



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



# **Quality Review Report**

**Roberto Clemente School**

**Middle School 195**

**625 West 133 Street  
New York  
NY 10026**

**Principal: Aura Rivera**

**Dates of review: February 11 - 12, 2008**

**Lead Reviewer: Tusha Chakraborti**

## **Part 1: The School Context**

Information about the school

## **Part 2: Overview**

What the school does well

What the school needs to improve

## **Part 3: Main Findings**

Progress made since the last review

Overall evaluation

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

## **Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Roberto Clemente is a middle school with 742 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 43% Black, 55% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 18% English language learners and 18% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006 -2007 was 89%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 79% eligibility.

This is the largest middle school in the district. Its 'barrier free' policy means it has a high proportion of special education students and English language learners. The school has four academies: Latham & Watkins Legal Studies, Performing Arts, Mott Hall and Reuters Business Academy. Each of these academies provides core curriculum as well as specialised subjects, which have established links with different business communities.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal promotes a strong sense of community wherein diversity is celebrated and respected.
- The clear vision for the future of the school is shared and promoted well by all members of the school community.
- Technology is used very effectively to enhance students' learning and to prepare them well for the next stage of education.
- Teachers have a good understanding of how to collect and use data consistently to plan activities for individual students and to chart their progress.
- The school's arrangements for teachers' professional development are of high quality and this gives them consistent support in improving their practice.
- Students display very positive attitudes to learning and this contributes very well to their personal development.
- The curriculum is organized very effectively and provides students with ample opportunities for pursuing different disciplines in which they are interested.
- The before and after school enrichment programs are planned effectively to extend students' academic needs and personal development.
- The principal manages the school budget very efficiently to benefit all students and to meet their educational goals.
- The school works very well in partnership with outside agencies.

### What the school needs to improve

- Further develop data to create a common system to measure the academic progress of students from their entry to grade 6 till they leave grade 8.
- Further develop strategies to ensure that higher achievers are always challenged sufficiently so that they reach higher levels.
- Continue to explore various ways to increase parental involvement in their children's learning.

## 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 school has made marked progress in improving its quality of education further since the time of the last review. This is because it has rigorously tackled each area for improvement. Data is gathered and analyzed consistently to show students' progress in subjects and classes across the school. The outcome is used systematically to monitor the impact on students' learning and to set and revise short and long term goals. However, a clear system for charting students' progress over time is not yet fully developed. The data is used well to design curriculum and instructional strategies to meet the needs of students, although higher achieving students are not always challenged sufficiently. The school has identified this as a priority area and plans are in place to address this issue. The inquiry team has identified their focus group of students who are capable of achieving higher scores in tests. This supports school's focus on increasing the number of students reaching Level 4.

The school has excellent capacity to use technology to collect, analyze and use data to monitor and improve its performance. It has a large student population most of whom are highly literate in computers and use their skills constantly to achieve their goals. Teachers are trained very well in acquiring technology skills and are proficient in using them to make learning more accessible to their students. The curriculum is organized very effectively to give students ample opportunities to extend their learning experiences within and beyond school.

The principal has high expectations of teachers, students and parents. Parents are informed regularly of their children's progress. The school organizes a wide range of programs and meetings to involve them in their children's education. As yet, parents' attendance in these meetings is very limited. The principal works collaboratively with her staff to create a school where mutual trust and respect ensures that students grow up as confident and independent learners. She has established very effective partnership with external business organizations and ensures that all her students benefit from these links.

### 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 has a well-developed system for gathering a wide range of data from its own assessments and external tests. These are used systematically to monitor the progress of all students. Leaders and teachers, including the data specialist and the inquiry team members, are all involved in obtaining and analysing the school's interim and the State test results. They have a clear understanding of how their students are performing and

what are the next steps of their learning. Staff are proficient in using technology to constantly update the results of the predictive and diagnostic tests and to analyse and identify the trends and patterns of their students' achievement. This helps them to understand how their students perform and to plan suitable activities for them. The school has developed a holistic approach to educating its students. This ensures that all teachers analyze the academic, social and emotional needs of their students and gain a clear understanding of how individual students learn.

There is an effective system for monitoring and evaluating progress of English language learners and special education students. The progress of special education students is tracked consistently and effectively through individual education plans and the information is used well to determine support for these students, for example through the extensive use of collaborative team teaching. This is having a positive impact on their performance and, last year, an increasing number of students moved up from Level 1 to Level 2. All English language learners are assessed through the State test to determine their proficiency in English language and a range of programs is used to accelerate their acquisition of English language skills. In the case of newly arrived students, the school uses the Rigor program effectively to identify their specific needs in order to plan suitable instructional strategies for them. The progress of boys and girls and that of different ethnic groups is monitored closely to identify any trends in their progress by grades and subjects. However, a clear system showing students' progress over the years from grade 6 to grade 8 is not yet fully developed. The school recognises this as an area for development and has started to address this. It compares its performance with similar schools within its network and works closely with the local schools from which it receives most of its students. It uses information from these meetings consistently to evaluate its performance.

**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.**

Leaders and teachers have a good level of expertise in using data to identify the learning needs of all students. Regular grade conferences, meetings with the inquiry team, literacy and math coaches and senior leaders are used effectively to set short and long term goals in reading, writing and math. Other faculty supervisors work closely with teachers to track students' progress in their subjects and set up specific intervention programs to support them to achieve their goals. For example, students are guided to join the before and after school as well as Saturday programs to accelerate their learning in English language arts and math. Teachers keep extensive records of how students progress in every marking period and their test scores. They use this data effectively to choose academic intervention programs and to group students. As a result, the number of students performing at Level 1 has decreased and that reaching Levels 2 and 3 has increased over the past year, especially in math. Although very few students achieved Level 4 over that period, current data suggests that the number of students reaching higher levels is increasing and the specific strategies for English language learners are proving to be effective in improving their achievement.

Leaders and teachers work collaboratively to make sure that goals are matched to the academic and personal needs of individual students and they are measurable and time bound. Students know their goals and assess their progress independently as well as with their teachers. The school shares its goals with parents and keeps them fully informed of their children's performance in all areas of the curriculum. It provides a wide range of

opportunities for parents to understand and support their children's academic and personal development but many parents do not take up these opportunities.

**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 school provides an engaging and stimulating curriculum which benefits all its students and prepares them well for their future education. Its provision for teaching every student to develop and use technology skills to aid their learning is exemplary. Every student has been provided with a laptop and is proficient enough to use it to assist their learning in all subjects. Many older students are well versed in the mechanics of how computers work and are able to repair them for the school and their parents. The four academies are well organized to broaden and enrich the students' learning experiences a great deal. In addition to core subjects, each offers its specialist subjects such as science, legal studies, business studies and performing arts to extend students' experiences in areas of their interest. One academy is designed to place strong focus on in-depth study of science and many higher achievers join this academy. Links with external academic and business communities are used efficiently to broaden students' understanding of the world of work. For example, professionals such as an attorney will come to discuss a case study with students in legal studies class or a banker will come to support students' understanding of investment banking in business studies class. Students are given ample opportunities to improve their reading, writing and math skills through the extended day activities. Students participate well in music, drama and dance within and outside the Academy of Performing Arts. Visits to places of interest, theaters and performances help to bring subject study to life.

The principal is very efficient in managing the budget and in securing funds by developing partnership with commercial and professional organisations. Teachers work collaboratively with the leaders and use data to align instruction so that it meets the needs of all groups of students. However, higher-achieving students are not always challenged sufficiently. This means that they do not have every opportunity to reach the levels of which they are capable.

The school monitors attendance rigorously and is beginning see some improvement in the current academic year. Community-based organisations operate successfully within the school to support the school's work to raise the rate of attendance and to extend students learning in the after school programs.

**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 a well-organized professional development program that is clearly designed to constantly update the expertise of leaders, teachers and other staff so that they adapt their practice successfully to accelerate the progress of each student. Professional development is firmly based on the needs of teachers and students as revealed by the analysis of data and the monitoring of instruction. The principal and school leaders closely monitor the quality of instruction through 'administrative walks' and informal and formal observation of lessons. Regular inter-visitations and meetings with

the administration and the external consultants support teachers well to increase expertise in areas identified for development. Technology is a part of the school's infrastructure. Every teacher is trained to be proficient in the use of technology through 'iTeach iLearn' program. This enables teachers to understand the data and how to use it to group students appropriately to maximise their performance.

Common planning periods allow teachers to work with faculty supervisors, coaches and other senior leaders. Literacy and math coaches model components of reading writing and math, providing teachers good opportunities to build their leadership capacity. The counselor and guidance team make sure that students stand the best possible chance of successfully reaching their goals.

The school is well organized and well managed. The principal is highly regarded by staff, students and parents. The school has established strong partnerships with outside organisations, which are having a positive impact on students' achievement and links with parents. Several programs have been initiated through these partnerships. One of the examples is 'Comp2Kids' provides a short training course for parents to learn computer skills, with a free computer on completion, so that they can be involved in their children's education.

**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.**

The school has an effective structure in place for evaluating students' progress systematically and to ensure that its practice is consistently adapted to meet its goals. Regular administrative team meetings evaluate data and feed this into the planning for future improvement. The Comprehensive Education Plan is an effective tool for tracking the school's progress towards its goals. It helps the school evaluate the programs and new initiatives in terms of their impact on students' performance, prioritise future goals and adapt them as required, to accelerate students' learning. For example, the use of technology is regarded essential to support students' learning styles. Consequently, rigorous training programs have been organized within and outside the school to provide relevant training for teachers and students as well as parents. The school is now in a very good position to use technology to accelerate students' learning in all areas of the curriculum and this is having a positive impact on students' performance.

The school sets realistic targets and strives to achieve its goals. It is well aware that although the test results are improving, further focus is needed to ensure that more students are enabled to achieve Level 4. Coaches and subject leaders actively seek to promote effective cross-curricular links and, along with staff, place a strong emphasis on developing English and math skills across the curriculum.

The principal is held in high esteem by the school community. Staff are very appreciative of the high quality resources and training they receive because of her exemplary financial planning. Staff share the principal's vision and are equally committed to achieving the school's goals.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: Roberto Clemente School (M195)</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.**

<b>To what extent do school leaders and faculty provide . . .</b>	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.**

<b>To what extent do school leaders and faculty . . .</b>	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.**

<b>To what extent does the school . . .</b>	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>