



**NYCDOE**

**Quality Review: Final Report**

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



# **Quality Review Report**

**Jeffrey M Rapport School for Career Development**

**High School 754  
470 Jackson Avenue  
Bronx  
NY 10455**

**Principal: Ellis Scope**

**Dates of review: May 20 - 21, 2008**

**Lead Reviewer: Jeffery Plumb**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Jeffery M. Rapport School for Career Development is a high school with 505 students from grades 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 38% Black, 58% Hispanic, 2% White, and 2%% Asian students. The student body includes 11% English language learners and 100% special education students. Boys account for 71% of the students enrolled and girls account for 29%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2007-2008 was 71.2%. The school is not in receipt of Title 1 funding.

This school serves alternate assessment and standardized assessment students. It is in its third year of taking standardized assessment students and has not yet had a cohort of students who have graduated with a high school diploma.

The school is organized into three academies. The Mission Academy, which serves students classified as having severe and emotional disorders. A pre-General Educational Development (GED) diploma program provides a pathway towards a qualification for students who are over-age for grade and under credited. This academy also includes an inclusion program off-site that assists students as they transition back to a general education environment. The Workforce Academy provides a departmentalized course of study for students who are working towards an Individual Education Plan (IEP) diploma. The course of study includes academic remediation, access to shop classes, and a focus on employment skills with a continuum of internship opportunities ranging from part-time in school to full-time in the community. The Aim for Greatness Academy provides a self-contained program for students with mild to moderate impairments in cognitive functioning. In addition to academic instruction, these students participate in shops and are prepared for work in the community through a range of internship opportunities ranging from full and part-time in school to full and part-time in the community.

The principal is in her second year at this school.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- There are good systems in place and the school uses collaborative meetings for analyzing data and setting goals to improve instruction and raise student achievement.
- The principal and administration and teachers share a vision which focuses on opening up a vocational pathway for all enrolled students.
- The curriculum program is flexible and provides an opportunity for alternate assessment students to graduate with a General Educational Diploma.
- The progress of alternate assessment students is effectively tracked over time.
- Teachers of alternate assessment students differentiate their instruction to meet their students' needs effectively.
- The introduction of the Positive Behavior Intervention Supports and clear expectations has led to a significant reduction in the number of serious incidents.
- Through good collaborative meetings teachers use data well to modify instruction to meet student needs successfully.
- The good work-study program enables students with severe and complex learning difficulties to secure competitive employment.
- Good partnerships with business and service agencies in the community benefit students' academic and social development.
- There is good counselor and outside agency support for students with mental health difficulties.

### What the school needs to improve

- Use data to analyze student performance by gender and improve the analysis of data by ethnic groupings.
- Explore assessment strategies for students who decline to use Scantron online in order to provide teachers with the data needed to plan differentiated instruction.
- Introduce strategies to improve punctuality and attendance for all students, but particularly for standardized students with emotional difficulties.
- Improve the engagement of parents and caregivers in the education of their children to accelerate their learning.

## Part 3: Main Findings

### Progress made since the last review

The school has some progress in addressing the issues identified in the previous Quality Review report

### Overall Evaluation

#### **This school is proficient.**

In a short space of time the principal has successfully engaged the vast majority of teachers in embracing her vision to ensure that as many as possible of the students in the school have the opportunity to graduate with a high school diploma. The curriculum is flexibly planned. It provides an opportunity for higher-achieving alternate assessment students to integrate with standardized assessment students and follow courses that lead to graduation with a General Educational Development diploma. Currently alternate assessment students follow a vocational pathway. Partnerships with businesses in the community support the good work-study program effectively. Effective guidance counselors and outside agency support helps students with mental health difficulties exceptionally well. Faculty collaborative meetings are beginning to make use of data to benefit students. For example, the assessment team is currently developing a writing rubric for students' with the most complex needs based on their performance as measured by the appropriate state standard.

Developments for standardized assessment students are not as advanced as those for alternate assessment students. The punctuality and attendance of a significant proportion of these students is poor. The Scantron tool is used to assess what this cohort of students know and can do, but many of them are either absent when the test is carried out or decline to participate. Consequently, teachers do not have robust information about what these students know and can do. Even where teachers do have data about the performance of these students, they do not use it consistently to differentiate their instruction to raise their achievement. The school works very hard to engage parents in an effective partnership to accelerate their children's learning, but they are not successful enough in doing so.

Since the last quality review, the school has made steady progress. In some areas, there has been significant progress. The number of serious behavior incidents has been reduced following the successful introduction of Positive Behavior Intervention Supports. The curriculum and instruction for alternate assessment students is now good. Their progress is tracked and their teachers use assessment data to differentiate their instruction to challenge them and meet their learning needs. The alternate assessment staff have made a valuable contribution to align rubrics to the alternate assessment levels. The inquiry team has begun to analyze the academic performance of different subgroups, but it is at too early a stage of development to evaluate its effectiveness. It has also analyzed math test results for standardized assessment students and taken action, which has raised their achievement in math.

## **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.**

The school gathers data about what alternate assessment students know and can do from a range of qualitative and quantitative sources. Brigance assessment data on these students is fed into tracking sheets, which are used to monitor their progress over time. Systems are not so robust for standardized assessment students. Scantron is used to assess what they know and as with alternate assessment students' data is fed into tracker sheets. However, a significant proportion of these students elect not to do the on-line Scantron assessments. Consequently, the school does not have enough data about their achievement to effectively track their progress.

English language learners are assessed in accordance with the mandated testing in District 75 schools. Their acquisition of speaking and reading skills is tracked over time. The inquiry team is beginning to gather data about the achievement of ethnic and gender groups. Behavior data is gathered and used effectively to track the behavior of challenging students. This results in a decrease in the number of serious incidents. The school scrutinizes its performance in tests. For example, the inquiry team has looked at math results for standardized students and taken action to improve instruction in this subject. Analysis of attendance data by class enables the administration to target additional support to teachers. Administration compares its performance against a similar school. The data specialist attends collaborative meetings to support teachers in the use of data to improve their instruction. The assessment committee for alternate assessment students is beginning to develop rubrics to support charting and monitoring 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 proficient.**

Brigance assessment data is used effectively to set relevant learning goals for alternate assessment students. Teachers make good use of these goals to plan lessons and accelerate student learning. The assessment committee is working on rubrics to chart the progress of students with the most complex needs and to set them achievable goals. At present, the goals are not sufficiently broken down and it appears as if some of these students are not making progress. Many standardized assessment students are frequently absent from school and often refuse to take the on-line tests. Consequently, the school does not have robust baseline data on many of these students from which to set academic goals. Scantron has got off to a promising start in providing data for faculty to plan programs to support standardized assessment students in accruing the credits required to reach their goal of graduating with a high school diploma, but it is too early to evaluate its effectiveness. In addition, many of these students have significant gaps in their education and enter this school with no test results. Where the school

successfully encourages these students to sit the on-line tests they set them goals to make up credits rapidly. Clear behavioral goals are set for students with the most challenging behaviors using data gathered from the school wide intervention system. These processes lead to improved behavior and accelerated learning for these students.

Collaborative faculty teams meet regularly to review and revise students' academic and behavior goals. There is daily dialogue between teachers and students about their learning goals. Individual education plans are monitored carefully and goals are frequently modified to accelerate student learning. The principal has an open door policy for communication with parents about their children's progress. Six report cards are sent home each year, which keeps parents fully informed. However, improving parental involvement in the education of their children remains a challenge for the school.

**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 core curriculum is flexibly planned which enables standardized assessment students who are under-credited and over-aged to accrue credits. This is innovative as these courses leading to this diploma are open to alternate assessment students as well. Standardized assessment students with good attendance have a curriculum mapped to the requirements of a Regents high school diploma. Although the alternate assessment curriculum for the most complex students is linked to the State standard, rubrics are not finely tuned to the needs of those students who make very small steps of progress. Alternate assessment students follow a work-study curriculum, which enables them to achieve their long-term goal of securing competitive employment. Enjoyment in learning is promoted through dance, music and physical education.

The building administration holds teachers to account through thorough and detailed lesson observations. However, observations within the Mission Academy do not always focus sharply enough on teachers' use of data about students' prior attainment to differentiate their instruction. Budgeting, staffing and scheduling decisions based on data are made. The decision to re-schedule teachers for small group instruction based on an analysis of performance accelerates student learning. The vast majority of teachers respect students. Supports are available for teachers to further develop their skills in this and other areas. The principal and assistant principals have a clear vision for the professional development of staff. Attendance is improving because of robust follow up systems put in place, but the punctuality and attendance of a hard core of standardized assessment students is poor and has a negative impact on their learning.

**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.**

Professional development is effective in enabling teachers to meet the disparate and very complex needs of their students. Regular and frequent cohort meetings have been put in place to focus professional development on analyzing and using data to differentiate instruction. The assessment team successfully uses data to plan lessons with very specific learning goals for the alternate assessment students with the most complex needs. As a result, instruction for this cohort of students has improved significantly. Whole-staff training in the implementation of the Positive Behavior Intervention Support has contributed to a skilful and consistent approach to behavior management throughout the school. This has had a positive impact and there are considerably less serious incidents than at the time of the previous Quality Review.

The administration team conducts lesson observations in accordance with tenure regulations. Teachers receive positive feedback on how to improve their instruction. However, written feedback following observations of classes for standardized assessment students does not always hone in sharply enough on how the assessment of students is used to differentiate their instruction. Induction of new teachers is effective. Consequently, new teachers say that they are confident in working to meet the requirements of students with complex needs. Counseling for students provided by related services contributes significantly to students' improved behavior. Good structures and systems are in place to ensure that this school runs smoothly. Partnerships with a wide range of outside entities support the work-study program exceptionally well. The support for students with mental health issues is a significant strength and enables them to access learning.

**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's attendance and crisis intervention plans have long-term goals focused on improving attendance and behavior with milestones and time-lined objectives to reach these goals. The crisis intervention plan has a significant impact on reducing the number of serious incidents, but the attendance plan is less effective. The Comprehensive Education Plan to accelerate student learning is under review. There is a robust system in place for teachers to track the progress of students over time. When a student meets his or her academic goals before the end of the year administration calls for an individual education plan meeting to be brought forward and immediately set goals that are more challenging for the student in question.

Periodic assessments are developing well for both alternate assessment and standardized assessment students. The use of these assessments is becoming increasingly effective in improving instruction and raising achievement. However, this is a work in progress for both groups of students. Rubrics are being developed to generate periodic assessments, especially for students with the most complex needs. However, the State levels are not sufficiently broken down to service the students with the most complex needs who make very small steps of progress in reading and writing. The principal has a clear vision that focuses on developing a continuum of instructional opportunities so that students leave school with the independence and vocational skills required to succeed at college or in the workplace.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME:</b>	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
<b>Jeffrey M. Rapport School for Career Development</b>					
<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>					X

<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>					X

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