



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Richard H Hungerford School

Middle-High School 721

**155 Tompkins Avenue
Staten Island
NY 10304**

Principal: Mary McInerney

Dates of review: May 12 - 13, 2008

Lead Reviewer: Corinne Brown

Content of the report

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

Hungerford School is a middle-high school with 274 students from grade 6 through grade 12. The school population comprises 22.3% Black, 14.2% Hispanic, 54.7% White, and 8.8% Asian students. The student body includes 10% English language learners and 100% special education students. Boys account for 63.5% of the students enrolled and girls account for 36.5%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 88.5%.

This District 75 cluster school serves special education students designated as cognitively challenged or on the autistic spectrum. All students have significant or severe disabilities and require a high level of support and specialist services. They range in age from 12 to 21 years. Classes are ungraded, with students grouped by disability with peers of similar ages. The school comprises one main site, four off sites and two full-time work sites. Students are served at the main site in four 12:1:4 (students to teacher to paraprofessional ratio), three 6:1:1 and seven 12:1:1 classes. There are inclusion classes at McKee High School, New Dorp High School and Tottenville High School as well as Intermediate School 24. New Dorp High School also serves one 12:1:4 and one 6:1:1 class. Intermediate School 24 has two 12:1:4 classes and one 12:1:1 class. Work-study sites include Bayley Seton Hospital and Lifestyles.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal's exemplary inclusive leadership sets the tone in this calm, nurturing innovative school that successfully involves the wider community.
- Skillful and unified administration ensures cohesion across all sites with focus on maximizing individual progress through data-driven instruction.
- Students make excellent social, emotional and academic progress as a result of integrated plans involving all staff.
- Compassionate, collegial and team-oriented staff are powerful role models so students are happy, safe and take risks in a supportive environment.
- The school's use of detailed, relevant data is ongoing, comprehensive and purposeful.
- Parents value the collaboration with the caring, dedicated staff and the school's open communication and family support.
- Staff professional growth is encouraged, supported thoroughly and rooted in students' needs.
- Students' success within the stimulating, rich curriculum and engaging programs is reflected in evolving displays that enhance the environment.
- Technology is well-used to motivate students and enable them to communicate and self-advocate.
- The school's cyclical planning references varied data to plan for the future and work cooperatively with other schools to promote inclusion.

What the school needs to improve

- Streamline data gathering within and across classrooms using technology to enable access at a single point by all staff.
- Ensure that all the new innovative transitional individual education plans formalize input from all stakeholders.
- Refine professional development programs so that all staff have individual growth plans.
- Incorporate quantifiable measures into the school's regular monitoring of all goals to formally measure progress toward the goals.

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 Richard H. Hungerford School's success is rooted in excellent leadership and comprehensive understanding of the individual student's needs. Effective teamwork by all professionals and parents delivers individualized programs through wise use of data. Students make remarkable progress or, for students with degenerative conditions, maintain skills because of ongoing monitoring and effective communication. The principal values the input of all stakeholders and works sensitively with staff to support parents and families. One parent appreciated, "The school is part of our family. It keeps us all balanced." The school is among the first recognized by the United Federation of Teachers Partnership Award for its work with teachers, staff and parents.

The school's transparent, reflective culture means it evaluates itself well. It is not complacent and continually seeks new ways to deliver even higher quality experiences for students. Both general education and special education schools use this school's expertise to enhance their own practice. Since the previous Quality Review, it has firmly embedded the use of data and technology to assist learning and monitor student performance. Training involves all staff, so paraprofessionals carefully implement programs under the direction of teachers, alongside therapists and other support providers. Students advocate for themselves because of careful individualized learning and positive behavior management, social skills training and assistive communication devices. The school is assertively adapting the City individual education plans to better reflect students' longer-term needs. Stakeholders are involved in the process of forming plans, but not always formally. Teachers use 'backwards design' in mapping the incremental steps and training required to reach students' goals. They gather data effectively to support and record progress through a variety of means, including digital imaging. There is no streamlined system so that all staff can readily access this data at a single point. Goal setting at all levels is realistic, based on data and relevant. Interim monitoring is routine practice, although measures are rarely quantifiable. The school bases its strong professional development on identified students needs. It is looking to refine this further by formalizing staff individual growth plans.

The school's inquiry team is focusing on the 36 students within its 12:1:4 student population and their mastery of English skills. Using the Brigance assessment, precision teaching is leading to more precise recording of student progress. In turn, this work feeds into the whole school revision of individual education plans in order to improve their quality. The work is progressing well as the team shares findings with staff and elicits their willing cooperation in the action research project.

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 captures all available data and generates its own and so clearly understands the performance and progress of its alternate assessment and standardized assessment students. The data is relevant to whole school, individual and group performance. The school analyzes information by disability group, so Brigance assessment is particularly useful to gauge small incremental steps of specific skills acquisition. This year it is piloting the online version. Teachers maintain comprehensive detailed individual datafolios for alternate assessment students in English, math and social studies. Staff creatively record progress or maintenance of skills through digital imaging and other means. All related service providers are similarly involved in capturing evidence, including low inference data. Teachers are skilled at recording students' progress toward skills mastery, although they may use different systems. The school is looking to establish more uniformity in gathering data using technology, taking into account the differing needs of its populations. The school ably tracks the progress of its subgroups. English language learners represent some of the twenty languages spoken in students' homes. Effective support enables them to acquire the English language well. The school interrogates and cross-references data, including by disability group, services provided, classes by staffing ratio and discharges so that it has a thorough overview of school performance. New York State Alternate Assessment data shows significant student growth. Many students move to less restrictive environments or inclusion settings. Although it broadly looks at gender and ethnicity groups, the primary focus rightly remains the individual.

In all areas of comparison, this school performs well relative to other District 75 schools. It tracks and compares their attendance, report card data, ethnicity and other information to measure itself against similar schools and share best practices. It has helped other schools improve their use of data. Staff are highly committed to using reliable precise data that provides a comprehensive picture of individual and group performance. The school provides suitable training at whole school and individual levels to support this.

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.

Staff teamwork and collaboration underpins successful planning and implementation that leads to excellent student achievement. At all levels of goal setting, teachers, administration, support staff and parents work together transparently to secure the best outcomes for students. The school benefits from a high degree of parent participation. Parents appreciate the collaboration as well as the support the school extends to families. They value Saturday support programs that also enable them to network with families in similarly challenging circumstances. Frequent meetings result in realistic action plans. Refined goal setting in the individual education plans results in increased specificity. The school is assertively revising the formal student plans to incorporate longer-term transitional planning at an earlier stage. It is working to secure and formalize active participation of all stakeholders that one of its strengths.

All adults work tirelessly to support the school's mission and goals. The grant writing committee and school leadership team are but two of the proactive groups that make ambitious plans and goals a reality to benefit students. Students make demonstrable progress or retain skills; a physical education program for students with Asperger's syndrome clearly facilitates development of improved gross motor and social skills. Therapists, teachers, administration and all staff are flexible and accessible. The school's extensive communication with families successfully promotes unified approaches and exchange of information.

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 successfully aligns alternate grade level indicators with the general education core curriculum. It meets the academic needs of its students at their level and presents suitable challenge, while building other necessary skills. For many students this means functional academics within a stimulating multi-sensory curriculum. All students, including the medically fragile and those with communication difficulties, participate in engaging programs. Teachers creatively infuse art and technology to motivate students and promote alternative means of achieving and recording success. In an innovative pilot program, students successfully communicate with each other and with verbal students through varied technological devices including the Smartboard, switches and talking machines. This school enables equal access for all students to a rich curriculum including art, poetry, music and work-study programs. Staff encourage students to take risks within a supportive, compassionate and respectful environment. One student showed evident joy as he recalled the first time he was able to play baseball because of "Wii" technology. Adapted pinball machines are another powerful motivational therapy tool.

All staff hold themselves fully accountable, as well as to the administration, and work together to provide individualized programs. Students work toward independence so many students successfully integrate into inclusion classes. The school is working with host schools to further suitable differentiation within general education inclusion classes. The school carefully manages its staffing, scheduling and budget to support students well. Artists in residence and a full-time technology teacher enhance the curriculum. Robust attendance procedures ensure excellent attendance for these student populations.

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 principal and assistant principals ensure consistency across all sites and encourage professional growth for all, including paraprofessionals and therapists. The school leadership team conducts school reviews in addition to administration's frequent observations and walkthroughs. In this way, the administration has a thorough knowledge of staff strengths. Professional development, based on students' needs, strongly focuses on maximizing individual progress through data-driven instruction. Teachers continually seek to improve, so visit other classrooms and schools to observe best practices. The school's open, sharing culture promotes innovation and creativity. Teachers reflect that

the principal “trusts staff expertise” and is “always working to involve staff and progress them.” The school wishes to develop individual growth plans for all staff, particularly as it expands next year with a new site. Comprehensive support for new teachers enables them to quickly acclimate and strengthen their instructional skills. Cohesive instructional teams work seamlessly in supporting student development or maintenance of skills. Individualization extends to effective personal behavior modification programs as required.

The school proactively seeks partnerships that benefit students and the school. Among many, significant links with Staten Island Zoo, the Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art, Goldman Sachs and Staten Island Rotary Club, give ongoing support in varied ways that enhance student experiences and achievement to excellent effect.

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 well established practice of monitoring goals as the students’ individual education plans drive instruction. Staff formally measure goals four times a year. At all levels these are realistic and incorporate suitable timeframes. Although they are broadly measurable and regularly monitored, this is not always sufficiently formalized or quantifiable. Student programs contain good embedded diagnostic measures. Ongoing evaluation means that teachers adjust strategies and interventions to better achieve or match student outcomes. Liaison with work-study placements has produced more individualized student-specific skills checklists. Similarly, the school strategically altered the start of its work-study program from the summer to October as a result of data analysis. The school uses data in a purposeful cycle of continual review, reflection and planning to build on previous experience. It works well with other schools to promote inclusion and move students to less restrictive environments. Analysis of data led the school to a reduction in paraprofessional staffing requirements as a result of its success. The school serves as a model for other schools for its many initiatives and programs.

The principal’s strong, exemplary leadership is highly valued by the school and wider community. She successfully includes all stakeholders in the learning partnership and embraces partners to further the school’s mission with clear long-term vision. The nurturing culture encourages innovative approaches and validates parents’ experience. One student communicated, “Teachers care about us and you can go to them to help you.” The community shares the principal’s commitment, dedication and vision to continually strive to enable students to self-advocate and maximize their achievement. The school motto, “Don’t dis our abilities,” exemplifies the systemic positive culture.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Richard H Hungerford 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 demanding, 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?				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?				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