

Quality Review Report 2008-2009

Richard R. Green High School of Teaching

High School 580

**421 East 88th Street
New York
NY10128**

Principal: David Raubvogel

Dates of review: March 16-17, 2009

Lead Reviewer: Charlene Jordan

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Richard R. Green School of Teaching is a high school with 595 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 35% Black, 58% Hispanic, 3% White, and 4% Asian students. The student body includes 5% English language learners and 11% special education students. Boys account for 32% of the students enrolled and girls account for 68%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2007 - 2008 was 87.3%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 75% eligibility.

The school's original goal was to prepare students for a career in teaching, but it now offers a more comprehensive curricula. The specialization in teaching still guides many of the non-mandated curriculum offerings and internship opportunities. The school is under the leadership of a new principal.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

The principal, administrative team and staff work collaboratively to ensure a culture of success for all the students. The principal has a clear vision for improving achievement through the consistent use of data to understand students' progress and the impact of teachers' instruction. Establishing specific learning goals is an aim of the school and although it does not analyze all available sources of data to set measurable learning goals for individual students, it has made a great deal of progress in collecting and examining data for groupings of students. This has resulted in an increase in the number of students passing all classes in January 2009, a rise in daily attendance and focused interventions to support credit accumulation.

High levels of mutual trust and respect permeate the school resulting in a family-like atmosphere. The administration and staff are attentive to meeting the academic and personal needs of students. Students, including families, list the supportive environment as an important factor in their success. In an effort to improve communication, the principal has initiated parent newsletters, increased e-mail communication, and created numerous committees for staff and student participation. All constituencies cite involvement in decision-making as a growing strength of the school. However, strategically there is insufficient use of data along with explicit benchmarks and timeframes for adjustments to be easily made to the curriculum including fully understanding the progress being made towards meeting the school's targets.

Professional development opportunities have greatly increased, enabling staff to learn more about collecting and analyzing data, as well as integrating technology. Even though expertise in these areas is increasing, the school does not yet have a formal teacher goal setting process to evaluate the impact of staff development on student outcomes and teacher growth. The administrators' plans to extend teacher expertise in differentiating instruction directly relates to one of the school's goals of improving student engagement. The school is rightfully proud of the curricular options that challenge high performing students and support struggling learners. Several new courses assist students with developing college readiness skills, as well as providing options for students who are not planning to follow a career in teaching.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school emphasizes a culture of success, with high expectations for student achievement and college readiness, and a strong commitment to meeting the academic and personal needs of students.
- An effective and visionary principal who is focused on plans for the future of the school and fully supported by a professional team of administrators and staff, leads the school.
- The ever-increasing collection, management, and analysis of data is informing and impacting positively on the achievement of groups of students, including students in the middle third and subgroups.
- Staff and students relate very well to each other within a culture of mutual trust and respect, where students enjoy their learning.
- Since the arrival of the new principal, communication has greatly improved and teachers, students and parents feel respected and included in school decision-making.
- School leaders provide structures that encourage the collaborative staff to discuss their practice, engage in learning and inquiry, and influence school policy.

What the school needs to improve

- Extend data gathering and analysis practices to all core subjects and establish specific learning goals to provide a complete picture of each individual student's progress over time.
- Improve the consistency of differentiation of instruction to meet students' specific needs and set meaningful learning goals in all core curriculum areas.
- Formalize the goal setting process for teachers in their professional development to include structures for specific and ongoing measures of progress to evaluate impact on student outcomes.
- In strategic decision-making, evaluate progress toward defined goals and adjust curriculum plans through ongoing, formalized interim checks against targets.

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.

The school is making great strides in the collection, management, and analysis of data focused on improving student achievement for various groupings of students. The administrative team ensures that teachers have access to data in the form of attendance, report card progress, and from interim assessments. Additionally, all teachers received a cohort spreadsheet created by the administrative team so the entire staff can track the progress of students towards graduation, and develop appropriate programs and interventions. Because of these ongoing reviews and identified trends, the school has added several instructional programs and guidance interventions. An analysis of the improved progress of 9th graders in the *Advancement through Individual Determination* program (AVID) led the principal to extend the program into 10th grade, where success continues. Similarly, analysis of the Progress Report led to the effective development of two groups to support Hispanic and Black males and by providing them with further academic assistance and mentoring.

When data indicated that 9th graders were struggling with algebra, the school reorganized math classes and developed a second inquiry team to study the issue and make recommendations. Departments began developing general learning goals for students at the beginning of this year and teachers build in reflection time at least once per marking period to assess progress. This process has raised awareness of the need to focus on establishing specific learning goals for individual students, a target for next year. The school does not yet extend data gathering and analysis practices to all core subjects so it does not have a complete picture of individual student's needs and their progress over time.

Communication within the school and with families continues to improve. Administrators involve staff in the development of curricular interventions and enhancements, such as resource centers, the addition of an advanced placement class, and electives for students not interested in teaching careers. Families receive newsletters, e-mails and phone calls, which are effective in updating them about students' progress and school news. The increased outreach to parents led to a 50% increase in parental participation at parent teacher conferences this year. Currently, teachers, students, and parents feel they have a greater voice in decision-making.

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.

This school communicates high expectations to students and families and emphasizes college readiness as one of the essential goals for all students. Guidance counselors and teachers consistently stress the need for students to do well in school so they can succeed in college. Even the principal’s morning announcements emphasize student accomplishments and opportunities for advancement through service learning and other means. Students report that these reminders encourage them to set high goals for themselves.

The principal has empowered departments to develop learning goals in content areas. At the beginning of the academic year, teachers meet with students to help them select from a general list of goals and at least once per marking period, students reflect on their progress to date. Presently, however, the school does not use data to set measurable and differentiated learning goals in all core subjects for individual students that include benchmarks and timeframes.

Teachers, students, and parents indicate that collaboration is a growing strength of the school. The school’s Comprehensive Educational Plan contains goals drawn from the previous year’s data as indicated on the Progress Report and Learning Environment Survey. The new principal shared these goals with staff and fully involved teachers in the preparation of the school’s self-evaluation form, using a faculty meeting to conduct focus groups and encourage an honest assessment of the school’s strengths and areas for improvement. As a result, teachers feel more involved in the decisions of the school. Parents indicate that they too, are encouraged to provide input into the school’s self-evaluation and they cite the enhanced outreach to parents as an effective practice that has increased the parental voice. The principal attends parent meetings, sends out newsletters, and invites families to the many celebrations that are effective in highlighting student achievement.

Students are able to list goals for improving their progress in math and English language arts mostly focused on improving writing and vocabulary, and availing themselves of the many opportunities for extra support. Similarly, students cited the school’s resource centers as places to go to receive extra help in science. The school recently added a global studies review class to increase Regents’ passing rates. These facilities are resulting in an ongoing improvement in student progress.

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.

Administrators, staff and students relate very well to each other within a culture of mutual trust and respect. This has led to a positive learning environment reflected in the school’s open door policy and students’ enthusiasm about coming to school every day and remaining after school to participate in activities. The principal and his administrative team collaborate with staff in ensuring that the curriculum is engaging and challenging and meets the needs of all students. The school offers calculus for seniors

and chemistry to 10th graders and plans to add an additional advanced placement course in biology next year. An increase in skills and credit accumulation for the middle third students has increased due such planning. Struggling students now all have individual learning plans specifying key skills and content areas for growth with recommended action plans resulting in improved progress. All students benefit from tutoring, credit recovery programs, and resource centers in math, English language arts, and science. There is effective support from guidance counselors for students and their families, and counselors participate in teacher meetings, particularly when the discussion focuses on students.

Teachers benefit from professional development directed to improving their skills in the collection of quantitative and formative assessment data to better understand students' skill levels and areas to progress. The emphasis on providing more training in differentiated instruction is beginning to impact on instructional strategies teachers use to engage all learners. Teachers indicate that they are more thoughtful about pairing and grouping students for class activities, and they are learning more about effective questioning. However, differentiation of instruction currently lacks consistency across the grade levels and content areas.

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 principal's philosophy about the importance of distributive leadership is evident in the structures that are now in place to ensure that teachers are part of the school's decision-making. The instructional advisory team consists of administrators and content area representatives. This group helps to plan the weekly Friday professional development meetings that are a result of input from teachers in response to the need to improve instruction and student achievement. Though this forum teachers cite an increase in opportunities to learn more about the collection and analysis of data and differentiated instruction. Instruction is improving because teachers are visiting each other's classrooms and trying best practices demonstrated and discussed in common planning time. Every new teacher receives the support of an experienced mentor. However, the school has not yet developed a formal goal setting process for teachers, including structures for specific and ongoing measures of progress, to fully evaluate impact on student outcomes and measure attainment of school goals.

The school now has two inquiry teams, with the additional team formed in response to the students' struggle with algebra. The principal and his administrators are members of the team and they encourage the teachers to share the research and ongoing results of student progress with the rest of the staff through professional development sessions and department and grade level meetings. The inquiry team members indicate that this type of collaboration positively influences student learning.

School leadership and staff work in partnership with families and outside agencies which ensures consistent academic and personal support for students. There is an array of after school programs and extra curricular activities, as well as opportunities for students to attend *College Summit* programs and *College Now* classes. Partnerships with community-based organizations, such as New York Cares and the Harlem Center, encourage students to volunteer their time to benefit others. The school makes effective use of internships in elementary schools to prepare students for their role as future

teachers. Students indicate that the principal listens to their suggestions for improving the school and its offerings and teachers and counselors are responsive and helpful in meeting their needs.

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.

School leaders use data on student achievement and from formal assessments and informal observations to plan improvements in the effectiveness of organizational and professional development decisions. The school's focus on writing translates into students expecting that they will compose several drafts before the work is completed and ready for final grading. Friday professional development sessions provide teachers with increased opportunities for improving pedagogy. The principal indicates that continued emphasis on differentiation is necessary to ensure consistency across the whole faculty.

Recently, the school adjusted its curriculum in response to an evaluation of student outcomes. Notably, administrators re-organized algebra classes to enable struggling students to benefit from smaller classes and intensive support. Similarly, item analysis of Acuity tests revealed the need to address numeracy on a school-wide level. While there is not enough informal data available yet to determine the effectiveness of this work, teachers report improvements from formative data. Staff development helped teachers understand some of the instructional strategies of AVID classrooms, particularly in relation to using Cornell note taking to improve organization. More teachers now use this strategy in their classrooms. Teachers work within departments to establish general benchmarks for student achievement in content classes, not necessarily linked to specific student performance data, but as a way of supporting reflection for teachers and students. However, the school is not yet using data to establish explicit benchmarks and timeframes to adjust curriculum and revise individual student learning plans throughout the school year and to determine progress in meeting the school goals.

Early data analysis indicates the school is on course to achieve its key goal of improving the graduation rate for all students and building a college-going culture that emphasizes attendance at four-year colleges. The individual learning goals developed for struggling students this year has helped teachers to understand how to work more effectively with individual students. However, this practice is not consistent throughout the school, so many individual students are not yet achieving optimum progress.

The principal has a clear vision for the school's development supported by all members of the school community. He and the staff understand and value self-reflection as a vehicle for improving teacher performance and student achievement and this is the driving force behind the school's current practices.

School Quality Criteria 2008-2009

School name: Richard R. Green High School of Teaching	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				

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.

To what extent do ...	Δ	➤	✓	+
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.

To what extent do school leaders...	Δ	➤	✓	+
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.

To what extent do ...	Δ	➤	✓	+
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							
Δ	Underdeveloped	➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features	✓	Proficient	+	Well Developed