

Quality Review Report 2008-2009

Dr. Richard R. Green School

Elementary- Middle School 183

2-45 Beach 79 Street

Queens

NY 11693

Principal: Renee Peart

Dates of review: April 6-7, 2009

Lead Reviewer: Michele Lloyd-Bey

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Dr Richard R Green is an elementary-middle school with 659 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 66% Black, 23% Hispanic, 4% White, and 6% Asian students. The student body includes 4% English language learners and 9% special education students. Boys account for 46% of the students enrolled and girls account for 54%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2007 - 28 was 90.2%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 81% eligibility.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

The school uses a variety of data sources very well and that keeps them focused on the performance and progress of all students in all core subjects. The principal uses the school's database developed in house to monitor strategically the achievement of all subgroups in an efficient manner. Action plans are used to monitor the results of students' performance and share information with all stakeholders. The principal makes effective organizational decisions and, as a result, students benefit from excellent resources and the strategic deployment of staff. Effective school procedures enable school leaders and teachers to plan and set goals for students. Goals are set for students in all core subjects and there are clearly delineated timeframes in which students are expected to meet the goals. At this time, student goals are actionable, but are not measurable in all core subjects. The principal is effective in the manner in which she articulates high expectations in order to create the school's Comprehensive Educational Plan. Parents are seen as partners in their children's education and the school is benefitting from increased parent involvement. Student progress reports and frequent meetings enable the leadership and teachers to communicate high expectations to ensure that parents know and understand the goals set for their children and their progress towards meeting them.

The school has placed considerable emphasis on technology and students' technological awareness and motivation have improved. However, teachers do not vary their approaches to instruction in core subjects and differentiate by product. This means that students do not benefit from the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned from the lesson or unit in a variety of ways. Because of the leadership's firm belief in the analysis of data, extended day and Saturday programs were implemented to address areas of stagnation in math and science. The principal ensures that students engage in activities that address cooperation and collaboration. Based on results identified in the Learning Environment Survey, the school has implemented programs and activities for students that promote trust and respect. However, it is too early to assess the benefits of these programs.

Teachers benefit from individualized professional development goals in order to grow professionally. Teachers have many opportunities to engage in collaborative learning but inter-visitations to enable exemplary practice to be shared are not yet embedded. The school's inquiry team has been instrumental in modeling for teachers how to effectively analyze and evaluate assessment data relating to struggling students in order to bring about school-wide changes. Students receive constant guidance and support so that they are able to grow academically and personally.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school consistently uses its own created database to monitor strategically the progress and performance of all students and to share information with students and their families.
- The school utilizes successful procedures to regularly set learning goals for individuals and groups of students that is effectively shared with all stakeholders.
- Teachers integrate technology well to enhance student engagement in interdisciplinary lessons and to differentiate their instruction.
- Leaders' use of data to make strategic and well-informed organizational decisions in all areas of the school enables students to achieve success.
- The school's very extensive and collaborative engagement of parents as partners promotes good student achievement and personal development.
- The principal is a strategic and reflective thinker whose vision of high expectations for high quality education for all students is embraced by all stakeholders.

What the school needs to improve

- Take differentiation to the next level in all core subjects by broadening the range of activities in lessons to take account of the different ways that individual students learn best.
- Enhance opportunities for students to engage in activities that enable them to build on reciprocated trust and respect for their peers and evaluate the impact.
- Embed the good practice of teacher inter-visitations to develop all teachers' professional growth by examining exemplary instructional models in and out of school.
- Extend the strategic manner in which the school develops interim goals so that they reflect more measurable outcomes for students in all core 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 well developed.

The school does an excellent job at gathering a wide range of relevant data in order to monitor and track the progress and performance of its students in all core subjects. Teachers analyze data in ARIS and periodic assessments that provide specific information based on student performance over time. A multitude of attendance tracking devices enables the school to monitor attendance data daily to ensure that steady and consistent progress is made in improving rates.

Parents are seen as partners in their children's education, and the school shares core subject information with them, utilizing data from Acuity, for upper grade students. In kindergarten through grade 3, teachers collect excellent data from the Reading First Program. The program enables the school to continuously analyze students' performance in reading. Based on the program's excellent monitoring of lower performing students and student subgroups, the school is able to provide immediate interventions so that students can achieve academic success. All data that is collected is used effectively set goals for students. All subgroup population data is carefully gathered and analyzed to ensure that all groups of students continue to make good progress.

The school creates action plans for each student detailing assessment needs, areas of strength and areas in need of improvement. Parents appreciate the good quality information contained in both progress reports and action plans that the school shares with them on an on-going basis. The principal has streamlined the data collection process and begun to collect data electronically. The school is able to use its own internally developed database to analyze the performance of students over a three-year period. The database enables the school to view all aspects of student performance with particular attention given to English language learners and special education students. When the school identify students whose attendance or academic performance has slipped, it takes swift and precise steps to reverse the trend. The principal identifies patterns and trends through data analysis, which informs strategic organizational decisions, such as purchasing new technology equipment and supplementary resources for the library.

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 uses collaborative and data-informed processes for planning and goal setting. Differentiated instruction is aligned with student goals and teachers' lesson planning. Data analysis informs all aspects of the school's planning are directly related to data. The

school implements assessments that have built in timeframes to enable students to reach their goals. Students help write their academic and personal goals. Data is monitored carefully so that instruction is focused and addresses the specific needs of each student. Students are a part of the planning process. Teacher conferences and the use of rubrics enable students to better understand entry points in their learning and articulate what they need to do in order to move to the next step. Teachers use curriculum maps to plan lessons for students that are based on the New York State performance indicators so that students are provided with lessons that are time bound in order to help them achieve their individual goals.

The school's Comprehensive Educational Plan is developed collaboratively and serves as the foundation for the school's goals. School goals are prominently posted across the school and regularly shared with stakeholders at parents and faculty meetings. Student's progress reports and action plans have enabled parents to stay abreast of their child's progress in school, and have strengthened communication between the home and the school. Parents speak very well of the principal and acknowledge and appreciate the high expectations she sets for 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.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The school offers a broad and challenging curriculum. Students indicate that they especially like the 'hands on' approaches they receive in science and the interactive and technical experiences technology affords them. Technology is used effectively to enhance students' interest and motivation in core subjects such as when students create interactive web pages or create PowerPoint presentations for social studies and science projects.

Teachers use evaluative questioning techniques to improve students' critical thinking through the implementation of literature circles. All students benefit from various kinds of art instruction, which is often linked to other subject areas. Teachers plan lessons that differentiate instruction for groups and individual students to ensure that they learn whatever level they are working at. However, at this time, many lessons are not differentiated to provide a variety of ways in which students can demonstrate what they have learned from the lesson. Product outcomes reflected in student assignments are mostly essays. Students indicate that they would like to have more choice and produce assignments that provide an alternative to completing an essay as the culminating activity.

The principal makes excellent strategic organizational decisions using data to guide her choices. All purchases and deployment of staff are undertaken in a purposeful manner. Through skillful analysis and careful budgeting, teachers and students receive the resources needed in order for them to improve their performance. The leadership's close analysis of math data revealed that there was a need to provide additional support to students that extended beyond the school day. As a result, the principal implemented a Saturday academy in order to address this area. To improve students' performance in science, the principal hired three science teachers, ensuring that two of them work directly with classes where scores showed a decline. The principal schedules deans to teach conflict resolution and additional social studies lessons to those students who demonstrate a need based on analysis of the data. The school has placed greater emphasis on its gifted classes in order to better prepare them for high school. As a result, there has been an increase in the number of students passing the math Regents examination.

The leadership is committed to fostering a safe and positive school culture. Students feel supported by their teachers and enjoy coming to school. A grade 8 student shared that “the school keeps getting better every year.” To address areas of concern identified in the Learning Environment Survey, the school has implemented programs that help promote students’ trust and respect for one another. Clubs are offered in basketball, drama, art and dance. However, at this time, the school cannot fully gauge the impact of the clubs’ programs on student achievement and personal 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 proficient.

The school has developed a positive culture of professional development as an effective means to improve teacher pedagogy. The leadership aligns teachers’ individualized professional development plans with the observation process in order to achieve better student outcomes. New teachers are appreciative of the many opportunities provided for them to engage in professional development and the support they receive from their colleagues on a continuous basis. At this time, inter-visitations have a remedial focus and are based mostly on the pedagogic needs of the teacher, as identified by the leadership. The school misses the opportunity to share best practice widely because it does not involve all teachers in inter-visitations so some do not benefit from observing exemplary instructional models in and out of the school.

The work of the inquiry team has been a significant aspect of the school’s work this year and a means by which teachers collaborate to reflect on their own practice. The manner in which the team analyzes data relating to struggling students in order to make strategic decisions about accelerating their learning, has served as an effective model to bring about systemic change in the school. The inquiry process and effective literacy strategies used by the core team are shared with smaller inquiry teams within the school in order to improve the performance of other students exhibiting the same learning challenges. Reflecting on the team’s inquiry work, one core team member stated, “initially you see the kids as just a number, but then you open the flood gates, and begin to see so much more about the child.”

The school collaboratively implements a comprehensive guidance plan that includes internal and external support services that connect with students and their families to enhance students’ personal and academic growth. The school works closely with external partners to ensure that students in need benefit from additional support services so that they may achieve well in school. Students enjoy American ballroom dancing, recorders and band, and a close collaboration with Rockaway Art Council and Leadership Conflict Resolution. The program “Spirituality for Kids” is taught during the day to students at the elementary school level, and “Spirituality for Teens” is taught to students in the middle school after school program. One parent commented about the positive impact that the drama program has had on her very shy daughter by encouraging her to be more open and confident. Parents work closely with the leadership and counselors, and as a result, there is improved home-school connections and student performance. The school’s pupil personnel committee meets regularly to develop plans for students who require additional guidance intervention services to ensure that they improve in their performance.

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 have systems in place to regularly examine individual, subgroup and grade level data and to monitor and revise groupings and curricular decisions in order to improve student outcomes. Formative and summative assessments help the school determine if students are making expected progress towards meeting their goals. Teacher use data-folios to set goals and are monitored closely by the leadership to ensure that students are achieving. Teachers use common planning time to collaborate and evaluate student performance in all subjects. They make adjustments in their lesson planning based on the results of student assessments. There are assessments at all grade levels that enable the school to make informed decisions about student progress so that interim goals can be modified in a timely fashion. While the school develops interim goals for students in core subjects, interim and long-term goals do not describe student and teacher outcomes clearly enough to enable the school to monitor the performance of students with equal precision and rigor as it applies to other areas of work.

Academic intervention teachers work closely with the leadership to analyze data and make revisions to programs or lesson planning when students show they are not making expected progress. By analyzing the results identified in the school's Progress Report, Quality Review and State Accountability reports, the leadership has been able to modify organizational decisions and structure professional collaborations in order for all students to make improvements. The school's self-evaluation is an accurate reflection of the present status of the school and clearly identifies the steps needed to be taken in order to make future improvements.

The vision set by the principal is clear, and shared by all stakeholders. Parents, faculty and students say that they know what the principal expects of them and understand and appreciate the goals set for the school. Parents willingly volunteer their time at the school; they have become better informed about the school and its instructional programs based on the school's grade-specific parent brochures. The close collaboration and commitment that exists in the school ensures that all students have every opportunity to achieve academic success.

School Quality Criteria 2008-2009

School name: Dr Richard R Green	△	➤	✓	+
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>	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.							
<i>To what extent do school leaders...</i>	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.							
<i>To what extent do...</i>	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