



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Robert H Goddard School

Middle School 202

**138 – 30 Lafayette Street
Queens
NY 11417**

Principal: William Moore

Dates of review: May 6 - 7, 2008

Lead Reviewer: George Wallace

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Robert H Goddard is a middle school with 1170 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 7.4% English language learners and 14.7% special education students. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 50%. 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 school is very well led and runs very smoothly providing a highly positive atmosphere for student learning in a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment.
- The school is at the leading edge of technology use which is raising student engagement in learning and improving achievement.
- Staff collaboration is high and teachers feel extremely well supported by the administration and other colleagues.
- The school collects and analyzes a wide range of useful data providing senior leaders and some teachers with a strong understanding of student performance.
- The school intelligently compares its performance with other schools both as a measure of effectiveness but also in bringing best practices to the school.
- The professional development program is broad, relevant and meets both teachers' professional needs as well as goals of the school.
- The school has a broad and interesting curriculum, including the arts, and incorporates new thinking in its design and teaching methodologies.
- Teachers have a good knowledge of their students and set valued next steps learning goals, which they effectively evaluate with each individual student.
- Students enjoy coming to school, find learning interesting, and always feel comfortable in turning to a teacher or other staff member for help and support.
- The school has a strong vision for its future development and has systems and procedures in place to effect change and growth.

What the school needs to improve

- Improve the ways in which teacher and periodic assessments are used to project student performance for state and interim tests at different points in the year.
- Continue to develop staff understanding and implementation of differentiation, which includes questioning skills, in their planning and teaching.
- Sharpen the school development goals to include clear measurable interim and final improvement indicators together with specific interim and final evaluation points.
- Improve the personal and social development of students by enhancing the profile of the student government.
- Continue to develop teachers' knowledge and understanding of the value and use of data analysis especially of sub-groups of students, such as ethnicity.

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 well developed.

The principal has a strong long-held vision for the future development of the school and over several years has worked tirelessly with an effective and committed staff to secure this. In particular, the school has developed from one with limited use of technology to one at the leading edge of technology including a fully functional television-recording studio. Staff are confident in their use of technology and through such resources they motivate students especially in the good use of laptops with lower achieving boys' successfully improving their writing skills. Students' use of a wide range of technology is well developed. Students like their school and find most lessons interesting and challenging, especially those that have practical aspects to them so that they are not just listening to teachers' talk. They feel safe in a largely stimulating environment where it is "cool to learn" but feel that their "voice" through the student government is ineffective.

Data is increasingly being used to very good effect. An assistant principal has very effectively involved large numbers of teachers in small working groups on data analysis. This work allows teachers to draw out a deeper understanding of their students and has promoted sharper approaches to lesson planning and improved student goal setting. These goals are recorded in a variety of ways and teachers evaluate and refine them to aid learning. Parents are pleased with their school and value the open access and frequency of information they receive. The curriculum offers students a wide range of experiences including educational trips and a valued arts program.

Teachers know they are accountable for students' learning and students largely enjoy their lessons and find the work interesting and challenging. Teachers work together to support and learn from each other. Effective monitoring of teaching occurs with valued feedback. This aids thinking about the professional development program which is aligned to school goals and teachers' needs. The schools' broad goals are clear and well known to staff. However, they are insufficiently sharp and school plans do not include interim goals or show effective evaluation of goals has occurred. The current system does not allow senior leaders to determine the quality of teachers' understanding of state rubrics. The inquiry team is very successful in its research and promotion of student achievement. While there has been very good progress in some aspects of the development points from the last review, the school continues to work on elements of differentiation and interim goal setting.

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 well developed.

The school collects a wide range of highly relevant data. The use of this information is steered by a highly efficient and effective assistant principal who keeps the administration briefed on all aspects of achievement data. At the same time, several small groups of staff work with the assistant principal to interpret the data for their groups of students. Such extremely useful work, however, does not always involve staff from different subject areas who teach the same groups of students. Nevertheless, by the time groups of teachers begin to discuss the implications of their student's achievement data it has been organized according to gender, ethnicity, and other categories. Such meetings occur weekly and are in addition to teachers' own evaluation of periodic test data, especially results arising from the use of Acuity. Teachers have a strong understanding of item analysis and therefore how to ensure that small groups of students are re-taught specific aspects of subjects or where, on occasions, the whole class requires a topic to be re-planned and re-taught. Data analysis training is well embedded into the culture of the school with many teachers using such information highly efficiently. Although members of the administration increasingly use data very well there is little evidence of the outcomes of teachers' own assessments being used, especially to make projections against periodic and State tests. Such comparisons would enable the school to determine the strength of correlation between teachers' understanding of their students' achievements and test results.

Special education student data is suitably monitored and analyzed by the administration and specialist teachers. Such information leads to an evaluation of the effectiveness of intervention strategies used with students. This also the case for English language learners. In particular, the administration and relevant teachers discuss student progress and ultimate success in their New York State examinations. Many students make strong progress. The school uses past performance in tests and teachers' report card summary assessment data to aid their overall evaluation of annual student progress. The school monitors its standing against other schools very closely. Consequently, high levels of achievement are maintained and knowledge of success elsewhere can be shared. In a similar way, many colleagues from other schools visit this 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 well developed.

Teachers work together in many formal and informal situations. Collaboration is strong throughout the school and staff feel that learning and development through collaborative means helps make for more enjoyable work and more effective practice. Students are positive about the support they receive from teachers who set them measurable goals. Teachers' files show that such goals are frequently revisited, discussed, and modified with students. There are examples in science and social studies of student performance outcomes being tracked and interim improvement targets set in relation to the State test rubrics. The use of data through the school means that teachers focus on individual students as well as their class over issues for improvement. On a larger scale, assistant principals and counselors identify focus groups through the analysis of data at subject and grade level. One such group of students are those in greatest need of improvement or at

greatest risk. The inquiry team's work has shown significant improvements have been achieved by nearly every student. Such outcomes from good goal setting and monitoring indicates that teachers have very high expectations of students' learning. Parents are extremely supportive of the school and also believe that expectations of students all round are high. They receive ample information, which is conveyed to them in many ways including electronic format. They are frequently updated with their child's progress and performance, and through conversations with teachers, parents are made aware of their child's learning goals. They find it easy to contact teachers and are pleased that they receive calls and information, not only to do with points for improvement but also to share reasons for changes to a student's work or to celebrate achievement.

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.

The curriculum produces useful data. Students are well versed in goal setting arising from core data. The school provides a broad and engaging curriculum. Students indicate that lessons are interesting and that learning is often fun. The curriculum is presented in a variety of interesting ways including the extensive use of innovative technology. Teachers are highly efficient and effective users of Smartboards. Students are confident any aspect of technology used and all have access to laptops as well as PCs, with those in grade 8 being issued with a laptop for the whole year. In addition, many teachers use "clickers" with their students. These are used effectively to determine the level of students' understanding of issues at any time during lessons. "Clickers" also indicate whether specific lesson objectives have been met by the end of each lesson. Consequently, teachers' planning for their next lesson is sharply focused on their students learning. Teachers know they are accountable for students' achievements and for the most part provide attractive and very stimulating learning environments. However, some parts of the grade 8 area organization and presentation are underdeveloped. Students feel safe and comment very favorably on their various experiences of teaching. However, too frequently teachers spend too much time instructing students. In the most effective lessons teachers very quickly get students actively working on tasks independently or in groups. Teachers are increasingly differentiating their planning and teaching to more closely meet the needs of all students. However, in too many lessons teachers still talk at students with varied qualities of questioning. The school budget is used efficiently to support the school's vision. This means that the school remains at the sharp end of technology use, as well as investigating new developments in teaching or curriculum design to promote higher student achievements. A major successful development is that of securing political agreement to establish a high school in this school building. This in part is due to falling enrollment as a consequence neighboring elementary schools changing their admission policies to accept grades 6 through 8. In lessons, students are well behaved and respectful. They co-operate well in class and grade assemblies are aligned to academic and especially personal development issues for students.

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.

Teachers feel extremely well supported. Senior leaders are frequently around the school, and walk throughs and formal observations of teaching are common. Teachers receive

thorough feedback and senior staff have refined their walk through checklist to ensure consistent feedback to staff in line with the school's model of teaching. Professional development is well organized and refined to accommodate the needs of teachers and the development priorities of the school. Both the continued development of technology and the continuing promotion of data analysis are core priorities for the school.

New teachers value their strong induction program. At the formal level, they are assigned a mentor and meet frequently with coordinators and coaches. The informal support network is also strong and highly valued. Support services for students are effective and, depending on need, are marshaled to help both students' academic and personal development. The school is calm and orderly. Students work diligently in their lessons. They have positive attitudes, relationships are good, and students respond very well to lessons that involve them directly and with hands on activities. They prefer practical involvement rather than being listeners who passively respond to questions. Behavior is very good and on rare occasions when bullying occurs it is dealt with very quickly and efficiently. The school works with a wide range of useful and very positive partnerships. These outside agencies support the school financially and through specific physical resources that include up to date electronic equipment. In addition, personnel from such partnerships visit the school, or students and staff visit them in their place of work.

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 proficient.

The senior leadership group has summarized the core improvement goals as identified in the Comprehensive Education Plan. These are known throughout the school. However, the school does not set interim goals and, although it tracks student progress through the school year, it does not relate this information fully to any evaluation and subsequent modification, of the whole school goals. The school's planned goals for improving teacher outcomes are clear, time related and loosely measurable, but do not contain interim goals.

Teachers and faculty use periodic and diagnostic test data well. Acuity in particular is used effectively as are other computer based learning and testing facilities. Students' goals, especially for math and English language arts, provide good challenges. The outcomes are monitored and addressed at the end of each marking period. Much intervention is ongoing in class where teachers discuss progress/outcomes with students about their work and provide ways for students to make improvements. Teachers are therefore using the data that is generated to modify the plans set for students. These plans are often recorded as students' next steps even though many students have longer - term goals. The assistant principal has coordinated a number of useful inquiries by teachers into data information and goal setting. The outcomes of periodic assessments are tracked and information used, especially by those in the control groups. Evidence shows that data use is effective and students' rate of progress is improved because teachers are matching lessons more closely to interests and needs. At whole school level, while there are general conversations about the effectiveness of the school, there is no record of interim or final evaluations of each whole school goal that indicate features of strength or weakness and how they relate to the shaping of new goals. However, the principal has a very clear vision for the future development of the school. The rationale for such developments are lucid and systems are in place to effect change.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Robert H Goddard Middle 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