

Quality Review Report

2008-2009

Roy Campanella Vocational Training Center

High School 721

**64 Avenue X
Brooklyn
NY 11223**

Principal: Wendy Weiss

Dates of review: April 21 - 23, 2009

Lead Reviewer: Helen Donnellan

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Roy Campanella Occupational Training Center is a high school with 467 students from grade 8 through grade 12. The school population comprises 50% Black, 20% Hispanic, 20% White and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 18% English language learners and 100% special education students. Boys account for 61% of the students enrolled and girls account for 39%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2007 - 2008 was 86.7%. The school is not in receipt of Title 1 funding.

This district 75 school is located on a main site in Brooklyn, a general education inclusion site and over 20 work sites. Students' disabilities include developmental delays, physical disabilities and autism. All students follow alternate assessment programs. Class organization reflects students' needs with student to teacher to paraprofessional ratios of 12:1:1, 12:1:4, 8:1:1 and 6:1:1. Fifty one percent of students also study at work sites.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

The Roy Campanella Occupational Training Center offers its diverse range of students a rich curriculum which links core subjects and vocational training in meaningful ways. This leads to interesting and challenging programs which hold students' interest and motivate them to learn. The principal has created a supportive culture with learning as the clear priority for all students, whatever their disability. Students are eager to be at school and to take part in varied learning programs. They recognize the need for active participation in learning, which one student described as "If you want to achieve it, you've got to go for it".

The school routinely gathers detailed and extensive data to give a balanced picture of student learning in all the core subjects, social development and other areas identified in individual educational plans (IEP). This data is used routinely to set individual goals within classes and for longer-term objectives in IEPs. While most goals are sharply written with measurable outcomes and timeframes there is some variation and, where this occurs, it is hard to identify exactly what needs to be achieved and monitor progress. While most teachers plan instruction to match the needs of their students, there is some inconsistency which leads to lower levels of engagement and reduced learning outcomes.

Staff and students show great respect for each other and this provides a solid platform for students to acquire self-control and to act in mature ways. That same respect underpins the ways in which teachers work together, share effective practice and help to resolve problems through successful team work. The extensive professional development program supports teachers across the school, but does not yet link to explicit plans for individual teacher development. The school has successfully created a culture where planning, monitoring and revising exist at all levels. Teachers, collaborative teams and administrators routinely use a range of assessment data to monitor the progress made in plans for individual students and whole-school plans. This monitoring is made complex owing to the lack of a clear structure for organizing changes.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school gathers and analyzes extensive data to show the progress of all students in all the core subjects and vocational programs offered.
- Administrators and faculty work hard to involve parents in students' education, keep them well-informed and provide extensive support in making long-term decisions.
- The school consistently conveys high expectations to parents and students about learning, behavior and attendance.
- The well-planned curriculum complies with requirements and is sufficiently flexible to give students in all service categories opportunities for learning.
- School leaders work hard to provide resources that match the diverse range of student needs in academic and vocational programs.
- Effective collaborative work enables staff to share leadership and make changes to instruction promptly.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that goals in all subjects are sharply defined, measurable and include interim milestones to improve ongoing monitoring.
- Structure all plans so that actions, people responsible, timescales, resources, monitoring and impact are easily identifiable.
- Establish individual development plans for teachers to provide a clear link with the school-wide improvement goals.
- Ensure that all teachers identify and apply their learning from professional development and evaluate its impact through monitoring their practice.

Part 3: Main Findings

How well the school meets New York City's evaluation criteria

Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, generate and analyze information on student learning outcomes and use it to understand what each student knows and can do and to monitor the student's progress over time.

This area of the school's work is well developed.

The school has created a robust assessment framework which is routinely used by teachers and administrators to give a comprehensive picture of student progress in all core subjects and vocational programs. Since the last review, the school has added to its understanding of student learning outcomes. It now analyzes data in new ways and has more accurate and evidence-based insights into patterns in different learning outcomes for boys, girls and ethnic groups. The school has developed a structured template which teachers use consistently to track progress and the impact of different levels of support on learning. They record small developmental learning steps at least twice each month, using observations, student tests and work samples to give balanced and precise information about individual students. The recording systems are detailed and teachers place high value on the breadth of information about their students and its importance in planning instruction. Technology is however, under-used to gather detailed data which adds to teacher workloads. The assessment systems take into account the needs of the individual students or group, which ensures that results are valid, relevant and reflect the areas identified in each student's IEP. The information about students is detailed and some teachers analyze data to show learning outcomes and trends over more than one year which provides a longer-term picture of student progress.

The progress of students on vocational programs is assessed with equal diligence at the work sites within the building and off-site. Through this work supervisors, subject teachers, students and parents have a complete picture of student progress. Wherever possible, the students are encouraged to assess their work in meaningful ways. This was observed during the review when students in the café checked the products they made and self-corrected to achieve the desired result.

Parents receive frequent information about their child's progress by formal reporting and detailed updates through informal reports, communication journals and personal contacts. Teachers show ingenuity in sharing assessment data with individual students so that they can understand what they have achieved and their next steps in learning. The school works equally hard to seek the views of parents and students throughout their time at school through surveys, formal meetings and informal communication. As a result, teachers gain important information about students at home and this is used to influence their work at school. Preparing for transition to adulthood is a prominent feature of school life, particularly in the higher grades, and the school works hard to gather the views of parents and students about their preferences and concerns. This information is then used to identify suitable programs and subjects and to track student progress to enable preferences to be achieved.

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.

The school makes clear its high expectations for all students from the time they join the school. Parents receive clearly written booklets about all aspects of school life to reinforce the information provided at conferences. The goals in every student’s IEP are crucial in setting out these high expectations and in guiding teachers’ planning of instruction to match student needs to enable them to achieve. Teachers in all subjects break down each student’s goals to create small steps for learning, assess progress towards these at least twice each month and modify their instruction to reflect the most recent assessments. They check progress towards the IEP goals three times each year. However, not all goals are written with sufficient precision to make clear exactly what the student needs to master or achieve, which compromises accurate monitoring of progress.

The principal conscientiously seeks the views of teachers, students and parent representatives, alongside assessment data and the outcomes of previous plans in determining and monitoring the progress of school-wide plans. The result is an explicit focus on student-centered priorities in school plans. The student council is active and articulate. This elected group of students works closely with the two student representatives on the school leadership team to express the student voice and to understand issues from the administration’s perspective. One student described their work as, “We’re here to help this school, what we should do and how things should be done”. Teachers and school leaders use their collaborative meetings well to evaluate students’ progress and plan instruction. Where goals are sharply written, students and families gain a clear understanding of progress made and the next steps, however this is limited where goals lack precision.

The school works hard to keep parents informed and involve them in the life of the school. In addition, the well-supported workshop program addresses issues relevant to school and vocational training and effectively supports parents to prepare for their child’s transition to adult life. Students are active participants in formal and informal reviews of their learning, as information is presented to them in formats that they can understand.

Quality Statement 3 – Develop Coherent Instructional and Organizational Strategies: The school uses rigorous curricula, teaching and organizational decision making to engage students and faculty in meeting all students’ learning goals.

This area of the school’s work is well developed.

The well-planned curriculum provides opportunities for students in all service categories to develop academically, personally and to gain vocational training. Teachers use a thematic approach to plan exciting and challenging classes which enable students to learn and apply knowledge and skills across subjects, including creative and performing arts. In a 6:1:1 lesson, the teacher skillfully wove musical and number concepts into tasks planned to build students’ understanding of scientific words. She used song, drums, speech, symbol cards and communication aids to engage and challenge each student. As a result, they achieved their learning goals while having fun and using a range of senses. Students also apply academic knowledge in vocational programs, which give them meaningful opportunities to apply personal skills and academic

learning. The majority of teachers use data well to plan instruction that meets the diverse range of student needs. However, there is some inconsistency which results in students not being challenged sufficiently and missed learning opportunities.

School leaders take care to ensure that equipment and staffing is provided to meet student resources and use the IEP goals as a cornerstone in planning how to achieve this. At the monthly cabinet meetings school leaders use data to ensure that students are progressing and make changes when these are needed. The close liaison between the cabinet, leadership team and collaborative teams means that resources are re-directed promptly when needs change.

Students, staff and parents speak positively about the high levels of mutual respect that exist between staff and students and how this supports the smooth running of the school. During a meeting, students showed high levels of respect for each other and their needs. They listened and reflected on the views and opinions of their peers in mature ways, which was well-illustrated by one student's comment of, "He makes an excellent point". Students are motivated to succeed in classes, vocational programs and in improving their behavior. Trust and respect are reflected in the ways that staff allow students in all service categories to take responsibility for themselves, their work and equipment and so steadily gain independence. The school actively encourages students to show respect and support for people living in different situations, for example by delivering 'Meals on Heels' to elderly people in the community.

Quality Statement 4 - Align Capacity Building to Goals: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school's goals for accelerating student learning.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The staff show high levels of commitment to professional learning with a clear focus on improving learning for students in all service categories. This is underpinned by the structured way in which school leaders plan professional development throughout the year and link this to the outcomes of their classroom observations. These are not yet set out in individual teacher plans however, which would allow progress against their individual goals to be easily monitored. The professional development program is clearly focused on improving instruction. The principal and assistant principals observe teaching regularly and make astute judgments about teaching. They challenge under-performance at the same time as providing focused feedback and professional development to improve teaching and learning.

Peer observations are highly valued as part of professional development and underpin the culture of ongoing professional learning. There is no system for teachers to reflect on what they have learned from professional development, or how they will apply it, which makes it hard to identify the impact of different development activities. New teachers receive additional support through extensive mentoring which some teachers have developed further into mutually supportive small teams. Through this they share effective practice and identify ways to overcome challenges.

The inquiry team is evaluating assessment tools in English language arts and mathematics. They share their results quickly with teachers in all service categories through the collaborative teams and this quickly influences the use of data across the school. Teachers now use focused assessments more effectively to plan and deliver work that builds on what students can do and this leads to increased rates of learning.

School leaders are planning ahead to ensure that the necessary resources are available to support the extension of this work to a greater number of classes and students.

Teachers and related service providers work together as effective partners in providing students with focused intervention. The collaboration with colleagues at work sites and in other agencies is just as effective and allows students and families to build on school-based learning for use at home and in adult life.

Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for monitoring and 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.

This is a school where administrators strive for continual improvement to enhance outcomes for students and make changes, based on evidence, to achieve sustainable improvements. This is reflected in the Comprehensive Educational Plan, which is clearly focused on students. The administration team work closely and regularly with teachers and teams to monitor progress against the goals of this school-wide plan so that necessary modifications can be made without undue delay. Not all changes or plans are set out in structured formats with defined responsibilities and timeframes, which makes monitoring of progress more complex than is necessary. Teachers and collaborative teams monitor student progress through routine evaluation of data summary sheets and make changes promptly to enhance student progress. This contributes to the formal evaluation of progress against the goals in IEPs during the year, and maintains an up-to-date picture of what students can and cannot do.

The administration takes full account of internal student assessments and external feedback about the school in monitoring the school's performance and setting priorities. They work hard to ensure that the school's vision for students to become as independent as possible is readily understood by all staff and students and, applied in all the learning environments within the school. As a result independence is now a tangible goal that is clearly evident through adaptations in levels of support, the use of technology and aids and transfers to less restrictive educational settings. The school's mission is a real goal for every student.

School Quality Criteria 2008-2009

School name: Roy Campanella Vocational Training Center	△	▷	✓	+
Overall QR Score			X	
Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, generate and analyze information on student learning outcomes and use it to understand what each student knows and can do, and to monitor the student’s progress over time.				
<i>To what extent do school leaders and faculty regularly...</i>	△	▷	✓	+
1.1 collect and analyze actionable information, including assessment results and attendance data, to provide a complete view of the learning outcomes and needs of individual students and groupings of students?				X
1.2 focus analysis on the learning outcomes and needs of all sub-groups of students?				X
1.3 engage in an open exchange of information with students and families about students’ learning needs and outcomes, including assessment results and attendance data?				X
1.4 design or adapt tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize and analyze student performance, identify trends and inform instructional and organizational decisions, and to enable students and their families to assess and track each student’s progress?			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 student’s learning.				
<i>To what extent do school leaders and faculty...</i>	△	▷	✓	+
2.1 use collaborative and data-informed processes to set measurable, actionable and differentiated learning goals in core subjects for individual students and groupings of students and develop differentiated plans and timeframes for reaching these goals?			X	
2.2 use collaborative and data-informed processes to develop the school’s Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP)?				X
2.3 ensure that the achievement of learning goals, and the implementation of plans and timeframes for reaching these goals, is the central focus of school leaders, faculty, students and families?			X	
2.4 communicate high expectations to all students and families, and involve students in developing their learning goals and plans and in taking their next learning steps?				X
Overall score for Quality Statement 2			X	

DEFINITIONS

“**Analyze**” or “**analysis**” includes, but is not limited to, comparisons of:

- the current and past outcomes of . . . individual students, administrative groupings and sub-groups of students and the school itself in core subjects;
- the outcomes of different classrooms and sub-groups in the same grades and core subjects; and
- the school’s Progress Report and other outcomes to those of peer/other schools

“**Assessment results**” include student outcomes on summative assessments (e.g., state ELA, math, science and social studies tests, NYSESLAT, Regents Exams, and Performance Based Assessment Tasks) and formative assessments aligned to the school’s curriculum (including Periodic, DYQ, and teacher-developed Classroom Assessments).

“**Core subjects**” are ELA, math, science, social studies/history, the arts, foreign language, and physical education/health.

“**Data-informed processes**” include analysis of Progress Report, Quality Review, Learning Environment Survey, Inquiry Team findings, assessment results and attendance data

“**Groupings of students**” include classrooms, grade levels and high school cohorts.

“**Organizational decisions or strategies**” refer to a school’s use of budget and resources, staffing, planning, scheduling, grade structure, departments and teacher teams and other aspects of the school’s structure and organization that can affect student outcomes.

“**Sub-groups of students**” include special education students, English Language Learners, the other NCLB sub-groups, boys, girls, and other groups significant to the school.

Quality Statement 3 – Develop Coherent Instructional and Organizational Strategies: The school uses rigorous curricula, teaching and organizational decision making to engage students and faculty in meeting all students’ learning goals.

<i>To what extent do ...</i>	△	➤	✓	+
3.1 school leaders and faculty deliver challenging and engaging curricula in core subjects, including the arts, that are aligned to state standards?				X
3.2 teachers plan and teach lessons that are differentiated to meet the needs of individual students and student groupings and are designed to enable all students to reach their learning goals?			X	
3.3 school leaders make strategic organizational decisions to support a coherent and rigorous instructional approach that enables students to reach their learning goals?				X
3.4 school leaders maintain a culture of mutual trust and respect and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?				X
Overall score for Quality Statement 3				X

Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building to Goals: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school’s goals for accelerating student learning.

<i>To what extent do school leaders...</i>	△	➤	✓	+
4.1 use their own observation of classroom teaching and the analysis of student outcomes to implement an explicit, differentiated strategy to improve each teacher’s instruction, with a special focus on new teachers?			X	
4.2 encourage teachers to take part in Inquiry Teams and other structured professional collaborations (informed by the examination of student work, assessment outcomes and their own peer observations) and share in the instructional leadership of the school with the goal of improved student learning?				X
4.3 provide professional development that encourages teachers to continuously evaluate and revise their classroom practices to improve student outcomes?			X	
4.4 utilize youth development, support services and partnerships with families and outside organizations to accelerate the academic and personal growth of students?				X
Overall score for Quality Statement 4			X	

Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for monitoring and evaluating each student’s progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.

<i>To what extent do ...</i>	△	➤	✓	+
5.1 the school’s plans for improving student outcomes and its strategies for improving each teacher’s instructional practices include measurable interim goals and suitable time frames for evaluating success and making adjustments during the year?			X	
5.2 school leaders and faculty use interim checkpoints and data to inform lessons, improve curriculum, differentiate instruction and revise student learning plans throughout the year?			X	
5.3 school leaders use data to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of and modify organizational decisions, structured professional collaborations and teacher improvement strategies?				X
5.4 school leaders and the school community have a clear vision for the future development of the school and implement procedures and systems to support academic, personal and professional growth?				X
Overall score for Quality Statement 5			X	

Quality Review Scoring Key

△	Underdeveloped	➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features	✓	Proficient	+	Well Developed
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