



# **The New York City Department of Education**



# **Quality Review Report**

**Jonathan D. Hyatt School**

**Elementary School 154**

**333 East 135 Street  
Bronx  
NY 10454**

**Principal: Cynthia Ballard**

**Dates of review: February 7 - 8, 2008**

**Reviewer: George Wallace**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Jonathan D. Hyatt School is an elementary school with 522 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 36% Black, 63% Hispanic, 0.5% White, and 0.5% Asian students. The student body includes 19.3% English language learners and 20% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 90.9%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 91% eligibility.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school collects and uses extremely effectively a wide range of student performance data to enhance planning, promote student progress and raise overall achievement.
- Teachers' knowledge of item analysis is highly effective and pattern analysis is developing well, enhancing their ability to plan differentiated instruction.
- The school has a wealth of systems to identify, support and improve the achievement of students at greatest risk.
- The principal provides extremely strong visionary leadership and has set a highly positive tone in which educational development thrives.
- Parents value the work, communications and overall qualities of the school extremely highly.
- The curriculum engages students because it is broad, interesting and incorporates many trips and productive links with outside organizations.
- Students love their school, find their lessons and other activities interesting and enjoy learning.
- The school provides a wide range of effective support for all teachers through a commitment to collaboration and effective use of professional development.
- The school uses its budget wisely to introduce a wide range of state of the art learning resources together with enhancements in data collection and analysis that has benefited the quality of teaching and learning.
- The school runs extremely smoothly and provides a highly caring, supportive and stimulating learning environment for students.

### What the school needs to improve

- Sharpen the school goal setting process to ensure that goals are much more easily measurable and aid the process of evaluation.
- Build in sharper procedures for evaluating the outcomes of goals both at interim points in the school year and at the end of the year.

## 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.**

Jonathan D. Hyatt School provides a clean, safe, caring and exciting learning environment in which children thrive. The principal has an extremely clear vision for the school and continues to be successful in creating a “garden of successful learners”. Teachers plan well to make their lessons interesting and as a result, students love their teachers and the varied types of challenging activities they do. The curriculum is broad, varied and inclusive. Teachers are always looking at ways to improve their instruction. Their highly effective approach to data analysis ensures they record key information from which they not only know the strengths and areas for development of their students, but also can consequently plan their lessons very effectively.

The school's senior leaders have a highly visible presence and are easily accessible to staff and parents daily. This is important to the successful running of the school and valued by staff and parents as it enables immediate discussion of issues of concern and solutions and strategies. Teachers keep senior leaders up to date about students' achievement on a weekly basis. This allows for close tracking of student progress and the ability for managers to intervene to re-direct strategies for student learning. The school has a very good knowledge of students at greatest risk regarding behavioral issues or academic performance. The support systems in place provide for them well. Additionally, there are useful meeting structures in place that allow staff to share their knowledge of specific students and the issues facing them. This enables staff to plan support accordingly.

This is a thinking school. Staff members are mindful of ensuring that the work they prepare challenges the higher achievers as well as being suitable for the needs of slower learners. They collaborate well and know and understand school goals, policies and procedures. The school uses the budget wisely and in recent years, has made decisions to enhance the quality of education it provides. It monitors these decisions and evaluates the effectiveness of such spending. The process of goal setting, while satisfactory, is not sharp enough to ensure that goals are measurable in order to support evaluation. However, goals are set and they drive the thinking and practice of the school effectively.

Since the last Quality Review, the school has strengthened the use of data and increased opportunities for teachers to share best practice to increase student achievement. The inquiry team is testing the effect of increased word study on spelling in order to improve students' reading and writing 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.**

The school collects a wide range of extremely useful data. Teachers are at the hub of data collection on student achievement and progress. Across the school, there are agreed procedures for the type of information collected, and most importantly, how to use it. From the data and subsequent conversations with other lead teachers and assistant principals, teachers know their students' needs extremely well. Teachers' item analysis is extremely strong and pattern analysis developing suitably well school wide. The school is part way through useful research and resource purchase related to boys and girls preferences in learning. In some classes, there is good attention to other categories in which to group students and where patterns emerge, teachers use strategies to aid the learning of such students. This allows them to plan work for all students in a highly effective way. The school caters for special education students extremely well and provides good support for English language learners. There are several forums in which to discuss the needs of such students, revise existing support and sometimes, plan new interventions.

The senior leaders know their school very well. Their strategies for change in the management structures of the school stem from detailed data analysis. The principal and four assistant principals meet weekly to discuss data updates received from all class teachers. Data analysis has a very high profile because all staff know the value of tracking performance and analyzing data for the benefit of students' learning. The school over recent years has been extremely good at raising the performance of students on Level 1 and current data suggests that their equivalent work to raise the proportion of higher attainers is also working. The principal is mindful of school performance in similar schools. Among other things, teachers make visits to other schools, as does the principal, for example, to assess an activity that is working well and may benefit Jonathan D Hyatt students. The school manages data collection, analysis and subsequent professional development extremely well.

**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.**

Administration is very effective in frequently bringing together staff and teachers in different forums to discuss students' needs. There are many times each week when staff meet and discuss students' achievements and progress, the nature of the curriculum and individual students and their very specific needs. Collaboration is strong and leads to a shared Comprehensive Education Plan, which belongs to the whole school community. There are additional school goals that relate strongly to the promotion of a secure and stimulating learning environment in which the "garden of successful learners" can thrive. There is a time frame to the goals, but too many are written in such a way either that it will be very difficult to measure the level of success achieved, or the school has not yet thought through ways to evaluate them.

Both formal and informal collaboration ensures the school attends to students' needs well. Staff knowledge of the children is exemplary. Diagnoses of problems are commonplace and suitable remedies put in place promptly. Staff also consider the needs of groups of students and deal efficiently with their academic, behavioral, personal and social development. The effectiveness of data collection and analysis ensures supports this. Consequently, planning for improvement is effective and both the academic results have improved and reductions in behavioral incidents have occurred.

The principal has very high expectations of students and staff and as a result, teachers have high expectations for their students. The way the school conveys these to students and their parents/carers is excellent. Through the many communications parents receive and their ease of access to staff to discuss their children, they are very well aware that the school has high expectations for good behavior, politeness, honor, respect and other attributes of personal and social growth.

**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 curriculum is broad although there is a focus on English language arts and math. Teachers monitor the progress of students' work closely. They gather a wide range of data and use it effectively to target students who require additional support. Teachers individually, and through their grade team meetings, monitor the performance of their students and discuss ways to make improvements. They use data to ensure that they are planning for differentiated instruction. Sometimes the effectiveness of teachers' planning is not always evident in ensuring that they meet the needs of all. However, teachers always ensure there is one target group of students that they spend additional time with, working on skills development. The wider curriculum ensures that students take art, physical education/dance, science, social studies and music on a weekly basis and go on many valuable trips. Many students learn musical instruments and in particular, many are accomplished violinists.

Teachers recognize that they are accountable for their students' learning. They have embraced new methods in lesson planning that ensure a consistent approach to teaching across the school. Students are motivated to learn. They find the work challenging and say that teachers vary their work and make learning both interesting and often fun. Teachers organize classrooms well and provide students with a safe, inclusive and vibrant environment for learning. The whole school is an oasis for students with trust and respect central to continuing school policy. The school targets finances to the areas of greatest need and in particular, to those areas which are central to the school development plan. Staffing and scheduling decisions, equally precise, efficient and well targeted, ensure both the performance and well-being of students improves significantly. Attendance across the school is improving and is currently running at over 93%. Upper years show better attendance rates than the early years. However, too many students, especially the youngest children arrive late for the start of school.

**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 senior leaders recognize their accountabilities. They observe lessons formally, complete walk-throughs and provide a consistent and helpful approach to feedback and development for staff. They are highly visible through the school and therefore staff and students know them well. In particular, they are effective in their role of ensuring the growth of students' personal, social and academic development. The school bases professional development decisions on an analysis of staff needs and targets it to meet the school's goals. This means that there is whole-school professional development, and while much development occurs through grade meetings, staff members attend external courses and turnkey on their return. Teachers also benefit from observing other teachers in their own as well as other schools. The school provides extremely good support for new teachers. Although they have a teacher mentor, many staff have an active involvement in ensuring they flourish in the school.

The school takes youth development and guidance seriously and organizations work with students during and after school on various improvement strategies. Overall, these, together with the after-school program and activities organized by other community-based organizations provide invaluable support for students. The school has ensured that the work of their partners is complementary to that of the school and therefore aligns with the school's personal and academic goals for students. The school runs extremely smoothly. There are clearly understood routines and procedures adhered to by all.

**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 a clear vision for the school, shared by the whole school community. Her leadership and vision has ensured that parents and students value extremely highly the work and direction of the school.

Goal setting is a significant mechanism through which school development occurs. The school uses data is widely and successfully in planning and evaluating performance against school goals. However, whilst the objectives are clear, the school does not express goals in ways that reveal interim points in the school year for evaluation or enable ease of measurement. The school effectively designs and targets professional development to ensure that it meets the needs of staff and aligns with its goals.

Effective use is made of periodic assessments. Any issues of concern regarding student progress results in teachers planning for differentiated support or intervention strategies. Staff discuss the outcomes of grade meetings frequently with senior leaders so that they are kept abreast of performance outcomes and plans arising from such data analysis. Therefore, school leaders are up to date in their tracking of student performance. Because of this, they know the extent to which the school is meeting its goals and what needs revising in order to meet goals where the data indicates that progress towards them is slower than expected.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: Jonathan D. Hyatt School</b>	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
<b>Quality Score</b>				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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>				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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>				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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>				X	

<b>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.</b>					
<b>To what extent does the school . . .</b>	<b>Δ</b>	<b>➤</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>◇</b>
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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>					<b>X</b>

<b>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.</b>					
<b>To what extent do . . .</b>	<b>Δ</b>	<b>➤</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>◇</b>
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
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>					<b>X</b>

◇	<b>Outstanding</b>
+	<b>Well Developed</b>
✓	<b>Proficient</b>
➤	<b>Underdeveloped with Proficient Features</b>
Δ	<b>Underdeveloped</b>