

Quality Review Report

2008-2009

Robert H Goddard School

Middle School 202

**138-30 Lafayette Street
Ozone Park
NY 11417**

Principal: William Fitzgerald

Dates of review: March 23 – 24, 2009

Lead Reviewer: Michele Lloyd-Bey

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Robert H. Goddard is a middle school with 1144 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 11% Black, 40% Hispanic, 18% White, and 30% Asian students. The student body includes 7% English language learners and 15% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2007 - 2008 was 90.8%. The school is not in receipt of Title 1 funding.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

The school collects and evaluates a wide range of data on a continuous basis to ensure that all students, including the sub-group population are achieving academic success. The school's web site and interim progress reports enable all stakeholders to keep well informed regarding student progress. Student attendance is a high priority, and because of the leadership's focus in this area, notable improvements are evident. The leadership makes strategic decisions to make certain that teachers work in collaborative teams to analyze data, plan effective lessons for students and to share information with students and their families. While the goal setting process is an important undertaking by the school, goals are not precise enough in all subjects to address each child's specific need. The school's efforts to set high expectations and involve parents more actively in their child's learning have resulted in improved home school communication and better student academic performance. According to the technology facilitator, "the school is not a technology school, but a place that uses technology". The school offers a challenging curriculum that incorporates technology to differentiate instruction and accelerate learning while enabling students to express themselves in creative and artistic ways. The leadership makes well-informed decisions regarding the purchase of resources and the utilization of staff so that all students make progress. The school maintains a positive tone and climate that is conducive to learning. However, further extension of collaborative activities to enhance trust and respect among all constituents is an aim of the school.

Teachers have individualized professional development plans and work collaboratively to share ideas and good instructional practice to improve student learning. However, at present, not all teachers engage in inter and intra-visitation opportunities to broaden their professional growth. This year the inquiry team's collaborative and reflective inquiry work has strengthened their knowledge of data and goal setting that they share with their colleagues who work in smaller inquiry teams. There is a wide range of interesting and challenging extra-curricular activities to support students in their academic and personal growth. As a result, students are motivated and enjoy school. The leadership and teachers analyze students' performance at interim checkpoints to determine the trends over time that impact on student achievement. Progress monitoring is ongoing and students actively engage in their own learning during conferences with their teachers. The school has not yet fully developed its use of identifying specific interim and long-term goals with measurable outcomes against which progress is measured. The school is reflective, and the principal maintains continuous focus on the clear vision that he frequently communicates to all stakeholders.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school provides valuable information and resources regarding all sub-groups to all stakeholders, to ensure that they make progress in all subject areas.
- The principal is strategic in using data to evaluate the effectiveness of organizational decisions and in assigning staff.
- All teachers use collaborative processes for planning and goal setting in all core subjects, based on the needs identified in the data.
- The school's many efforts to involve parents in their child's learning have increased the level of communication and have improved attendance.
- Students benefit from the technology used by teachers to analyze data, in order to differentiate their instruction all core subjects.
- School leaders regularly refer to each teacher's professional development plan and provide valuable feedback to improve student performance

What the school needs to improve

- Enhance teachers' ability to set learning goals more precisely for their students.
- Further extend opportunities for school members to engage in collaborative activities to support students and each other, in order to enhance trust and respect.
- Extend opportunities for all teachers to participate in inter and intra-visitations in order to maximize teachers' professional growth.
- Extend the use of interim goals to include measurable checkpoints in all grades and subjects, to periodically evaluate students' progress in reaching long-term goals.

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 continuously and strategically uses a wide range of data that enables them to monitor students' performance. The leadership collaboratively collects data on individuals and groups of students in order to provide academic support services based on their needs. The school collects and analyzes formative and summative data on their students to reflect performance in all core subjects. The various data sources are analyzed to help the school determine the level of consistency in the overall analysis. A full range of data is collected and analyzed by teachers collaboratively in order for them to better understand each student's instructional entry point. Consistent and excellent attention is given to the analysis of data for struggling students and sub-group populations, resulting in increased student performance, is evidenced in the school's accountability reports. Performance Series, Fountas and Pinnell, and Read 180 are extremely useful in supporting educators in the school to collect and analyze meaningful data that is linked to next step planning. Students and their families are an integral part of the data process. Interim student progress reports are shared with parents alongside multiple opportunities to meet and discuss their child's goals and the progress towards meeting them with faculty. Based on the constant sharing of data with students and their families, communication has improved.

In order to determine how students are performing over time, the leadership analyzes data longitudinally. All students in jeopardy of slipping, or not making progress are provided with immediate academic assistance. The principal uses carefully prepared computer generated spreadsheets to clearly identify the progress of English language learners. The information contained in each report helps to inform the instructional and organizational decision-making and the allocation of resources. The leadership uses faculty and grade conferences, and parent meetings as platforms to share the information contained in data reports so that communication remains strengthened and appropriate planning for students takes place.

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 leadership ensures that collaborative structures are embedded, leading to focused planning related to school and student goals. The school sets interim goals for students that are checked periodically to ensure that effective, differentiated instruction in all core subjects meets the needs of groups and individual students. Teachers collaboratively create pacing calendars and plan, at the beginning of the year, lessons from the scope and sequence to be developed into small units of study. The units become interim

assessments and help teachers create student goals that guide their planning as they work to improve all students' performance.

The Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP) is the major driver for the development of school wide goals. The long and short-term goals are displayed throughout the school and progress towards meeting the goals is shared with stakeholders during faculty, grade and parent meetings. All stakeholders take an active role in the development of the CEP. As a result, everyone maintains the same vision for the school. The use of periodic assessments assists teachers in setting goals for students and in effectively planning lessons within specific timeframes in order for students to show progress. The school sets interim goals in all core subjects. However, the precision of the goals so that they are measurable to show progress along the way is not evident in all subject areas. The careful and frequent attention to planning that the school gives to its English language learners and special needs population ensures that they achieve academic success. The principal created a team to address the needs of the school's sub-groups on a consistent basis. This kind of focused attention has resulted in improvement in students' overall performance. To ensure that the school is on track for meeting its goals, the principal effectively communicates high expectations regarding attendance, behavior, discipline and academic performance through the school's web site and student progress reports. Students appreciate the high expectations that their teachers have for them, and as a result, work hard to improve their performance.

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 curricular to all students. Students state that they like their classes and enjoy school. The leadership's focus on differentiated instruction ensures that all classes address students' goals and tailor instruction to meet individual needs. Teachers' effective use of SMARTboards and laptops in all classes ensures that learning is accelerated and engaging for all students. Teachers have common planning time in which to collaborate and plan differentiated lessons that address the needs of every student in all content areas. The Renzulli program supports seventh grade students as they engage in differentiated lessons that align with their learning style and enable them to meet their own individualized learning goals. The enhancements made to the school's instructional program, have increased the number of students transitioning to high school with advanced Regents designation. The leadership makes strategic decisions and as a result, the assignment of staff supports the specific needs of students identified in the data as requiring additional academic support services.

Trust and mutual respect received low scores on the School's Learning Environment Survey. Based on comments made by stakeholders in the school, improved efforts by the leadership and faculty have strengthened this area. Students engage in small group activities that encourage them to take risks and be more cooperative as they support one another in their work. However, further opportunities for all school members to engage in collaborative activities in order to enhance trust and respect are a next step for the school.

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 leadership uses the observation process to ensure that goals are addressed through teacher planning and lesson implementation. Differentiated professional development plans link to the school and student goals in order to maximize learning for students. During regular intervals, the leadership meets with staff in order to reflect collaboratively on the professional growth of each teacher. Faculty agree that the ongoing, differentiated professional development to address the needs of the school has improved teacher performance. Differentiated instruction and improved data analysis by all educators is observed in all core subject classrooms. Systems are not yet in place however to determine the effectiveness of teacher professional development on groups or individual students.

The school has a positive and professional tone in which teachers' state that they feel supported by one another as they share professional ideas freely with each other. New and veteran teachers appreciate the on-going support that they receive from the leadership and their peers to improve their ability to provide effective instruction for students. Teachers comment positively regarding their intra and inter-visitation experiences in order to maximize their professional growth. The school offers some, but not all, teachers the opportunity to engage in inter and intra- visitations. The dedicated inquiry team has developed into a reflective community of learners where they meet weekly to understand the inquiry process. The work of the inquiry team has positively influenced the manner in which teachers work in smaller teams across the school in order to analyze data, set goals for students, and plan differentiated instruction. As the team's next step, they plan to extend their work by sharing effective writing strategies with their colleagues across the school so that they may better serve the needs of students in their classes. The leadership, working closely with the parent coordinator effectively engages parents as partners in their child's education so that students produce improved academic and personal outcomes. Meaningful and ongoing parent workshops enhance parents' knowledge of the school's academic program and enable them to help their children more effectively at home.

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.

Teachers in all core subjects monitor the progress made by individuals and groups of students. The school's use of periodic assessments and unit exams assist teachers in setting interim goals for students and adjusting the instructional plan as required. Teachers meet regularly to plan lessons based on data derived from assessments in order to monitor students' growth over time. The school has not yet fully developed its use of interim checkpoints in all core subjects in order to create the measurable goals for students used to revise student-learning plans. The principal constantly reviews the progress report, quality review and periodic assessment data in order to analyze the effectiveness of organizational decisions and modify them as required. The leadership uses informal and formal observations to evaluate the effectiveness of teacher

differentiated professional development plans to ensure that school and student goals are addressed daily.

The leadership enhanced the use of data to track individual and groups of students across the school in order to establish trends, and regularly examines student outcomes. Through the close tracking of its sub-group data, the school found that gender differences in literacy exist between male and female students. This led the school to create two book clubs, designed to meet the needs of male students. The school purchased new and exciting libraries based on student surveys, to ensure that there is high interest and improved student motivation. While the impact of the literacy clubs cannot yet be fully determined, the principal is optimistic about the positive effect the clubs will have on male participants' academic performance in the future.

The school's self-evaluation form is reflective and clearly recognizes the steps needed to improve. The principal's energetic and focused attention to the needs of the entire school ensures that the vision for future development is constantly articulated, and is shared by all stakeholders.

School Quality Criteria 2008-2009

School name: Robert Goddard School – Q202	△	➤	✓	+
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, DY0, 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