



**Department of
Education**

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

**Quality Review Report
Office of Accountability
2008-2009**

Quality Review Report 2008-2009

Jeffrey M. Rapport School For Career Development

High School 754

470 Jackson Avenue

Bronx

NY 10455

Principal: Ellis Scope

Dates of review: April 29 - May 1, 2009

Lead Reviewer: Frank Jones

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Jeffrey M. Rapport School for Career Development is a high school with 623 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 35% Black, 61% Hispanic, 2% White, 1% Asian and 1% other students. The student body includes 19% English language learners and 100% special education students. Boys account for 71% of the students enrolled and girls account for 29%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2007 - 2008 was 70.9%. The school is not in receipt of Title 1 funding.

Overall Evaluation

This school is well developed.

Jeffrey M. Rapport School for Career and Development has become a well-developed school because of the transformational leadership of the principal. Her clarity of vision coupled with strategic acumen has ensured the school has developed into a high quality educational establishment where making a positive difference to the lives of the students is the driving force. The highly committed and motivated staff work as an exceptionally cohesive team who believe both in each other and what they are doing. The leadership values their views and efforts and as a result, staff feel empowered. This in turn engenders a positive culture of mutual respect and support. Teachers understand and utilize data exceptionally well to write individual education plans and the incremental learning goals that support the next steps in learning. This information enables the school to carefully track and monitor student progress allowing it to adjust student programs as the need occurs. This highly detailed and flexible approach reflects the in depth understanding the school has of the needs and potential of each student. The school is therefore able to successfully formulate and put in place the relevant educational pathways for each student, which enables them to realize their potential. The majority of teachers also use data extremely effectively to inform their instruction and it enables them to match activities closely to individual learning needs. When this occurs students are highly engaged, motivated and the quality of learning is very good. However, not every teacher has embedded differentiation of instruction in their practice and at times, this has an adverse impact on student performance and behavior.

The inquiry team has spawned satellite teams and all of them have identified relevant areas for research, which has a positive impact on student performance and progress. The school has yet to formulate individual teacher goals but classroom observations provide invaluable support for teachers as they continue to improve their practice. Similarly, teachers eagerly grasp the range and quality of professional development opportunities, which have a positive impact on teacher skills and strategies for development. As one teacher said, "I've had the opportunity to learn, we are a learning environment." Staff voluntarily modified the language of their contracts to create time to meet and share best practice. There is extremely effective amalgamation of the strengths and expertise of the whole school community to provide for the social emotional, behavioral, and learning needs of each student. Teachers have a deep desire to make a difference to the life opportunities of the students and through exceptional leadership and teamwork, they are.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The clarity of vision and strategic acumen of the principal, ably supported by her assistants, has transformed the school into an exceptional learning establishment that has a fundamental belief in the students it serves.
- Staff are highly committed, extremely motivated and mutually supportive working with great skill and professional expertise to successfully meet the diverse needs of the student population.
- The school uses teacher driven assessments and tracking systems particularly effectively to monitor progress and identify the next steps in learning.
- Individual education plans are very well written and applied as are the detailed teacher driven incremental learning goals that compliment them.
- The school has an in depth understanding of the specific needs and strengths of each student, which it uses extremely well to plan educational pathways that enable the realization of their potential and aspirations.
- By utilizing additional services and implementing positive strategies, the school successfully tackles the challenging behaviors of students and addresses their social and emotional needs.
- Staff consider the administration have empowered, valued and unconditionally supported them, which has resulted in the exceptionally positive learning and caring culture that pervades the school.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue to support staff in extending their ability to differentiate instruction so tasks clearly match the learning and skills needs of every student.
- Build on the high level of support for staff by linking classroom observation outcomes with teacher self-evaluation to provide individual development goals.
- Continue to develop the obvious potential of the inquiry teams, particularly to improve attendance, and share the evolving good practice.

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 gathers an extensive range of pertinent standardized and alternate assessment data relating to behavior, learning, emotional development and attendance which provides a clear picture of the performance and progress of each student. Teachers have a detailed understanding of the data at their disposal and use this information intelligently to write well-crafted individual education plans and the incremental learning goals to achieve them. Teachers carefully analyze formative assessments such as Scantron, the Brigance and the Slosson Inventory. They supplement this with further information derived from instructional programs such as Achieve 3000 and Positive Intervention and Supports (PBIS). This enables the school to accurately monitor and set apposite goals in the significant areas that have a specific impact on individual and groups of students.

Assessment is effective and on going in each classroom using observations, discussions and other tools. This provides immediate and relevant information about understanding and mastery of concepts. The use of computer-based learning provides a structured and sequential approach to development of skills and knowledge, which directs and reinforces student learning. Teachers are therefore able to measure the progress of all students. They retain this data in individual student binders providing an accurate record of student achievement and the assessment of the impact of teaching. Importantly, teachers also use it exceptionally well to formulate strategies that will further enhance and add focus to the next steps in learning. The school operates a continuum to prepare students for competitive employment. To enable this to occur students engage in effective pre vocational experiences both in school and in the community. The school carefully assesses and monitors students to ensure that they have, and develop, the requisite skills that will enable them to secure competitive employment. This extremely careful attention to student development reflects in the successful placement of a high number of students in the work place environment.

The school works extremely hard to communicate with parents. It regularly uses telephone calls to discuss concerns that arise and keep parents informed about their child's progress. Parents receive report cards six times a year, which clearly chart the strengths and development areas for each student. The open door policy operated by the school affords instant access to parents giving them the opportunity for high quality discourse.

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 well developed.

Teachers are particularly adept at maximizing the potential of the data they collect to produce highly focused and relevant goals, which are contained in the students’ individual education plans. The detailed longer-term goals provide clear learning pathways. The attendant rigorous incremental learning goals provide a sequential program of development, which builds on prior learning. The school effectively employs the individual education plans to direct and develop instructional strategies. This enables the differentiation of tasks according to identified learning need. Therefore, the school is able to accurately monitor performance and realign strategies as required. This rigorous attention to detail enables early intervention to occur. Where more than one teacher teaches students then they discuss individual education plan goals and allocate responsibilities for their implementation to specific people. This ensures accountability and results in comprehensive coverage of all development areas.

The quality of the school evaluation is extremely thorough and therefore accurately informs the corporately developed goals in the schools Comprehensive Educational Plan. These give purpose and direction to the future development of the school. The clear and precise goals focus on raising achievement, are time scaled, quantifiable, and subject to monthly scrutiny. This provides essential opportunities to measure the impact of implemented strategies and to monitor progress effectively.

The principal and staff have high expectations of themselves and the students they educate. Staff are highly committed, extremely motivated, and mutually supportive. They work with great skill and professional expertise to successfully meet the diverse needs of the student population. Students in one advisory lesson, engaged in a verbal assessment of what they had learned, and the reasons why. As a result, they were able to begin to articulate their next learning goals with a good degree of accuracy.

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 well developed.

The curriculum is broad and specifically designed to meet the diverse and complex requirements of the student population. It aligns to state standards and student need. The school has a comprehensive understanding of the specific needs and strengths of each student. It employs this information extremely well to identify which diploma or vocational program will best suit individual student requirements. Regular evaluations occur to ensure placements are effective. This allows the realization of student potential and aspirations. A high degree of organizational flexibility ensures that students can easily move between programs to maximize their learning. Teachers are diligent in their efforts to engage students. Where a student experiences problems with writing, then subjects like creative arts other mediums such as painting or modeling provide opportunities for students to express themselves. Students speak highly of the technology, which the school uses exceptionally well to support the curriculum and its

delivery. Students are therefore recipients of a wide-ranging program that is rich in experience and opportunity.

Teachers use data particularly effectively in the majority of classrooms to differentiate activities to meet the developmental requirements of each student. On most occasions, lessons engage students, optimize their learning and so progress is good. When tasks do not accurately reflect need or there is too much emphasis on a didactic approach to instruction, students become passive recipients of knowledge rather than active participants in experiential learning.

The exceptional collegiate and supportive culture that pervades the school is fundamental to the very good progress it has made. Staff feel empowered, valued and unconditionally supported by the administration, which has resulted in an extremely positive learning environment. The outstanding mutual respect and trust between all staff and an acceptance of responsibility has had a tremendous impact on the positive development of each student.

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 administration has a very good understanding of what good learning and teaching looks like. Therefore, their classroom observations provide a first-class understanding of the strengths and development areas for each teacher. Staff welcome these supportive observations and say they benefit greatly because administration provides them with additional strategies to improve their instruction further. As one teacher said, "This is a learning environment for all." Teachers are beginning to evaluate their own practice. However, the school has not sufficiently formalized the link between this activity and classroom observation to provide individual professional goals. Teachers speak highly of the administration and the encouragement they receive to access a range of professional development opportunities. These support them in the introduction of new programs or provide them with additional teaching strategies. Teachers have changed their contractual obligations to create additional opportunities to meet together, share best practice and discuss the information they have. This reflects the tremendous commitment they display to meet the needs of the students. It has also resulted in increased confidence in implementing strategies that impact on teaching and promoted a coherent and cohesive approach to improving learning. The school takes great care to match seasoned para professionals and seasoned teachers with those new to the school. This ensures that support is maximized, extremely well focused and builds in success. One new teacher talking about the support said, "They take time for you as a person and give you the opportunity to learn". Another said, "I lucked in when I got hired here."

The inquiry team is using data effectively to identify deficits in student work and to test hypotheses. They have initiated set processes and protocols embedded in good research techniques. These have subsequently been implemented by the three other inquiry teams which have developed. It is too early to draw conclusions and measure significant impact but all areas of inquiry reflect a desire to overcome barriers, such as the very poor attendance, which detracts from good learning occurring.

The school successfully utilizes additional services and implements positive strategies to tackle the challenging behaviors of students and address their social and emotional needs. Counselors, paraprofessionals, advisory, crisis intervention teams and other related services have welded in to a particularly effective team that provides great care, expertise and sensitivity in their work to promote personal student growth. 'Phenomenal', was one word used by a teacher to describe the work of the crisis intervention team. The school works exceptionally well to prepare students for placement in worksites that they have formed a partnership with, such as Fordham University. This has enabled students to gain permanent employment in meaningful jobs, which reflects the school mission.

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 well developed.

The school is acutely aware of the importance and use of data to set pertinent and challenging goals for all students. Teachers have an in depth understanding of the data they use and this makes certain that goals are highly focused and clearly identify the incremental learning steps required to achieve them. Therefore, plans for improving student outcomes are particularly good and have significant impact on performance. Professional development is matched closely to teacher need and therefore is effective in having a positive impact on instruction. Efficient analysis of data enables the use of the resultant information to adapt instruction and modify goals so that learning remains focused and the school can maintain progress. The school also uses this data to determine and amend the educational direction of each student. Constant formal and informal reviews of student performance inform decisions about programs it will follow. This flexibility of approach guarantees that students are recipients of programs, which match their social, emotional and educational needs.

The school knows its strengths and areas for development because of the comprehensive evaluation that takes place of all aspects of the school. Goals contained in the Comprehensive Educational Plan emanate from the evaluations and therefore have purpose and focus. The principal has been in place for a little over two years. During this time she has transformed the education provided by the school and cultivated a culture which is now very much 'want to do and can do'. She is ably supported by three talented assistant principals who are extremely good practitioners. Students and staff recognize the efforts of the administration and the values they hold energize them. As a result, their commitment is extremely high and teachers work together very effectively as a team. They demonstrate a considerable degree of support for each other and an unswerving desire to make a difference to the lives of the students they teach. Exceptional strategic expertise supports the clarity of vision displayed by the principal and shared with the school community. This has created a vibrant learning establishment that has a fundamental belief in the students it serves.

School Quality Criteria 2008-2009

School name: Jeffrey M Rapport School For Career Development	Δ	➤	✓	+
Overall QR Score				X
Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, generate and analyze information on student learning outcomes and use it to understand what each student knows and can do, and to monitor the student’s progress over time.				
<i>To what extent do school leaders and faculty regularly...</i>	Δ	➤	✓	+
1.1 collect and analyze actionable information, including assessment results and attendance data, to provide a complete view of the learning outcomes and needs of individual students and groupings of students?				X
1.2 focus analysis on the learning outcomes and needs of all sub-groups of students?				X
1.3 engage in an open exchange of information with students and families about students’ learning needs and outcomes, including assessment results and attendance data?				X
1.4 design or adapt tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize and analyze student performance, identify trends and inform instructional and organizational decisions, and to enable students and their families to assess and track each student’s progress?				X
Overall score for Quality Statement 1				X
Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use data to understand each student’s next learning steps and to set suitably high goals for accelerating each student’s learning.				
<i>To what extent do school leaders and faculty...</i>	Δ	➤	✓	+
2.1 use collaborative and data-informed processes to set measurable, actionable and differentiated learning goals in core subjects for individual students and groupings of students and develop differentiated plans and timeframes for reaching these goals?				X
2.2 use collaborative and data-informed processes to develop the school’s Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP)?				X
2.3 ensure that the achievement of learning goals, and the implementation of plans and timeframes for reaching these goals, is the central focus of school leaders, faculty, students and families?				X
2.4 communicate high expectations to all students and families, and involve students in developing their learning goals and plans and in taking their next learning steps?				X
Overall score for Quality Statement 2				X

DEFINITIONS

“**Analyze**” or “**analysis**” includes, but is not limited to, comparisons of:

- the current and past outcomes of . . . individual students, administrative groupings and sub-groups of students and the school itself in core subjects;
- the outcomes of different classrooms and sub-groups in the same grades and core subjects; and
- the school’s Progress Report and other outcomes to those of peer/other schools

“**Assessment results**” include student outcomes on summative assessments (e.g., state ELA, math, science and social studies tests, NYSESLAT, Regents Exams, and Performance Based Assessment Tasks) and formative assessments aligned to the school’s curriculum (including Periodic, DYO, and teacher-developed Classroom Assessments).

“**Core subjects**” are ELA, math, science, social studies/history, the arts, foreign language, and physical education/health.

“**Data-informed processes**” include analysis of Progress Report, Quality Review, Learning Environment Survey, Inquiry Team findings, assessment results and attendance data

“**Groupings of students**” include classrooms, grade levels and high school cohorts.

“**Organizational decisions or strategies**” refer to a school’s use of budget and resources, staffing, planning, scheduling, grade structure, departments and teacher teams and other aspects of the school’s structure and organization that can affect student outcomes.

“**Sub-groups of students**” include special education students, English Language Learners, the other NCLB sub-groups, boys, girls, and other groups significant to the school

Quality Statement 3 – Develop Coherent Instructional and Organizational Strategies: The school uses rigorous curricula, teaching and organizational decision making to engage students and faculty in meeting all students’ learning goals.							
<i>To what extent do ...</i>	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