



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Roy H Mann School

Middle School 078

**1420 East 68 Street
Brooklyn
NY 11234**

Principal: Phyllis F Marino

Dates of review: April 7 - 8, 2008

Lead Reviewer: John Francis

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Roy H Mann School is a middle school with 1150 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 69% Black, 8% Hispanic, 19% White, 1% American Indian/Alaskan and 3% Asian students. The student body includes 4% English language learners and 12% special education students. Boys account for 49% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 92.3%. The school is not in receipt of Title 1 funding.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal is a highly effective leader who has quickly gained the confidence and respect of the faculty, students and parents.
- The school provides a safe and increasingly positive environment for learning.
- The cabinet works together well, bringing a range of complementary skills that benefit planning and the implementation of procedures.
- There are good, efficient systems in place to gather record and evaluate an increasingly wide range of data.
- There are well-targeted and effective support systems for those students who find learning difficult.
- The whole learning community has a common vision and goal for the school and demonstrate a strong will to succeed.
- The school has well planned professional development clearly focused on improving instruction and students' achievement.
- Students are actively engaged in their learning and the school has good relationships with their parents who are supportive of the recent changes.
- Faculty collaborates well to plan the curriculum, share best practice and engage in discussions about students.
- The school has made significant strides in developing its technology capabilities and raising the skill level of teachers and students.

What the school needs to improve

- Create strategic action plans at the departmental level that reflect the challenging goals set for grades, cohorts and target groups.
- Develop the organization of the school's data so it more clearly demonstrates trends over time and the rate of progress towards the goals.
- Continue to improve instruction through planning for and building in checks on progress during and at the end of lessons to assess impact.

Part 3: Main Findings

Progress made since the last review

The school has made good progress in addressing the issues identified in the previous Quality Review report.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

This school has made significant progress in its development and in the quality of the systems put in place since September 2007, following the appointment of the current principal. The school has been through a significant amount of turbulence with five principals in the last five years. Although effective work had been done prior to the principal's appointment to secure students' safety, nothing had been done to address the many significant areas for improvement from the last Quality Review. In the seven months since her appointment, the principal has made great strides in tackling these issues, reinvigorating the school and establishing a culture of high expectations.

The principal's drive and vision have been the key contributors in bringing about this cultural change, gaining the confidence and respect of the faculty, students and parents in the process. She has won the 'hearts and minds' of the entire school community, which now fully embraces her vision. Students and parents are supportive of the changes and welcome the greater level of security and safety that now exists. The school has developed effective systems to gather and analyze the increasing range of data it is generating. The presentation of this data is generally clear and informative, though there remains work to do to quantify trends over time and the relative rate of progress towards the stated goals of the school. Starting from a very low level of knowledge and understanding, teachers now have a secure grasp of the role played by data in helping them plan more effectively for differentiated instruction. The faculty work well together to plan the curriculum, share best practice and engage in focused discussions about students. The very able and reflective cabinet drives this and brings a wide range of complementary pedagogical, management and personal skills to the table. The school not only uses data to improve instructional planning but also as one of the drivers for the good quality professional development seen at whole school, grade and subject levels. This is having a positive influence on the progress of all students and is particularly effective in generating well-targeted support for those students who have weaker learning skills. The inquiry team is very influential in guiding and monitoring the impact of this. However, the school lacks the sharper whole school and departmental plans to accurately reflect and incorporate the challenging goals being set for all grades, cohorts and target groups.

The quality of instruction continues to rise but not all teachers have yet developed the precision needed to set clearly differentiated goals and build in checks during and at the end of class to assess the impact of their instruction on all students. However, an area where the school has made significant improvement is in the development of technology. Both the quality and range of hardware and the development of technology skills make this an everyday tool for teachers and learners. The impact of this has been to improve student engagement and through technology-based assessments, provide teachers with timely data to refine their instructional planning.

How well the school meets New York City's evaluation criteria

Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor the student's progress over time.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The school has achieved much in a short time to gather the right sort of data to provide the information it needs to support the students' growth. For the first time, this data now provides a very clear picture of the achievement of all students and of some key groups. While it gives an overview of progress over time it is less effective in demonstrating the links to whole-school goals and the goals for subjects and specific cohorts, for example by linking the data of different sub-sets, such as gender with ethnicity. The good example provided by the English language arts and math departments is driving the use of data for goal setting. While the school has done good work to evaluate achievement in key areas, it has not yet extended this level of detail to subjects such as science and social studies. Nevertheless, there is a much clearer focus on measuring student performance than was seen previously.

The school is clearly open to comparing its performance with its past performance and that of others but this is a developing aspect of its work. Regular assessment and conferencing ensures a much greater level of accountability among all teachers. While continuing to develop, this is having an impact on student performance and contributes to the upward trend in standards and expectations. The administration has identified specific aspects of further training that will enable the good practice to become the norm across the school.

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.

From a starting point of extremely low-level knowledge of data, the faculty now has a much greater understanding of its potential. The school has extended its use of Children First Assessment Tools, initially for whole-school goal setting, to target individual students. This is a rapidly growing element of the school's work. Teachers now recognize that data influences all aspects of the school's development and is the key to improving students' progress. This is the result of making good quality information more widely available. Through carefully planned professional development, teachers now have a clearer understanding of what it means for their classroom, the quality of their instruction and students' progress.

The programs for those students who find learning difficult and the impact these are having on accelerating their learning clearly demonstrates teachers' improved understanding. The inquiry team maintains a thorough and detailed analysis of the achievements of these targeted students that drives the high quality debate around the approaches used and their relative impact.

The increasing use of good quality data binders by teachers means that the necessary information is always at hand as a point of reference and an ongoing record of students'

academic development. Through sharing this information, teachers, students and parents feel much more secure in understanding their roles in improving achievement.

Parents now receive information that enables them to know what their children can do and what they must do to improve, both academically and socially. Their confidence in the administration continues to grow as they see the impact of the changes and innovations.

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instructional Strategy to Goals: The school aligns its academic work, strategic decisions and resources, and effectively engages students around its plans and goals for accelerating student learning.

This area of the school’s work is well developed.

Revised curricular approaches to the core subjects of English language arts, math and science and also the ‘minors’ such as drama, art and particularly culinary arts, provide a vibrant and engaging curriculum for students. While working under some degree of budgetary constraint, the school has made sensible decisions, which maximize the use of the budget, and is reviewing and revising the whole curriculum. Much has gone in to improving the quantity of technology and incorporating it well into students’ learning.

The administration has not just focused on the core subjects but has also turned the spotlight on subjects such as social studies, which has not been a priority subject for many years. This department now has its own professional development plan and benefits from very strong direction by one of the assistant principals. The school is making clear links to social studies with the skills developed in English language arts and math. It has done good work to resurrect the quality of physical education, which is now generating its own data through ‘fitness grams’ that track the physical development of students alongside their academic.

The engagement of students is clear and, along with rigorous new systems and the work of the safety coordinator, behavior is improving dramatically as the school makes its expectations clear and instruction becomes more sharply focused on students’ needs. However, the school is not doing enough yet to make continuous checks on students’ progress during or at the end of classes to ensure all students making the maximum progress.

Attendance is improving because the clear systems and close working with parents is beginning to result in higher attendance rates.

Quality Statement 4 - Align Capacity Building to Goals: The development of leadership, teachers and other staff capacity is aligned to the school’s collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.

This area of the school’s work is well developed.

School leaders see classroom management and high-quality instruction as critical elements in the drive to raise achievement. Regular formal and frequent informal observations provide the administration with good quality data to use to drive individual and departmental professional development. There is a clear expectation that teachers base their instruction and planning on the analysis of the data provided for them. While there remains variation on the quality of instruction, much is at a good level and leading to demonstrable improvements in progress and achievement.

There are sound systems for the induction and continued support of new teachers. There is an increasing degree of mutual support developing where teachers feel confident to observe each other. This openness is a strong feature of the school's continuing drive for improvement.

The work of the pupil progress team covers a range of vital, additional services and complements work done by groups such as the inquiry team. The school is introducing peer mediation as an innovation to allow students to be part of the system for dealing with conflict.

The school has assessed and revised all the organizational and administrative structures to create a smooth system in which everyone is clear about their role and responsibilities. The administration has identified the need for greater involvement of organizations outside of school that can further broaden students' experiences and actively engage parents.

Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for 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.

This aspect is the powerhouse that has driven all of the changes and improvements seen over the past seven months. The principal's clarity of vision and direct approach has moved the school a long way in a short time. Planning for change and improvement is now a strong feature of the school's work. It carefully formulates whole-school goals, which have clear timescales for review to give a constantly up-dated picture of progress. Teachers also have goals, both personal and professional. This level of thinking is still in the early stages of development but gives a clear indication of the expectations for not only the present, but also the future.

The development plans for assistant principals are comprehensive and cover all the key aspects of their role. However, they are overly complex and the targets in them are not sufficiently clear. The school has now firmly embedded data analysis as part of its culture. Through the work of the inquiry team and the detailed analysis of students' skill levels using Acuity and ARIS, the school is able to modify its plans quickly where issues arise. One innovation for the school in response to data evaluation is the creation of two single sex classes in Grade 7. This has only been in place since the start of April but baseline data has been determined and the outcomes of this will be evaluated against the progress of those student groups in the mixed gender classes to determine the efficacy of the initiative.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Roy H Mann School	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
Quality Score			X		

Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather and generate data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor the students progress over time.

To what extent do school leaders and faculty provide . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
1.1 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of each student, classroom, grade level?				X	
1.2 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of special education students?				X	
1.3 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of English language learners?				X	
1.4 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of ethnic groups, gender groups and all other categories of interest to the school?			X		
1.5 a measurement of performance and progress based on the school's own past performance, and among students, classrooms, grades and subject areas?			X		
1.6 a measurement of performance and progress based on comparisons with similar schools?			X		
1.7 training, management systems and structures that support teachers in the use of school data to inform planning and instruction and to track the progress of students?				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 students learning.

To what extent do school leaders and faculty . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
2.1 engage in collaborative processes to set rigorous, objectively measurable goals for improvement, and to develop plans and timeframes for reaching those goals?			X		
2.2 focus on each student, classroom, grade level, academic subject and group of students whose performance or progress has been identified by the school as a particular focus area?				X	
2.3 identify and improve the performance and progress of those students in greatest need of improvement?				X	
2.4 share whole school goals with all members of the school community to rigorously improve the performance and progress of students?				X	
2.5 convey consistently high expectations to students and their parents/caregivers?			X		
2.6 regularly provide students and their parents/caregivers with information about the goals set for each student, and about each student's progress and performance, and how they can improve?			X		
2.7 invite and enable parents/caregivers to provide useful information to teachers and the school about the learning needs and capacities of their children?			X		
Overall score for Quality Statement 2			X		

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instructional Strategy to Goals: The school aligns its academic work, strategic decisions and resources, and effectively engages students around its plans and goals for accelerating student learning.

To what extent does the school . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
3.1 select core curricular approaches that facilitate and provide meaningful interim data about progress towards goals and focus on raising the achievement of students?				X	
3.2 provide a broad and engaging curriculum, including the arts, to enhance learning both within and outside the school day?				X	
3.3 hold teachers accountable for the progress and learning of the students in their charge, for making instruction interesting and compelling, and for creating a positive safe and inclusive learning environment?				X	
3.4 ensure that teachers use school, class and student data to plan for and provide differentiated instruction that meets the specific needs of all the students in their charge?				X	
3.5 make budgeting, staffing and scheduling decisions strategically, based on data, to meet the school's academic goals for all students?				X	
3.6 ensure that there is an environment of mutual trust and respect between all staff and students to support personal and academic development?				X	
3.7 ensure that there are effective and consistently applied procedures to encourage and monitor student attendance and tardiness?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 3				X	

Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building to Goals: The development of leadership, teachers and other staff capacity is aligned to the school’s collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.					
To what extent does the school . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
4.1 use frequent observations of classroom teaching by the principal and other available information to develop a differentiated strategy for improving the quality of each teacher’s instruction?				X	
4.2 make professional development decisions strategically, based on data, to help meet the improvement goals of students and teachers?				X	
4.3 provide frequent opportunities for teachers to observe each other’s classroom instruction and to meet together in teams to plan, share effective practices, and evaluate one another’s instruction in an open and reflective professional environment?				X	
4.4 develop effective procedures for the induction and support of teachers who are new to the profession or the school?			X		
4.5 align youth development, guidance/advising and other student support services around stated academic and personal development goals?				X	
4.6 consistently implement clear procedures that enable the school to run smoothly and encourage effective student learning, and effectively address discipline related incidents?				X	
4.7 create effective partnerships with outside entities that support the academic and personal growth of the students?			X		
Overall score for Quality Statement 4				X	

Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for 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 include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?				X	
5.2 the school’s plans for improving teacher outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?			X		
5.3 teachers and faculty use periodic assessments and other diagnostic tools to measure the effectiveness of plans and interventions for individual and groups of students in key areas?				X	
5.4 teachers and faculty use the information generated by periodic assessments and other progress measures and comparisons to revise plans immediately in order to reach stated goals?				X	
5.5 school leaders track the outcomes of periodic assessments and other diagnostic measures and use the results to makes strategic decisions to modify practices to improve student outcomes?				X	
5.6 school leaders and staff use each plan’s interim and final outcomes to drive the next stage of goal setting and improvement planning?				X	
5.7 the principal and school community have a clear vision for the future development of the school and implement procedures and systems to effect change?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 5				X	

◇	Outstanding
+	Well Developed
✓	Proficient
➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features
Δ	Underdeveloped