

# Quality Review Report 2009-2010

**Jean Nuzzi**

**Intermediate School 109  
213-10 92<sup>nd</sup> Avenue  
Queens Village  
NY 11428**

**Principal: Miatheresa Pate-Alexander**

**Dates of review: February 3 - 4, 2010  
Lead Reviewer: Monica George-Fields**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Jean Nuzzi is an intermediate school with 1158 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 44% Black, 22% Hispanic, 2% White, 30% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 2% American Indian students. The student body includes 9% English language learners and 14% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2008 - 2009 was 91%.

### Overall Evaluation

#### **This school is proficient.**

Jean Nuzzi is a large educational community that school leaders and staff have managed to make feel small by creating instructional clusters. These instructional clusters represent strategic organizational decisions that heighten ownership by teachers around student achievement. Teachers use extensive and detailed standards-based curriculum maps and pacing calendars to create lesson plans for teaching and learning. These instructional tools enable students to receive all standards-based instruction.

Purposeful and highly effective collection and analysis of data takes place regularly by school leaders and staff members. This leads to teachers identifying the needs of students in need of intervention so that their achievement is accelerated. The school has developed robust programs such as Read 180 and tutoring for struggling students. School leaders and teachers use a variety of highly effective assessment tools to allow them to identify students' strengths and areas of need, which leads to increased student achievement. However, the school has not established systems for staff members to evaluate and adjust curriculum and instruction for students excelling across the grades and within certain subjects. Differentiated instruction is not consistently offered in all classes, making the delivery of some lessons and work products generic and limiting students' exposure to different approaches to engaging in learning. The school has not fully developed ways to communicate school-wide annual achievement to the entire school community so that progress towards those goals is monitored and tracked. The staff has only engaged in the review of annual goals in the beginning of the school year.

All teachers participate in highly effective professional collaborations and teacher teams in which they identify and address students' strengths and areas of need. The school has developed effective and purposeful partnerships with community based organizations. These organizations help the school to meet the socio-emotional needs of students and offer well attended English as a second language classes to parents. Assessment tools such as rubrics and electronic systems to track student achievement are inconsistently used throughout the school, which creates difficulty for students and parents to fully partner in students' educational success.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- Detailed and rigorous curriculum maps and pacing calendars for all subjects align to State standards, and create cohesive expectations for teaching.
  - The faculty used their analysis of State tests to select specific standards for focus in each grade and every subject, including art and physical education. The pre-determined standards are clearly delineated within each unit of work. The standards scaffold from one grade to the other and lead to complex activities as the school year progresses. As a result, the school ensures curriculum alignment in every subject across each grade.
  - All units of study outline expectations for rigorous habits of mind by identifying high levels of essential vocabulary words, complex skills, and a variety of assessments for students to complete. For example, the 7<sup>th</sup> grade November science curriculum calls for students to learn “Wave behavior, speed of light and sound.” One of the student assessments is to “Design models of any sound instruments.” As a result, the units ensure that coherent expectations of rigor are evident across the entire school.
- The principal creates and maintains a high sense of respect, trust, and school pride which supports the school community’s goals of creating a safe community where students and staff can grow and learn.
  - Based on the learning environment survey, the decision to hire additional deans successfully results in increased safety and respect. These deans actively monitor students’ movement throughout the school day, and provide successful immediate interventions and counseling to encourage positive interactions and behavior, which results in a calm school tone.
  - School leaders creatively organized students in clusters where four content area teachers provide instruction to a cohort of students. This enables teachers to know their students well and to assist students with their academic and socio-emotional needs so that students have greater opportunities to excel.
- School leaders gather and analyze a wide range of data which is used to identify teacher and student areas of improvement and strengths so that the school has a clear understanding of how teachers and students are performing.
  - School leaders use daily observations of classroom instruction to create a clear understanding of the teachers who need additional support and those who are excelling. These observations lead to a snapshot of the instructional capacity in the school, and the subjects and/or grades where improvement is necessary so that needs can be addressed and good practices shared.
  - School leaders collect and analyze a wide range of data from ARIS, school database sources (ATS), and teacher-created baseline assessments. School leaders share the outcome of analyzing the data during routine meetings. Teachers use the analysis, during their team meetings, to determine which students should receive additional help during lunch and other times during the school day. This enables

students to be carefully supported to ensure that their learning needs are met.

- School leaders and faculty effectively developed a clear set of goals that are widely known and acted upon by the staff, which results in a school-wide effort to increase the use of data to support struggling students.
  - All teachers consistently use a plethora of data-collection tools such as portfolio booklets, reflection questionnaires, and conferring scoring forms. This reflects the school-wide goal, demonstrating commitment to increased data collection, ensuring wide understanding of the needs of all students in the school.
  - The school's goal of addressing the lowest third of students has translated into the development of robust services such as Read 180 and tutoring programs for struggling students. Students rotate through several highly engaging literacy centers, including a computer-based vocabulary program, and receive direct instruction from the teacher. These measures have already yielded improvement in the literacy skills of targeted students.
- Staff members participate in purposeful and effective professional development workshops and teacher team meetings to foster collaboration in addressing student strengths and areas of need.
  - School leaders and support staff routinely offer well-attended professional development workshops. These workshops lead to the development of consistent practices around new instructional initiatives, such as teachers' conferences with students, with positive impact on student performance and progress.
  - To ensure that all experienced teachers have the opportunity to share their best practices with others, tenured teachers have the opportunity to use Option A. These yearlong projects result in teachers creating and successfully delivering professional development workshops for their peers, requested via self-assessment surveys completed by all teachers in the school. In consequence, the quality of teaching and student learning is constantly improving.
- School leaders and faculty have developed highly effective relationships with community-based organizations to support students and parents in developing academic and social interaction skills.
  - The school has developed a successful partnership with an organization that delivers English as a second language classes to parents. This increases parental involvement and encourages them to become more involved in their children's education.
  - Experts in socio-emotional development facilitate Town Hall meetings for all students. During these meetings, students learn problem solving and high self-esteem strategies, while the faculty learns additional ways to address student needs.

## **What the school needs to improve**

- Develop teachers' understanding of delivering the detailed curriculum using differentiated strategies so that all students have access to engaging materials and lessons and produce high quality work products.
  - Several teachers use generic teaching strategies to deliver instruction and student work products, which leads to one interpretation of the curriculum. As a result, not all students are exposed to different possible approaches to solving problems, in using higher order thinking skills or in developing collaborative work skills.
  - Teachers successfully address struggling students' needs using a variety of strategies; however, too few teachers use data to plan their instruction to meet the needs of all the learners in their classes.
- Expand the data that teachers that regularly analyze to include students who are excelling in subjects across the grade and all subject areas, so that purposeful decisions are made about their instruction and learning.
  - The school leaders and teachers do not analyze data to track the progress of students who have mastered particular areas. As a result, teachers do not make periodic adjustments to the curriculum to address those students' specific needs and students do not all make the progress of which they are capable.
  - Some teachers engage in developing organic assessments to supplement generic assessments. This leads to an uneven development of teacher expertise in designing assessments for differentiated instruction and means that student performance, particularly for the high achievers, is not tracked closely enough.
- Communicate school-wide annual goals more widely to teachers so that the school community can make appropriate adjustments throughout the school year.
  - School leaders formally distribute school-wide data and annual goals at the beginning of the school year, but do not have teachers revisit them consistently throughout the school year. This means that progress towards goals is not monitored closely enough to make the necessary adjustments to curriculum and instruction in order to maximize student outcomes.
- Refine the structures and systems for evaluating assessment tools and their use, to ensure consistent access so that students and parents can fully partner with teachers to provide a success educational experience.
  - School leaders expect teachers to use rubrics to assess student work, but these are used inconsistently. This leads to students' uncertainty about the specific strategies required to improve their work.
  - Teachers' organization of student data is not fully consistent. Whereas some teachers use an electronic data source to aggregate and organize data, other teachers have not employed those methods. This leads to uneven access for students and parents.
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## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2009-2010

|   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| School name: Jean Nuzzi   | △ | ▶ | ✓ | + |
| Overall QR Score  |   |   | X |   |
| <b>Quality Statement 1 – Instructional and Organizational Coherence: The school has a coherent strategy to support student learning that aligns curriculum, instruction and organizational decisions.</b>                             |   |   |   |   |
| <i>To what extent does the school regularly...</i>  | △ | ▶ | ✓ | + |
| 1.1 Design engaging, rigorous and coherent curricula, including the Arts, for a variety of learners and aligned to key State standards?   |   |   |   | X |
| 1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best, and ensure that it is: aligned to the curriculum, engaging, and differentiated to enable all students to produce meaningful work products? |   |   | X |   |
| 1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet student learning needs?  |   |   |   | X |
| 1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?   |   |   |   | X |
| Overall score for Quality Statement 1   |   |   |   | X |
| <b>Quality Statement 2 – Gather and Analyze Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, analyze and share information on student learning outcomes to understand school and student progress over time.</b>                 |   |   |   |   |
| <i>To what extent does the school ...</i>   | △ | ▶ | ✓ | + |
| 2.1 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the school level?   |   |   |   | X |
| 2.2 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the team and classroom level?   |   |   | X |   |
| 2.3 Use or develop tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize and analyze student performance trends?  |   |   |   | X |
| 2.4 Engage in an open exchange of information with students and families regarding students' learning needs and outcomes?   |   |   |   | X |
| Overall score for Quality Statement 2   |   |   |   | X |

| <b>Quality Statement 3 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently engage the school community and use data to set and track suitably high goals for accelerating student learning.</b>  |                       |   |  |   |                   |   |                       |
|--|-----------------------|---|--|---|-------------------|---|-----------------------|
| <i>To what extent does the school ...</i>  | △                     | ➤ | ✓  | + |                   |   |                       |
| 3.1 Establish a coherent vision of future development that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are understood and supported by the entire school community?   |                       |   |  | X |                   |   |                       |
| 3.2 Use collaborative and data informed processes to set measurable and differentiated learning goals for student subgroups, and students in need of additional support?   |                       |   | X  |   |                   |   |                       |
| 3.3 Ensure the achievement of learning goals by tracking progress at the school, teacher team and classroom level?   |                       |   | X  |   |                   |   |                       |
| 3.4 Communicate high expectations to students and families, engage them in decision-making, and promote active involvement in the school community?  |                       |   |  | X |                   |   |                       |
| <b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>   |                       |   |  | X |                   |   |                       |
| <b>Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school’s goals and student learning and emotional needs.</b>                           |                       |   |  |   |                   |   |                       |
| <i>To what extent does the school...</i>   | △                     | ➤ | ✓  | + |                   |   |                       |
| 4.1 Use the observation of classroom teaching and the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection, with a special focus on new teachers? |                       |   |  | X |                   |   |                       |
| 4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning?  |                       |   |  | X |                   |   |                       |
| 4.3 Provide professional development that promotes independent and shared reflection, opportunities for leadership growth, and enables teachers to continuously evaluate and revise their classroom practices to improve learning outcomes?        |                       |   |  | X |                   |   |                       |
| 4.4 Integrate child/youth development, support services and partnerships with families and outside organizations with the school-wide goals to accelerate the academic and personal growth of students?  |                       |   |  | X |                   |   |                       |
| <b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>   |                       |   |  | X |                   |   |                       |
| <b>Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for monitoring and evaluating progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.</b>                   |                       |   |  |   |                   |   |                       |
| <i>To what extent does the school...</i>   | △                     | ➤ | ✓  | + |                   |   |                       |
| 5.1 Evaluate the quality of curricular, instructional and organizational decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school?  |                       |   | X  |   |                   |   |                       |
| 5.2 Evaluate systems for assessing students, organizing data, and sharing information with student and families, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school?                               |                       |   | X  |   |                   |   |                       |
| 5.3 Establish and sustain a transparent, collaborative system for measuring progress towards interim and long term goals and making adjustments during the year and over time?   |                       |   | X  |   |                   |   |                       |
| 5.4 Use data to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of structured professional collaboration, capacity building and leadership development strategies?  |                       |   | X  |   |                   |   |                       |
| <b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>   |                       |   |  | X |                   |   |                       |
| <b>Quality Review Scoring Key</b>  |                       |   |  |   |                   |   |                       |
| △  | <b>Underdeveloped</b> | ➤ | <b>Underdeveloped with Proficient Features</b> | ✓ | <b>Proficient</b> | + | <b>Well Developed</b> |