

Quality Review Report

2008-2009

Roberto Clemente

Middle School 195

**625 West 133rd Street
New York
NY 10027**

Principal: Rosarie Jean

Dates of review: May 4 – 5, 2009

Lead Reviewer: Gale Reeves

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Roberto Clemente is a middle school with 645 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 43% Black, 55% Hispanic, 1% White, and .62% Asian students. The student body includes 20% English language learners and 21% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2007 – 2008 was 89.1%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 89% eligibility.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

The principal is in her first year at the school. During this short time frame, both she and her cabinet have positively affected the culture and climate. This is a caring community where students speak of feeling comfortable about talking to their teachers and where parents feel supported and welcomed. There is a high level of collegiality among all members of the community. The principal and assistant principals communicate their vision of high expectations with all school constituents.

School leaders have taken steps to address the areas of concern noted in last year's Quality Review. Through well judged strategic decisions, school leaders and staff have established a systematic approach to the gathering, analysis and use of data at the whole-school, grade and individual student level and extend the analysis to examine trends and patterns in subgroups in order to take timely action. They have not yet extended their data gathering and analysis practices to all core subjects in order to provide a complete picture of students' progress across all aspects of the school. With the support of school leaders, coaches and other teacher leaders, the pedagogic skills of teachers are swiftly developing. Some teachers have mastered the art of setting realistic and measurable goals for students. However, goal setting for and by students is not yet present in all classes and all subject areas. As a result, not all students are fully aware of their learning needs and next steps.

There is an open-door policy and parents welcome the ongoing feedback and the amount of data that the school provides to them. The school enhances these strong relationships with parents by sharing high expectations and maintaining a high quality of communication about the achievement and progress of their children. Additionally, the administration has developed a culture of trust, respect and collaboration that encourages teachers to learn from each other and supports the personal growth of teachers and staff. Professional growth is a high priority so the reflective staff profit from varied opportunities to share and develop strengths as individuals and members of the teaching community. While pedagogic skills are developing, some teachers have not yet ensured that lessons and content areas are suitably differentiated to challenge and extend the learning of all students, particularly high achievers.

The school has developed a broad curriculum that integrates technology in all subject areas and is aligned with State standards. At present, there are data systems to track and monitor student progress in some core subjects. School leaders note that they must now further expand the present systems for monitoring the progress of student achievement to all core curriculum subjects.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- School leaders and staff have established a systematic approach to the gathering, analysis and use of data at whole-school, grade and individual student level and extend the analysis to examine trends and patterns in subgroups in order to take timely action.
- The school enhances strong relationships with parents by sharing high expectations and maintaining a high quality of communication about the achievement and progress of their children.
- The administration has developed a culture of trust, respect and collaboration that encourages teachers to learn from each other and supports the personal growth of teachers and staff.
- The school has developed a broad curriculum that integrates technology in all subject areas and is aligned with State standards.
- Professional growth is high priority so the reflective faculty profit from varied opportunities to share and develop strengths as individuals and members of the teaching community.
- The principal implements and shares a clear vision for the school through well judged strategic decisions and the support of the assistant principals.

What the school needs to improve

- Extend data gathering and analysis practices to all core subjects to provide a complete picture of students' progress across all aspects of the school.
- Extend goal setting for and by students to all subjects so that they are fully aware of their learning needs and next steps.
- Ensure that lessons and content areas are suitably differentiated to challenge all students, particularly high achievers, and extend their learning.
- Further expand the present data systems for monitoring the progress of student achievement to all the core curriculum subjects.

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 proficient.

School leaders and staff have established a systematic approach to the gathering, analysis and use of data at whole-school, grade and individual student levels. They extend the analysis to examine trends and patterns in subgroups in order to take timely action. The school collects a range of data in English language arts, math and some other core subjects, which shows clearly what students know and can do, and which informs planning at all levels. Thorough data analysis allows teachers to target specific skills and students' needs in science, math and English language arts.

As a result of the review of the Progress Report and noted trends in the progress of English language learners, the school now disaggregates unit assessments every three to five weeks for these students. Likewise, when school leaders noted a decline in the achievement levels of higher performing students, they created pre-Regents classes in math and science to appropriately meet the needs and challenge targeted groups of students. This level of analysis and specificity of data gathering does not yet extend to all core subjects. School leaders note that they are at the beginning stages of data collection and analysis in social studies. As a result, there is not yet a complete picture of students' progress across all aspects of the school.

Parents work in partnership with school leaders and staff to share information about their children and to keep abreast of their progress. The principal and assistant principals engage in ongoing conversations with staff and parents about student performance. Teachers meet with students to review the progress they have made and also share this data with parents. Parents indicate that the school has "good communication" with them and indicate that information is readily available and accessible, which results in a sense of shared accountability for 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.

There is a high level of collaboration among the school community. School leaders effectively involve teachers and parents in the review of data and of goals. The school community utilizes the services of a consulting firm and is presently engaged in long and short term strategic planning. The review of noted trends translates into the principal's performance goals and into the Comprehensive Educational Plan. Varied constituents in the school community provide suitable input in the development of the Comprehensive Educational Plan.

The school is rapidly developing a goal-setting culture and uses goals in a number of ways to increase student achievement. Via weekly content meetings, teachers develop student goals in English language arts, math and science. The school has not yet extended goal setting to be for and by all students so that they are fully aware of their learning needs and next steps in all core subjects. Additionally, the school has not taken the important step of setting interim measurable goals for individual students in all core subjects that will serve as benchmarks against which their rates of progress can be measured. The ability level of staff members to use data to establish differentiated learning goals is still somewhat uneven. As such, school leaders note the need to draw on the school's best practices and continue to establish clear connections between summative and formative assessments in order to further precisely diagnose student needs and to evaluate the effectiveness of specific strategies in accelerating student progress and in embedding goal setting for individuals and groups across all content areas.

School leaders set high expectations for themselves and the school community. The principal effectively communicates these expectations to parents and teachers. The school enhances strong relationships with parents by sharing expectations and by ensuring there is high-quality communication about the achievement and progress of their children. Teachers, in turn, share expectations with students. Administrators and staff work hard to keep parents and students informed via individual meetings, open houses, grade-level assemblies and newsletters. The school also communicates expectations in tangible ways, such as the display of students' work in classrooms and corridor bulletin boards with corresponding rubrics. Because everyone is cognizant of the information and knows the administration's expectations, there is an increased level of accountability, which is serving to cement relationships between home and 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.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The school ensures that its curriculum is aligned with the required City and State standards. As a result of a review of the English language arts curriculum, school staff revised it to ensure closer alignment with State standards. The school shares the core curriculum broadly with the school community. Students, however, do not have the opportunity to participate in the arts during the school day. Students who attend the after-school program can take music and art classes during this time period. As such, school leaders recognize the need to ensure that more students are afforded these opportunities throughout the school day and are reviewing school schedules as well as seeking grants and external supports in order to develop a rigorous arts curriculum. The school's developed curriculum integrates technology in all subject areas and aligns with State standards. All classrooms utilize smartboards and every student has access to a laptop. Students note that the technology allows them to conduct research and helps them "improve" their skills. Differentiated learning opportunities occur in some classrooms but they are not all suitably rigorous. While at times students work in small groups, some lessons lack extensions or the appropriate tasks that serve to challenge the needs of all students, especially higher-performing students. School leaders plan to continue to consistently support each teacher in order to ensure that lessons and content areas are suitably differentiated to challenge all students and extend their learning, particularly higher-achieving students.

The principal maximizes the budget to ensure that appropriate resources are available to teachers and students. Science labs are fully equipped and well utilized to meet students' needs. As a result of a review of assessment data, the principal decided to utilize funding to create smaller class sizes. Additionally, academic intervention services provide support to students who need assistance with specific learning skills.

The administration has developed a culture of trust, respect and collaboration that encourages teachers to learn from each other and supports the personal growth of teachers and staff. As noted in the Learning Environment Survey, teachers demonstrate an above average level of respect for each other. Likewise, parents and students report that teachers treat students and each other respectfully. Further evidence that adults in the school trust and support each other is noted in their ongoing sharing of resources and strong interpersonal relationships. Teachers readily share practices and support each other's leadership growth.

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 well developed.

School leaders are visible and conduct walkthroughs throughout the school day. At the beginning of the school year, teachers complete their professional goals. The principal follows up with one-to-one conferences with teachers. School leaders conduct both formal and informal observations and provide teachers with feedback in order to support improved classroom practices. This has led to growth in specific pedagogic practices.

In addition to the support that school leaders provide, coaches provide individual and group-level support to teachers. The principal assigns coaches to support specific teachers and all new teachers receive the support of an assigned mentor. The level of collegial support ensures that new teachers are quickly embraced into the culture of the school. Additionally, English language arts teachers utilize an online wiki space to share instructional materials and ideas. Teachers are pleased with the level of support and state that they have varied opportunities to collaborate and learn from each other. Core content teachers collaborate during formal and informal grade and department meetings. Teachers report that they engage in intervisitations and share lessons with each other. Noted distributive leadership structures are swiftly embedded and ensure that teachers are part of key decisions that impact their work. Professional growth is high priority and so the reflective faculty profit from varied opportunities to share and develop strengths as individuals and members of the teaching community.

The work of the inquiry team focuses on the same population of students as they targeted last school year. The team meets weekly and uses a variety of data sources to review the progress students have made and make appropriate adaptations. As a result, all students have demonstrated progress and the inquiry team has now expanded to include more classroom teachers. Indications that the progress made by higher-achieving students dipped last year led to the creation of pre-Regents classes in order to appropriately challenge these students. Team members state that there is an "increased level of transparency and sharing of the data", which has heightened the level of trust between teachers and students. Every student has a personal intervention plan, which has led to greater ownership and accountability of his or her learning.

School guidance counselors and the Beacon program provide additional support services to students and their families. To support their efforts, the school has

developed strong partnerships with Columbia University and Latham and Watkins law firm that have a positive impact on students' social, emotional and academic growth. The school's internal and external support system ensures that they meet students' needs in a cohesive manner that has a direct impact on student achievement.

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.

Administrators and coaches regularly monitor student data in order to identify gaps in learning. Teachers of English language arts, math and science, monitor and revise student progress. These systems and structures do not yet extend in an in-depth, cohesive manner to all core subjects. In an attempt to further advance student achievement, school leaders note the need to expand the present data systems for monitoring the progress of student achievement to all core curriculum subjects.

The school aims social studies goals at grade-level expectations. As a result, teachers' plans do not reflect the same level of specificity to learning as is noted in the other content areas. The school recognizes the need to refine, develop and communicate quantifiable goals in all core subjects with teachers, parents and students. This has influenced the school's ability to accurately monitor progress in these subjects and to ensure that students in all classrooms know the precise purpose of lessons so that their efforts are well focused.

The school met its State and City targets with noted increase in achievement levels in English language arts, math and science for all subgroups. School leaders use the city's accountability tools, findings from the inquiry team as well as formative and summative assessment data to evaluate the effectiveness of organizational decisions. Based on the review of data, school leaders make needed modifications as necessary. The school's self evaluation accurately describes existing systems and structures. Self-reflection is rapidly becoming the norm in the school culture. Additionally, distributive leadership is noted in the varied ways school constituents share ownership and responsibility for the smooth running of the school. The principal implements and shares a clear vision for the school through well-judged strategic decisions and the support of the assistant principals. She focuses on improving the social/emotional as well as the academic needs of all students. She communicates her vision to all members of the school community, inclusive of parents.

School Quality Criteria 2008-2009

School name: Roberto Clemente	Δ	➤	✓	+
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>	Δ	➤	✓	+
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>	Δ	➤	✓	+
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, DYO, 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