

Quality Review Report

2008-2009

The Raymond York School

Elementary School 065

103-22 99th Street

Queens

NY 11417

Principal: Rafael Morales

Dates of review: February 25 - 26, 2009

Lead Reviewer: Michele Lloyd-Bey

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Raymond York is an elementary school with 565 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 9% Black, 42% Hispanic, 6% White, and 43% Asian students. The student body includes 10% English language learners and 10% special education students. Boys account for 55% of the students enrolled and girls account for 45%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2007 - 2008 was 94.1%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 67% eligibility.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

The school works tirelessly to continually analyze formative and summative data in order to ensure that all students make adequate progress. The school's developed data tracking report system provides significant longitudinal information about students that help determine future instructional planning. The data-reporting tool has also been instrumental in monitoring special education students and English language learners in order to provide them with effective academic support services.

Parents state that "the leader participates in everything". This is consistent with the principal's daily precise examination of attendance data to ensure that the school meets its attendance goals. The continuous use of various data tools inform how students' performance and progress are advancing as teachers collaborate regularly to plan and set goals for them. The development of the school's Comprehensive Educational Plan is a collaborative process, and all constituencies are aware of the school's goals and interim progress towards meeting them. Educators share students' interim achievement of goals with students and their families through intermittent progress reports and on-going parent-teacher conferences. However, the school has not yet developed a system to involve parents in establishing goals for their children.

The principal ensures that teachers use data from periodic and core subject assessments to differentiate instruction for students. The continuation of the school's 'Success for All' literacy program and the implementation of a new math program enable students to participate in rigorous instructional approaches that are designed to help them reach their learning goals. Safety and mutual respect are at the helm of this school, and parents and students indicate that they "are happy and feel supported by everyone here". Parents comment, "This school is like family".

Professional development is part of the fabric of the school, and all teachers maintain individualized professional development plans. Teacher observation reports enable school leaders to support teachers' professional growth as they work to improve their craft in goal setting to differentiate instruction for all students. While there are external partnerships that are linked to the arts, students and parents indicate they would like to see more sports and physical activities that extend beyond the school day. Former inquiry team members now support new inquiry teams in all grades to ensure that students in greatest need are provided with targeted academic interventions. All data from instructional programs is monitored closely, and this enables educators to adjust students' goals. The principal has a clear vision for the school and staff and parents join with him as he seeks to improve the performance of all students.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school has clearly defined structures and practices in place to analyze and interpret formative and summative data in all core subjects.
- The use of school-wide data tracking systems enables the school to analyze student data longitudinally in order to improve student performance.
- Teachers work collaboratively with each other and with students to set interim goals that are regularly checked in order to target effective differentiated instruction.
- Consistent review of data supports the organizational decisions made by the principal in order to accelerate student learning.
- The school provides a very safe and caring environment where students are encouraged to take risks and feel respected by teachers and peers.
- The continuous strategic use of data systems to monitor interim goals at regular checkpoints enables teachers to modify goals effectively for students.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop additional opportunities to strengthen communication with parents regarding their children's goals so that they can better support learning.
- Explore ways to implement the arts so that they are linked to all other core subjects to engage students in interdisciplinary lessons.
- Formalize the manner in which educators at all levels share information related to student goals so that teachers' professional growth is not incidental.
- Extend collaborations with external partnerships that address sports and physical activities for students in order to improve students' social and personal growth.

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 collects and analyzes many forms of actionable data that it uses effectively to ensure that students make consistently good progress over time. Clearly defined systems and structures enable educators to track student performance in all core subjects by analyzing assessment results across the school, by grade and by student.

Attendance data analysis is critical to the leadership, and is collected and analyzed daily by the attendance liaison. Based on rigorous monitoring and tracking of student attendance, student achievement and attendance have improved. The school's careful examination and use of data for instructional planning for English language learners and special education students ensures that the school continues to meet its annual yearly progress targets. Extensive data analysis is ongoing in order to make comparisons of progress between grades and sub-groups within the school.

The school provides parents with various opportunities to engage in continuous conversations regarding their child's performance so that home-school connections are strengthened. The school's well-developed data report tracking system effectively provides longitudinal information regarding students' performance and progress over a period of four years. The system's search engine has been a significant feature in allowing administrators to locate relevant information on discharged students returning to this school. The system also enables educators to make important decisions on individual student needs in real time. Data from many sources in all core subjects has helped identify patterns and trends across the school, which has enabled administrators to target students in need of additional academic support. All teachers maintain and review a wide range of data on students and collaborate to share findings and make informed decisions about lesson planning.

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's Comprehensive Educational Plan is a collaborative effort and the cornerstone for the school's goals. The attention to students' needs and their learning takes center stage at this school. Teachers work collaboratively to discuss data in order to plan next step instruction for students. Teachers also work closely with students to inform them of their strengths and weaknesses in their learning. As a result, students can articulate their learning goals. They understand what they need to do in order to move to the next level by using information gained during conferencing with their teachers and review of their assessment data.

Students indicate that they feel supported in their classrooms as their teachers plan instruction that is based on their individual learning goals. The continuous use of data

enables teachers to set measurable and rigorous goals for students that are evident in all core subjects. Teachers meet regularly to review their plans for instruction with a special focus on English language learners and special education students to ensure that they feel supported and successful in their learning.

Student progress reports, derived from assessment data, improve communication and enable parents and students to remain involved in the school improvement planning cycle. However, the school has not yet effectively involved parents in the goal-setting process and recognizes that this the next step in developing communication with parents.

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.

Teachers use pacing calendars in core subjects that are aligned to State standards. Students’ projects in social studies and science are differentiated based on students’ goals. The school provides interdisciplinary experiences in art and social studies that enable students to express their creative skills, as evidenced by the exciting assortment of Indian masks accompanied by individualized research reports. However, the school has not yet linked art to other core subjects in order that students can make interconnections in their learning.

Literacy resources are plentiful throughout the school and students comment that they have become more knowledgeable by reading books of their choice, across all subject areas. Leaders make informed and effective organizational decisions in an effort to support student learning. The entire school collaborates to implement the “Success for All” literacy program. Data generated from the program enables teachers to set clear goals for their students. Teachers meet weekly during common planning time to analyze data related to the curriculum and form new groups based on the needs of students.

All teachers maintain student conference data and skills checklists that they monitor carefully to ensure that students master the curriculum. The leadership and ancillary staff maintain data identifying students on the cusp of a performance level to ensure that there is no slippage. These students receive academic intervention support, and their performance is carefully scrutinized to check for continuous progress. Based on high levels of trust and mutual respect amongst all constituencies, students willingly take risks and feel supported by adults and their peers. Parents and students state that they love the school and would not like to be anywhere else.

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 does all he can to meet his teachers’ professional development needs in order for them to attain the goals that are jointly set with the leadership. Teachers have frequent opportunities to participate in many kinds of professional development. The school’s funding of a teacher center enables its specialist to support new and veteran teachers effectively across the school. Major emphasis has been placed on writing, and

as a result, teachers in grades 1 and 3 are given on-going support in the AUSSIE program to help accelerate progress in writing for primary grade students.

The leadership ensures that there is alignment between professional growth and student achievement through formal and informal observations. All teachers have a differentiated professional development plan that is modified every three months. The leadership uses observations as a means to support teachers and monitor instructional practices to ensure students receive differentiated instruction to improve learning.

Teachers know the school's goals and participate in professional development opportunities to help them successfully meet the expectations of the school. Last year the inquiry team focused on improving students' writing skills. Based on the examination of student work, the school has chosen to extend its inquiry work and address writing in the upper grades. The entire school is involved in the inquiry process. Grade inquiry teams collaborate with core team members in order to strengthen their inquiry practice and share effective strategies as they seek to improve students' performance.

Each year the school broadens its collaboration with external partnerships in order to address the personal, social and physical needs of its students. However, it is too early to assess the impact on student learning of the school's collaboration with new external partners. Parents and students agree that in order for the school to have a more balanced instructional program, they would like to see additional sports and recreation programs offered during the day and after school.

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.

The school has systems in place to regularly monitor and revise student goals based on the continuous examination of assessment data and student work in all core subjects. The thoughtfulness in teachers' analysis of student data has enabled them to differentiate instruction for all sub-groups and individual students. Teachers routinely use interim checkpoints in all core subjects to make the necessary adjustments to the curriculum and lesson plans to ensure positive student outcomes. Interim goals are reviewed at designated times to gauge the effectiveness of the curriculum and programs in order to ensure that students are making adequate progress along the way.

On-going assessments are provided to students, and teachers collaborate with each other to examine assessment results in order to make informed decisions for their students. The leadership and teachers closely evaluate data to determine which students or groups of students need their learning accelerated or need to be given additional support. Academic support providers maintain very specific performance data on students in order to effectively address students' individual needs. Rubrics are used across the school and their use provides accurate assessments of students' work and supports teachers in making necessary adjustments to the curriculum.

The strategic monitoring of a range of data enables the principal to monitor the effectiveness of instructional and organizational decisions regularly and to provide meaningful professional development and resources for staff. The extensive analysis of the school's Progress Report led to a reorganization of ancillary staff assignments so that they would better serve the needs of sub-groups and individual students. Through

analysis of the school's Progress Report and the Learning Environment Survey, the leadership clearly outlines goals for the school.

The principal's vision is clearly communicated and his efforts are supported by both parents and teachers. The school uses data from formative and summative assessments as well as informal and formal observations to expand its knowledge of the effectiveness of its professional development plans. Through thoughtful and collaborative reflection, the school continually seeks ways to use data in order to improve students' performance.

School Quality Criteria 2008-2009

School name: The Raymond York School	△	▶	✓	+
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