



**Department of  
Education**  
*Carmen Fariña, Chancellor*

**Office of School Quality  
Division of Teaching and Learning**

# **Quality Review Report**

## **2015-2016**

**J. M. Rapport School Career Development**

**High School X754**

**470 Jackson Avenue  
Bronx  
NY 10455**

**Principal: Daniel Hoehn**

**Date of review: April 19, 2016  
Lead Reviewer: Robin Cohen**

## The School Context

J. M. Rapport School Career Development is a high school with 515 students from grade 8 through grade 12. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 0% Asian, 35% Black, 61% Hispanic, 4% White students. The student body includes 32% English Language Learners and 96% students with disabilities. Boys account for 66% of the students enrolled and girls account for 34%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 81.0%.

## School Quality Criteria

<b>Instructional Core</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
1.1 Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards	<b>Celebration</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the instructional shifts and Danielson <i>Framework for Teaching</i> , aligned to the curricula, engaging, and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
2.2 Align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessment and grading practices, and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
<b>School Culture</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
<b>Systems for Improvement</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>

## Area of Celebration

**Quality Indicator:**

**1.1 Curriculum**

**Rating:**

**Well Developed**

### Findings

All curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and strategically integrate the instructional shifts. The school continues to deepen, expand, and refine their curriculum maps and units of study to ensure a range of learning experiences, thereby engaging all students in academic and life skills.

### Impact

The school's curricula decisions, with input from staff, build coherence across all sites and foster student engagement, academic achievement, and independence leading to college and career readiness.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school made purposeful choices about curricula based on research, student needs, and the expertise of teachers. The Tri-State Rubric was used as a tool to assess various curricula. The school has invested in Common Core-aligned *EngageNY* Math and *Collections English Language Arts* for their students participating in standardized assessment and for students participating in alternate assessment at the main site, demonstrating the school's high expectations for all students. Common Core-aligned *Attainment* curricula is used with students participating in alternate assessment at worksites and annexes. *Attainment* is designed to foster and support student independence, academic and behavioral growth, and provide college and career readiness skills.
- Presently, 68% of the student body are students with disabilities who participate in standardized assessment. Teachers use grade-level texts evaluated by the school's instructional support team, using the Text Complexity Rubric to ensure coherence across the school. Teachers create units of study focusing on a specific Common Core Learning Standard. For example, the math department continues to focus on word problems and embedding the instructional math shift on application. In an 8:1:1 alternate assessment class, students learn about the concept of perimeter and area in relation to real world situations, such as building and installing a fence. The lesson involves buying a home, and then proceeding to install a new fence around the property. Students are provided with the formulas for area and perimeter and directed to determine the measurements for differing shapes.
- The school is very vigilant in their planning and refining of curriculum maps and units of study. Teachers revise and organize the maps by subject areas, grades, and by alternate and standardized student population needs. For example, teachers' analysis of Regents' data indicated that students were deficient in writing skills. A cohort of teachers and school leaders received training in the Hochman Writing Revolution program. The curriculum team refined their units of study to focus on specific writing standards, across all content areas and grade levels. Teaching methodologies and teaching strategies such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Webb's *Depth of Knowledge* (DOK) questioning techniques are discussed during teacher team meetings and integrated into lesson planning. The school's belief of assuring access for all learners is embedded in all lesson planning. Entry points for all students are a collaborative decision-making approach that strategically focuses on the students' learning style, interests, and readiness skills.

## Area of Focus

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>3.4 High Expectations</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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### Findings

The school consistently communicates high expectations for learning to the entire staff via the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and has established systematic structures that engage and inform all stakeholders, leading to a path of college and career readiness for all students. The school is working on improving participation of greater numbers of parents in the ongoing support avenues and workshops available to them.

### Impact

Structures that support the school's high expectations result in a culture of mutual accountability and effective academic and personal growth for staff and students.

### Supporting Evidence

- High expectations are consistently communicated to all constituents through a variety of means such as the staff and student handbooks, emails, instructional memos, post-observation reports, faculty meetings, and collaborative team meetings. The handbooks ensure that the entire school is aware of the instructional and behavioral expectations fostering a culture of mutual accountability. A teacher shared that "On day one of the new school year, we review the mission and vision of our school, the expected standards of professionalism, and the instructional focus for the new year." School leaders use observations to hold staff to these expectations. School leaders and teachers consistently review student incidents and write-ups and model social and behavioral skills such as taking turns, asking appropriate questions, and giving and receiving feedback.
- The school is committed to providing challenging educational and community-based work experiences for their students, enabling them to become productive and independent members of society. The school provides a range of learning experiences from the main campus to its eleven community-based work-study programs. Students work in food service catering at Fordham Lincoln Center, Fordham Rose Hill, and Manhattan College. Students also work at Daughters of Jacob and Kings Harbor Multicare Center performing a variety of tasks supporting the daily operation of a nursing home. Students also perform a variety of clerical tasks at Lincoln Medical Center. Unique to the school is the Teacher Assistant program at a general education school in which students assist the classroom staff in working with elementary school children with a variety of disabilities.
- School leaders and staff work as a team in study groups reviewing potential curricula and in planning and designing professional development workshops. Staff members submit feedback on workshops to inform future professional development activities. Parent workshops provide information on topics such as post-secondary preparation, however, parents stated that the same twelve parents come to workshops and meetings. School leaders and staff provide ongoing professional development with regard to implementing best practices identified in the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. The school ensures ongoing rigorous professional development every Wednesday through a School Based Option (SBO) vote. Workshops such as Regents analysis, New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA), and Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) development, help support and guide teachers. School leaders provide next steps linked to targeted components of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* as noted in post-observation reports.

## Additional Findings

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>1.2 Pedagogy</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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### Findings

Teaching practices across the school reflect a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best as embodied in the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and the instructional shifts. Teaching strategies tactically provide multiple entry points and high quality supports and extensions into the curricula to ensure all students have the opportunity to produce meaningful work products.

### Impact

Discussion at the team and school levels formed the school's belief system in how students learn best resulting in teaching practices that meet the needs of all students. All students are engaged in cognitively appropriate, yet challenging tasks.

### Supporting Evidence

- Classroom instruction and lesson planning includes differentiated activities and multiple entry points through leveled texts, manipulatives, graphic organizers, visual aids, and technology. The school community believes students learn best by being engaged in purposeful lessons that directly relate to their lives and that include embedded opportunities to engage in productive conversations with peers and adults. In addition, teachers stated that based upon lengthy analysis of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and discussions at Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), that they agree that students learn best when they are placed in appropriate groups, have the opportunity to self-reflect, and when there is choice. This philosophy is displayed proudly throughout the school and referred to consistently.
- The instructional focus for 2015-2016 school year is: "Through an inquiry-based noted approach, teachers will support students in their ability to communicate ideas through discussion and written form in all content areas. Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) teachers will prioritize the communication of process and solutions, while humanities teachers will prioritize how to communicate using relevant and compelling evidence in support of an argument." For example, in a Global History class, students were directed to view two photographs displayed on the interactive whiteboard. The objective of the lesson was for students to connect how Japan's new social reforms led to her becoming an imperial power. Students were asked to make inferences as to what they were seeing, discuss their assumptions, and then share with the class.
- Class instruction provides extensions, which include essential and focus questions, requiring high levels of student thinking. For example, in an Earth Science class, the essential question was; "How do the forces of water and gravity shape landscapes over time?" In line with the school's focus on developing academic vocabulary, the teacher introduced the vocabulary porosity and permeability using images of the new words and asked the students to describe "what they see" and "what is happening."
- Student binders and classroom and hallway bulletin boards show tasks that are differentiated, provide multiple entry points, and offer students opportunities to engage in challenging activities that develop critical thinking skills. Clear scaffolds, such as teacher modeling, purposeful groupings, and technology, allows all learners a variety of pathways to complete tasks and demonstrate their thinking.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>2.2 Assessment</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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### Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers use curricula-aligned common assessments, rubrics, and checklists to monitor student understanding and consistently use ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

### Impact

Teachers and students have meaningful feedback about student achievement. Teachers make effective adjustments to meet all students' learning needs and students are aware of their next learning steps.

### Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and teachers believe that assessment data is an effective approach to drive instruction and improve student learning. Across all classrooms visited, teachers and paraprofessionals record data daily for both academic performance and behavior. Teachers administer *Scantron* and *New York City Performance Tasks* to students participating in standardized assessment as their baseline assessment. This baseline data is used to help establish students' reading, writing, communication, and math skills levels. For students participating in alternate assessment, *Students Annual Needs Determination Inventory (SANDI)* is the baseline assessment used to establish academic and social and emotional levels. Following each unit of study, assessments are administered to capture students' progress for targeted learning skills. Goal specific feedback is provided through the use of common rubrics of student performance. For example, during a high school math lesson on choosing the table of values representing a linear relationship, a student circled the correct answer, then wrote "number represents a linear relationship because the chart is adding by the same number." The teacher's feedback was "your explanation was fantastic! Great way of describing linear relationships. Next time try showing what you are adding on the table."
- Across all classrooms visited, teachers monitor student progress through strategies such as the use of questioning based on Webb's *Depth of Knowledge* leveled wheel, peer-to-peer discussions, cold-calling, and exit slips. Student work samples are reviewed on a weekly basis as seen during a team meeting. Teachers stated that work samples are used to determine next steps and subsequent lesson planning including group assignments, re-teaching, visual supports, and technology. Structured and frequent analysis of baseline data collected through the *Student Annual Needs Determination Inventory (SANDI)* for students participating in alternate assessments, and *Scantron* for students participating in standardized assessment, is used to inform Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), monitor student progress, and continually refine units, lessons, student performance tasks, and determine student groupings.
- During classroom visits, teachers provide time for students to self-assess using teacher team created student friendly and cognitively appropriate curricula-aligned rubrics and checklists that are cognitively appropriate for both standardized and alternate assessment students. In addition, meaningful feedback is differentiated to meet the needs of students. Feedback is provided both verbally and in writing, such as grow and glow statements. Students are asked to self-reflect with questions such as "How do you feel about your work – give an example?", "What problems/questions did you encounter while you were working on this piece?", and "What's one goal you would like to set for yourself for the next unit?"

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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**Findings**

All teachers are engaged in collaborative inquiry-based professional learning teams that have strengthened school-wide instructional practices embedding the Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts. The teams consistently and systematically examine student work and analyze data.

**Impact**

Teachers’ participation in various teams provides opportunities to collaborate on best practices for teaching, lesson planning, curriculum development, and behavioral interventions resulting in school-wide instructional coherence, improved teacher practice, and increase student achievement.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Unique to the school is its structure in which all teachers participate in twice-weekly department (content area subject) Professional Learning Cycle meetings, as well as participate in five data-driven inquiry cycles per year. For example, cycle two for English Language Arts and history focused on “citing evidence from close reads of a given text in order to strengthen writing and support analysis.” To promote the consistent implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards, the school created a Professional Learning Cycles guide. For each cycle, the guide includes an allocated timeframe for the Common Core Learning Standard and instructional shifts being addressed and outlines students’ expected growth after each cycle. The second meeting per week known as the Knowledge of Student meetings are organized by grades. Teachers collaboratively develop student interventions and monitor students’ Individualized Education Plan (IEP) goals. Both the Professional Learning Cycle meetings and the Knowledge of Student meetings look at student work through the content area and grade level lens. Teacher teams use the Atlas protocol for looking at student work.
- During the literacy team meeting, each teacher articulated how he or she discusses the impact of an applied suggestion or strategy, which had emanated from a concern posed and discussed at a prior meeting. For example, at a Knowledge of Student meeting, one teacher stated his students “did not take into consideration the thoughts of other students.” One of the suggestions made was to have students debate on a topic that was important to them, encouraging the students to exercise their listening skills.
- The school’s curriculum team reviews and updates curriculum maps, culminating tasks, and scoring rubrics embedding the Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts into curricula and instruction across all grades. At the end of each six-week cycle, teacher teams make decisions about curricula implementation and future instructional groupings based on assessments. For example, students with autism at the main site use the same curriculum (*Collections ELA* and *EngageNY Math*) as the students in standardized assessment classes. The curriculum team modified the published materials to meet the needs of their students.