



# **The New York City Department of Education**



# **Quality Review Report**

**Roland Hayes School**

**Middle School 291**

**231 Palmetto Street  
Brooklyn  
NY 11221**

**Principal: Sean Walsh**

**Dates of review: May 28 - 29, 2008**

**Lead Reviewer: Bruce Berry**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Roland Hayes is a middle school with 808 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 32.55% Black, 64.73% Hispanic, 1.36% White, 0.74% Asian and 0.62% other students. The student body includes 17.2% English language learners and 15.5% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 88.3%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 100% eligibility.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal's dynamic leadership is having a major impact on the rapid improvement in all aspects of the work of the school.
- The leadership team is fully focused on improving the learning outcomes of the students.
- Teachers work well in collaborative teams to plan curriculum, instruction and discuss student progress.
- A wide variety of data is used effectively to regularly monitor student progress and achievement.
- Excellent support is provided for the students in greatest need of improvement, who make good progress as a result.
- The school curriculum, together with the after-school program, provides very good levels of engagement and interest for students' academic and social development.
- Well-structured professional development programs are integrated fully with the school's improvement agenda and are significantly improving teachers' skills and knowledge.
- The parents have high praise for the rapid changes in the school culture and the positive impact they had made to their children's education.
- The staff have made significant progress in successfully establishing a caring culture built on mutual respect between all members of the school community.

### What the school needs to improve

- Further improve procedures for establishing whole school and interim subject goals based on students' present and projected achievement levels.
- Improve the consistency of goal-setting across all subjects to ensure the students have an understanding of their next steps of learning.
- Develop consistency in the use of differentiated instruction and activities to create greater levels of engagement, challenge and interest for the higher achieving students.
- Establish regular in-depth disaggregated analysis of data to identify trends in strengths and improvement areas for all subgroups, to inform instructional planning.

## 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.**

Since the last Quality Review, teachers have made significant progress in the use of data in their curriculum and instruction planning. Parental involvement has increased considerably, and the excellent Learning Leaders Program is actively involving parents in the school's work on a daily basis. English language learners make very good progress as a result of the effective changes in their curriculum and instruction in the past year.

The principal, ably supported by other cabinet members, provides dynamic leadership, which is the driving force for improving all aspects of the work of the school. The school has gone through a rapid and major improvement program in the last two years and this is beginning to have an impact on the quality of instruction and student progress. The curriculum and instruction are providing good levels of engagement and interest for the students. This has been achieved through a complete turnaround in the culture in the school, which is now built on mutual care and respect. However, the differentiation of instruction is not yet providing sufficient challenge and engagement for the higher achieving students.

The leadership team and teachers use data effectively to monitor student progress and plan individual, group and intervention activities. However, the whole school and interim goal setting does not yet take account of students' present and projected achievement outcomes. There is also inconsistency in the setting and students' understanding of learning goals across subjects and grades. The inquiry team's research and activities are having a positive impact on the progress of low achieving students in English language arts.

### **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.**

School leaders and teachers effectively use a wide variety of data to monitor student progress and achievement on a regular basis. Teachers receive valuable training in the use of data to inform their instructional planning. They make very good use of Acuity and Scantron to analyze students' strengths and areas for improvement. They also use the information very well to plan individual, group and whole class instruction. Senior leaders make effective use of the available information about each student prior to them joining the school. They provide teachers with benchmark data for each student in order for them

to plan their curriculum and instruction. The administration rigorously analyzes test outcomes to monitor progress within the school year, as well as the school's progress over time. Annual test data is disaggregated to review the progress of all groupings of students by gender and ethnicity. As a result, the school and classroom libraries have been enhanced to cater for boys' interests in order to encourage them to read more. However, the school does not yet regularly analyze data during the school year to identify trends in strengths and improvement areas for all subgroups to inform instructional planning.

Special education students receive very good support and make good progress in their achievement levels. The teachers use a variety of effective strategies and programs in self-contained and collaborative team teaching classrooms to meet the identified learning goals of the students. A significant number of the students have made very good gains in achievement in the State tests. English language learners receive good support, with a wide range of excellent programs used to accelerate their learning and provide useful opportunities for the students to enhance their vocabulary, reading and writing skills. Computerized programs provide very valuable differentiated activities to increase the students' progress in reading and math. As a result, students at all levels are making good gains in their achievement levels.

**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.**

The school has appropriate plans and measurable goals for improving student achievement. All sections of the school community collaboratively contribute in producing the Comprehensive Education Plan. Goals are shared with all sections of the school community through leadership and parent meetings. However, the whole school improvement goals are not presently based on the students' present and projected achievement levels. The senior leaders and teachers regularly review student progress and use skills analysis to set goals for improving classroom, grade and subject outcomes. Some teachers set effective learning goals for students, who are able to understand and articulate their next steps of learning. However, the setting of student learning goals is not yet consistent in some classrooms and across the grades. The school has very good systems in place for addressing the learning needs of the students in greatest need of improvement. Staff review the progress of all students at the end of each marking period and design intervention plans for those who are seen to be at risk. After-school and Saturday programs create further useful opportunities for the students to improve their achievement levels. The positive impact is seen in the significant reduction of students at Level 1 in the State tests.

There has been an exceptional improvement in the expectation of what students can achieve within the school and parent community. A grade 8 student, who has experienced the school before and after the major changes, described the difference by saying that the school is now "committed to change" and went on to say it has gone "from chaos to organized, from not much learning to a lot of learning." The parents also reflect positively on the changes in the school and give high praise for the caring culture and the positive impact it has on their children's education. The parents receive regular feedback on the progress their children are making. Teachers contact parents if they have any concerns and parents are confident in sharing academic or social information, which may impact on their children's education.

**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 core curriculum provides many opportunities for teachers to generate data to monitor the progress students make in their content and skills development. The curriculum is structured effectively by use of the workshop model. Learning objectives are on display and students are able to articulate the learning outcomes for their activities. A range of arts subjects, together with an extensive after-school program, create high levels of engagement and interest for students’ academic and social development. The programs include art, robotics, filmmaking, theatre, poetry and many other enrichment activities. Senior leaders effectively hold teachers accountable for making the curriculum and instruction interesting and engaging by monitoring student progress and through classroom walkthroughs. Many teachers use data effectively to differentiate the instruction to meet the identified needs of their students. However, there is not yet consistency in the differentiation of instruction and activities to create sufficient engagement, challenge and interest for the higher achieving students.

The principal uses the budget effectively to support the curriculum, instruction and the transformational changes necessary for improving student outcomes. The budget is used extensively to create smaller class sizes, to enhance technology and for professional development activities. The excellent Computers for Youth Program has provided each of the grade 6 students with a home computer. Family members and students receive valuable training in the use of the computer software packages to help support learning beyond the school day. The school has made excellent progress in successfully creating a caring culture, where mutual respect and trust is well established. Student work is celebrated in colorful displays in classrooms and throughout the school. Student achievement is recognized regularly through awards, certificates and parties. For example, the students of the month have lunch with the principal. Further evidence of the level of interest students now have in their education is seen in the continuously improving attendance levels in the school.

**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.**

The school has an observation team of highly skilled classroom practitioners who undertake frequent classroom walkthroughs to monitor the effectiveness of the curriculum and instruction. Teachers received valuable feedback and, where improvement areas are identified, a support team of coaches and lead teachers provide expert advice and guidance. They work effectively with the teachers on instructional planning, undertake demonstration lessons and set up inter-visitations within the school. Professional development programs are focused on the school’s improvement agenda and are having a significant impact on improving teachers’ skills, knowledge and classroom instruction. Teachers attending off-site training complete a useful review and receive a classroom visit when they are required to demonstrate the impact of their training on student learning. They also turnkey their newly acquired knowledge and skills to colleagues in their subject area. The principal has introduced the innovative Healthy Habits for Teachers training. They learn about eating healthily, sleeping well, working smartly, organizing planning and

interacting positively with students in respect of their learning, feelings and concerns. Teachers work effectively and collaboratively in daily common planning time to prepare curriculum and instruction and to review student progress. New teachers receive excellent support from a mentor, coaches and assistant principals. They regularly meet to discuss their practice and have opportunities to view demonstration lessons, visit classrooms and share ideas with other teachers.

The school has excellent programs for supporting the academic and personal development of the students. The student government has representatives from each class and has successfully introduced the student of the month award, chosen the colors for painting the school and is deciding on a name for the newly renovated outdoor sports and recreation area. The school provides an effective program of social and personal education, which covers health, physical and emotional issues relevant to the students' age group. The leadership program helps students to take responsibility and accountability for their involvement in community activities. Over the past two years, the school has implemented clear procedures and expectations, which have significantly changed the culture of the school. This has created a very positive learning environment, where students are now demonstrating high levels of self-discipline and respect for others. A variety of partnerships is providing very good opportunities for students' academic and personal development. These include an after-school academic and social support program, as well as a community service program where the students are presently engaged in the physical decoration of the building and its perimeter.

**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 school's plans have clearly defined objectives and measurable goals for improving student outcomes. However, the plans do not define interim goals and timeframes for monitoring the progress the school is making in achieving its long-term improvement goals. The leadership team review teacher outcomes based on their analysis of marking period grades and other assessment data. The school is part of an interesting Department of Education value added pilot project for analyzing teacher impact on student achievement. The cabinet uses the information to provide positive and helpful support for the teachers. The teachers are using a variety of data sources effectively to immediately review their curriculum and instruction in line with the identified needs of students. This practice is particularly successful with the students in greatest need of improvement, but is not yet as effective in providing challenge and engagement for the higher achieving students. School leaders have made significant strategic changes that have produced an excellent change in the culture and organizational structures throughout the school. This is successfully driving the vision, which is shared by the whole school community, for improving students' academic and social development. Teachers are fully engaged as partners in continuously reviewing their practice and planning curriculum maps and pacing guides for the following years' instructional activities. The school has successfully established effective organizational structures and has the capacity to accelerate the improvement of student achievement levels.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: Roland Hayes School</b>	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
<b>Quality Score</b>			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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>				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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>			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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>				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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>					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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>					X

◇	<b>Outstanding</b>
+	<b>Well Developed</b>
✓	<b>Proficient</b>
➤	<b>Underdeveloped with Proficient Features</b>
Δ	<b>Underdeveloped</b>