



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

**Jane Addams High School for Academics and
Careers**

**High School 650
900 Tinton Avenue
Bronx
NY 10456**

Principal: Sharron Smalls

Dates of review: May 12 - 14, 2008

Lead Reviewer: Jan Warner

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Jane Addams High School for Academics and Careers is a high school with 1,713 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 33% Black, 63% Hispanic and 4% White and other students. The student body includes 11% English language learners and 18% special education students. Boys account for 32% of the students enrolled and girls account for 68%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 79%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 92% eligibility.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Teachers use data well to evaluate students' progress very effectively and share all types of student information across the school.
- The curriculum is being extended to widen the range of opportunities made available to the students and increase their engagement and motivation.
- Resources, in particular technology, are being used strategically to meet the school's academic goals for all students.
- Clear systems and structures are implemented rigorously enabling the school to function effectively on a day-to-day basis.
- Focused support helps over-age and under-credited students to graduate.
- Good relationships throughout the school ensure that there are high levels of mutual trust, respect and regard between all staff and students to support their personal and academic development.
- Good levels of support help students to successfully move on to the next level of their education.
- Effective partnerships with outside agencies actively support the academic and personal growth of the students.
- The principal's dedication and total commitment is the driving force for change.

What the school needs to improve

- Further establish systems to enable the sharing of good practice and promote an open and reflective professional environment.
- Fully embed the vision for the school so that it becomes a single driving force for development.
- Continue to implement the corrective action plan for the Learning Academy students.
- Identify and implement ways to raise the all-round achievement of boys.
- Continue to improve attendance rates.
- Explore ways to sustain two-way communication with more parents.

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.

Teachers at the Jane Addams School use data effectively to track students' progress and plan their lessons to meet individual needs. Lessons are mostly differentiated and of a high standard. Teachers employ technology effectively to track student progress and apply this to planning to enhance student learning. Under-credited students are given the intervention they need in order to graduate through the use of specific provision and all students receive extensive support in order to move successfully on to the next stage of their education. The teachers and support services use very effective communication systems to ensure all information is shared. Systems are also in place to ensure that the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. High levels of mutual trust and respect are evident amongst both staff and students. Effective partnerships with outside agencies enhance the learning opportunities available to students.

The school has made good progress since the last Review. As a result, the use of data is better established throughout the school and there are systems which track student progress and ensure that they are set targets. More consistent use of item analysis and a common framework of rubrics ensure that students are made aware of their strengths and weaknesses and what they have to do to improve. More focused observations and discussion in study groups aid the establishment of a common understanding of best practice, but this is not yet fully embedded. The inquiry team works well to look at students in grades 9 and 10 with poor English language arts scores. It has already identified specific skills concerning the acquisition of vocabulary and comprehension that need to be addressed by all subject areas in the future. The new principal is driving up standards with high expectations for all members of the school community and an insistence on a professional learning environment where all can succeed. This vision has yet to be fully embedded. The principal has created plans to further enhance the learning for special education students in the Learning Academy and boys.

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.

Analysis of a wide range of assessment information is helping the school to understand patterns of achievement. Two data specialists ensure that all teachers have access to

school wide data and all departments are implementing the Kaplan Achievement Plan to track progress and set targets for students. Teachers also use computerized grade recording systems and a whole-school information sharing system to ensure that they are kept fully informed about every aspect of students' needs and progress. As a result, students are more aware of what they need to do to improve and are making better progress. Teachers have received sharply focused training in order to be able to use the data systems in the school and the necessary software has been purchased. Coaches are on hand to give support so that teachers feel confident in analyzing the data that is made available to them.

Patterns of achievement between different groups of students are reviewed carefully. As a result, programs such as Above and Beyond are being refined and made more successful. Lessons learnt in relation to accelerating the progress of under-credited students are being used to address the needs of other groups of students. However, the Learning Academy special education students' individual education plans are not focused enough and boys' needs have yet to be fully investigated so that these groups achieve their full potential. The needs of students with English as a second language are being identified, but not all these students are making the same progress as their peers. As well as making comparisons with similar schools within her peer group, the principal has established links with other schools of a similar designation outside the district achieving better results in order to share best practice.

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 staff meet together regularly in curriculum teams in order to develop standardized curriculum maps, grading criteria and rubrics across all departments. A common framework ensures that students know what they have to learn and continual assessment informs them where they are and what they have to do in all subject areas. The grading policies are in line with state examination requirements and rubrics are tailored according to student needs. The assistant principals review the data with their department at the end of every marking period to ensure that support systems are put in place for those that need it.

The principal is insistent that all students are expected to achieve at whatever level whether they are in honors classes or a member of the Learning Academy. Those students in greatest need of improvement are clearly identified and offered a variety of support including tutoring after school and on Saturdays. Students were clear that teachers offer help freely in their own time in order to help them succeed. One said, "They never stop caring about us". The Daedalus computerized information system ensures that support staff have access to all student information about attendance, results and specific needs so that no student is left behind. Students attested to the fact that this information is sent home regularly via telephone calls, letters and emails so that "our parents always know everything". However, it is not easy to reach parents as this is not a neighborhood school and parents do not always attend meetings in great numbers. It is therefore difficult to build up close two-way communication links between school and students' families.

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.

As well as the core curriculum classes being aligned to the State exam grading system, the career and technical courses have industry accreditation. The variety of courses on offer reflects the wide range of abilities of the students and the need to accommodate both genders. For example, the school offers more advanced placement courses than most other schools of its kind and has introduced courses such as cosmetology and barbering in order to appeal to both boys and girls. Art is strength in the school and subjects such as ceramics and graffiti art appeal to a wide range of the student population. Students have a direct influence on the extra-curricular courses available and speak with enthusiasm about the choice of clubs and sports teams on offer. Options include martial arts, yoga, track, cheerleading, video club and Women of Essence. In this way student motivation has increased and drop-off rates have been reduced. However, there are limited activities which motivate boys and enable them to develop social skills.

Students are tracked in line with their ability and teachers plan lessons and support carefully to match the needs of individual students. Teachers are now better equipped to monitor student progress and draw on item analysis in order to focus their teaching on areas of weakness. Teachers meet regularly with the principal to discuss data and are held accountable for student progress. The school budget has been well used to provide training and purchase resources. Effective use of technology ensures that teaching is differentiated successfully. The students expressed the view that teachers “go the extra mile” for them and each hold the other in high regard. They appreciate the fact that much career-focused teaching is carried out by educators who have a depth of understanding of the world of work and a passion for their subject which is transferred to the students, resulting in high levels of trust and respect. The new principal has placed a firm emphasis on improving attendance across the school. As a result, a wider range of strategies is being trialed to prevent long-term absentees from dropping out altogether and attendance officers work tirelessly to follow up all absences in a timely way. Such initiatives are beginning to have an effect, but have not been in place long enough to impact significantly.

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’s commitment to achieving high standards of teaching and learning is clear through the range of professional development on offer to teachers. Teachers have a menu of training more aligned to their professional needs while walkthroughs and observations are linked to targets set. Inter-visitations do take place but are not, as yet, formalized. Such visits, focused observations and meeting times are being used to establish school-wide agreement around what is good practice before a system of sharing is set up. Staff work in close collaboration to plan and support each other, but

due to their large numbers and the complicated scheduling required in a technology-based school, do not always do this in a formal way. However, they participate in regular Lunch and Learns and attend training in their own time. New teachers were quick to recognize that everyone helped them with advice and support, not just their mentors. Training includes demonstration lessons and regular meetings which raise levels of confidence and establishes good communication links.

The school supports students effectively at many levels throughout their time at the school both academically and personally. One example is the experienced team geared towards preparing students for their move to the next stage of their education and, where possible, gaining scholarships. Systems of sanctions and rewards help maintain discipline throughout the building and keep students safe. For example, students are now more punctual for lessons since the introduction of detentions in association with the three minute rule. Students benefit from many highly influential experiences through partnerships with outside organizations and celebrities such as Bobbi Brown. Some were eager to relate the competitions and sporting events they had attended in places across America and the world. Links with the community and the business world have also made a considerable impact on students' future work opportunities through internships and extra-curricular experiences.

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 school is adept at evaluating and monitoring its goals and the principal is tracking progress made at every stage of the school's development. Goals, such as those in the Corrective Action Plan for Special Education, are measurable and time-limited. As a result, the school is now meeting its obligations concerning annual reviews for students with individual education plans. Pacing calendars direct the work of every department and these are revised as necessary. Discussions held at the end of every marking period result in courses being realigned accordingly.

Teachers and faculty use both Kaplan baseline assessments and reports from Acuity to measure the effectiveness of plans. Other diagnostic tools such as Orchard identify and monitor the progress of special education students who are placed in the Alternative Assessment program. Students are given every opportunity to succeed and plans are changed if results show that it is necessary. For example, the less successful environmental science course offered to in-coming students has been replaced by a living environment course of study. The school has looked carefully at the need to make further changes for new students in order to help them make greater progress early on in their school career and plans and scheduling are being revised as a result. The principal is determined to improve achievement by raising expectations across the whole school community. Her vision of "A professional learning environment with high expectations for all" is becoming a reality but is not, as yet, the total driving force across the whole school. The principal's determination and leadership skills are moving the school on successfully.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Jane Addams High School for Academics and Careers

Quality Score

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