress of students. They use this information to evaluate relative performance of sub groups, classrooms, grades and subjects. In this way, they ensure progress remains consistently high and students achieve very good academic outcomes. Leaders and teachers take timely and effective action when student performance dips. Teachers make good use of a wealth of disaggregated data to identify students' next learning steps. They share this information with students and their parents.

The school community shares very high expectations for student achievement. The principal has taken decisive action to achieve demanding goals by holding teachers to account for the quality of their instruction and the performance of students in their charge. However, the school does not routinely share school goals with all members of the school community so does not gain the assistance of all parents in accelerating student progress. Parents are enthusiastic about supporting their children but are not asked routinely to provide information about them, to help teachers meet their needs and promote their learning. The school has a coherent plan for improving teacher performance to the very high quality seen in most classrooms. Targeted professional development does not yet sufficiently address the planning and instructional skills of a minority of teachers. Teachers work very well together. They visit each other's classrooms, evaluate each other's performance, share best practice and plan and deliver challenging and effective instruction. Students enjoy learning and are motivated to succeed.

Leaders and teachers consistently implement procedures that ensure the school runs smoothly and supports effective learning. Students feel safe and well cared for in an environment of mutual trust and respect between staff and students. Administrators and staff make good use of regular assessments to monitor the effectiveness of plans and procedures throughout the school. They use this information to make considered and timely revisions where these are necessary. The principal, supported by the school community, drives the school towards the realization of an ambitious vision. Since his appointment, the new principal has taken decisive action to resolve areas identified for improvement at the last Quality Review. The school has made substantial progress in all areas. The inquiry team has taken care to identify a homogeneous group of students at risk of failing in English language arts and explore ways to promote their skills in essay writing. The plan was successful in gaining passes for all focus group students in English Regents tests in January. The inquiry team plans to extend this program to all students and subjects and across other learning skills.

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.

Administration and faculty use standardized and a variety of school-based assessments to update their understanding of the progress of students. Teachers make good use of techniques to gain a frequently updated picture of student progress and achievement. These include regular one-on-one conferencing during lesson time and occasional use of a remote response system that enables all students to answer teacher questions simultaneously and provide disaggregated feedback to teachers and students. The effect of this system on student engagement is palpable. Teachers use this information to evaluate student performance within classrooms while the leadership team evaluates progress of sub groups, classrooms, grades and subjects. The administrators compare performance and progress with other high achieving high schools. They identified one school where progress was accelerating, so studied and emulated the school's highly effective use of interactive white boards as an aid to teaching and learning. The principal is vigilant to ensure progress of all students continues to improve.

The substantial majority of students progress well in all subjects and achieve very good academic outcomes. Teachers and leaders take timely and effective action when the performance of individual students dips. They refine instruction and use well established teacher and peer tutoring programs to support students whose progress is less than satisfactory. One student tutor commented, "The school has done a lot for me. This is one way I can repay them." School leaders have recently introduced excellent technology systems that support teachers in their use of data to inform planning and instruction and monitor individual student progress. Professional development is targeted to the needs of most teachers in the use of these systems and in using data to plan effective instruction and accelerate student progress.

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.

Teachers make good use of a wealth of disaggregated data to identify students' next learning steps and establish demanding interim goals at regular intervals towards important examinations. Through regular conferencing with teachers, students have a very good understanding of what they need to do in order to progress. Teachers send regular progress reports to parents so parents understand what their children know and what they need to learn next in order to progress and meet their goals. A comprehensive parents' handbook provides clear instruction on how to interpret progress reports and report cards. The school provides regular and much appreciated workshops and conferences to support parents. These have covered such topics as college preparation, student empowerment, study skills and preparation for Regents examinations. Parents, who perceive the school to be family oriented, use this information to support their children in achieving demanding end of course goals.

The principal has very high expectations of student success, which he shares throughout the learning community. Administrators and faculty work collaboratively to set goals for improvement that are objectively measurable and challenging and are based on student data. However, the school does not routinely involve parents in the development of these overall school goals so does not gain the fullest support of parents in accelerating student progress. Parents are enthusiastic about supporting their children and do work with teachers to ensure their children's success. However, not all parents are routinely asked to provide information about their children, to help teachers meet their needs and promote their learning.

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 has aligned the school's work around ambitious plans to accelerate student learning in this high achieving career and technical high school. The curriculum is broad and engaging and includes arts subjects. Students appreciate an exciting range of clubs and other opportunities that extend their experience and skills including leadership skills. Many courses are extremely popular and attract large numbers of students. English language arts, math, science, social studies and foreign language programs include honors and advanced placement courses. Well-structured introductory courses allow freshmen to choose between distinct programs in grades 10 through 12. These provide pathways leading to college and careers in technical electronics, commercial art and graphic communication, automotive technologies and information technology. Programs lead to exciting leadership opportunities. For example, the "MOUSE" Squad assembled the computer network for the New York Department of Education High School Admission Center. Students produce the high quality newspaper, "The Edison Light". Students and their parents are clear about graduation and college entry requirements in all pathways and receive very frequent information on their progress at regular benchmark events through the year.

The principal has the full support of his teachers in holding them to account for the quality of their instruction and the performance of students in their charge. Very well planned and interesting classroom activities challenge students to achieve their best. Instruction is motivating, highly engaging and meets the needs of individual students. Students feel safe and well cared for in an environment of mutual trust and respect between staff and students. Students are enthusiastic about their school, motivation is high and attendance is very good.

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.

Assistant principals, who lead each department, scrutinize student performance data and frequently visit classrooms to maintain a thorough understanding of student progress. This ensures planning and instruction are carefully designed to achieve the school's demanding goals and that teacher performance is of a uniformly high quality. The principal, who is highly visible in classrooms and hallways throughout the school,

monitors the work of his assistants to ensure learning and instruction are highly effective. In collaboration with faculty, leaders plan professional development programs to meet student and teacher improvement goals. The new principal has introduced procedures to ensure professional development aligns with the specific skills of individual teachers. This is already having some positive impact on teacher performance and student learning. Teachers are proud of the school and its students and work very well together. They visit each other's classrooms routinely, evaluate each other's performance, share best practice and plan effective instruction. Teacher turnover is low but the school has well-planned procedures to provide very good support for all new teachers.

The school has built a very strong guidance counseling service with clear routines to help students' meet their academic needs towards graduation and beyond. A network of support organizations provides additional support when appropriate. The school has excellent links with universities and colleges to extend student experience through internships in pharmacy, automotive technologies, "CISCO" and "MOUSE" programs. Student also benefit from opportunities with art and dance organizations and museums. Well established procedures are consistently applied to enable students to learn in a calm, highly ordered and well resourced school.

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 principal has the full and enthusiastic support of the school community in the measures he is taking to ensure the school meets challenging goals for improvement. Procedures to monitor the progress of students are carefully considered, consistently applied and highly effective. Where necessary, plans are adjusted promptly to respond to changing circumstances. The link between the use of updated data on student progress and finely tuned instruction to meet the needs of individual learners is well established. The principal is exploiting this link by introducing powerful and highly effective data management systems to support teachers. These systems also improve two-way communications between home and school. Recently implemented procedures to maintain a constantly updated understanding of teacher performance are highly effective. The school continues to improve processes to align professional development, training and coaching to the identified needs of individual teachers. In this way, the considerable strengths of many teachers are being shared and the quality of instruction is rising to very high levels.

Leaders and faculty systematically use assessment outcomes to monitor the effectiveness of plans, systems and procedures and make adjustments accordingly. Teachers make very good use of scheduled planning time to review sections of the curriculum and revise them. For example, social studies teachers align the curriculum to events currently in the news while maintaining progress towards examination success. Teachers are reviewing the curriculum to align their instruction across subjects where this will promote learning. Links between physics and electronics programs and between history and literature are examples of where improvements are being considered. These refinements promote student interest and improve examination performance. Highly effective leadership and well-qualified, reflective and informed teachers are building on student successes to drive further improvement. The principal, very strongly supported by the school community, leads the school towards the realization of an ambitious vision with vigor and considerable skill.

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