

## **Commissioner's Evaluation of the Jersey City School District July 23, 2007**

The QSAC process is designed to evaluate the thoroughness and efficiency of all of the public school districts in the State. This assessment will provide feedback to New Jersey school districts both in terms of compliance with state and federal requirements and best practices in schools in five key areas – Operations Management, Personnel, Instruction and Program, Governance and Fiscal Management. In accordance with the statutory requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-10 et seq., the Jersey City School District was assessed by an evaluation team that made a preliminary determination of the status of the district on each of the indicators contained in the District Performance Review (DPR). That work was then reviewed by senior staff in the Department of Education, who used data and other information available in the Department, to recommend a final score in each of the five areas examined by QSAC.

After reviewing the recommendations of the senior staff delineated in the attached memorandum from Deputy Commissioner Willa Spicer, I have adopted those recommendations. Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-14 and N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-53, the Commissioner is obligated to review the results of the reports and examine all relevant data to ensure that the final determination of performance in each area is appropriate and accurately reflects the district's achievement of each of the performance indicators. Therefore, some adjustments have been made to the evaluation team's results to reflect information available to the department and to ensure consistency within and among the DPR results. I have made the following determination as to the Jersey City School District's placement on the QSAC continuum in each of the five areas:

**Operations Management** – 74% of indicators met.

**Personnel** – 58% of indicators met.

**Instruction and Program** - 57% of indicators met.

**Governance** – 89% of indicators met.

**Fiscal Management** - 92% of indicators met.

Pursuant to the regulations governing QSAC implementation, you may appeal this decision to the State Board of Education within 30 days by following the procedures outlined in N.J.A.C. 6A:30-8.3. In addition, if you disagree with any of these determinations, you may present information to support your position and request that I reconsider my decision within 7 days of the date hereof, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:30-8.3(h). Because the Jersey City School District has met more than 80% of the indicators in two of the five areas, Governance and Fiscal Management, I will recommend to the State Board of Education that the process for initiating transition to local control of those

components be initiated pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:30-7.2. The district is to be congratulated for its progress in all areas. An improvement plan will be required for the three areas for which less than 80% of the indicators were met and staff from the Division of School and District Improvement will work collaboratively with the district to complete that process.

## MEMORANDUM

To: Commissioner Lucille E. Davy  
From: Deputy Commissioner Willa Spicer  
Re: QSAC Report for the Jersey City School District  
Date: July 20, 2007

The Department of Education's senior staff examined the results of the QSAC review completed by an evaluation team and proposes the following modifications based upon information provided by the evaluation team as well as from data and other information in the department. A final weighting in each of the five areas examined by QSAC -- Operations Management, Personnel, Instruction and Program, Governance, and Fiscal Management -- is recommended to you as noted below.

### Operations Management

Overall Score: Evaluation Team			
Raw Score:	74	Total Possible Points: 100	Final Score: 74%
Overall Score: Department Recommendation			
Raw Score:	74	Total Possible Points: 100	Final Score 74%.

- Department staff concurred with the findings of the external evaluation team.

### Personnel

Overall Score: Evaluation Team			
Raw Score:	68	Possible Points: 100	Total Score: 68%
Overall Score: Department Recommendation			
Raw Score:	58	Possible Points: 100	Total Score: 58%

- Department staff recommends rescoring indicator #A1c because the Department's list of certified personnel indicates that some of Jersey City's teachers are not properly certified, reducing the total by 10 points.
- Department staff recommends rescoring indicator #C4c as the evaluation team found that there was "no documentation provided that professional development is aligned to the individual Professional Growth Plans," although there was no impact on the score. The Department recognizes the excellent job the district has done with staff development for both teachers and administrators and notes that administrative training should include consideration of the Personal Growth Plans of the principals as well as the needs of the district and school.

### **Instruction and Program**

Overall Score: Evaluation Team

Raw Score: 68 Possible Points: 120 Total Score: 57%

Overall Score: Department Recommendation

Raw Score: 68 Possible Points: 120 Total Score: 57%

- Department staff concurred with the findings of the evaluation team.

### **Governance**

Overall Score: Evaluation Team

Raw Score: 89 Possible Points: 100 Total Score: 89%

Overall Score: Department Recommendation

Raw Score: 89 Possible Points: 100 Total Score: 89%

- Department staff concurred with the findings of the evaluation team.

### **Fiscal Management**

Overall Score: Evaluation Team

Raw Score: 98 Possible Points: 100 Total Score: 98%

Overall Score: Department Recommendation

Raw Score: 92 Possible Points: 100 Total Score: 92%

- Department staff recommends rescoring indicator #B3b, reducing the score by two points, because changes in the management of petty cash are underway but had not been accomplished by the time of the team review. Department staff also recommends rescoring indicator #B3d, because although some work has been done in this area, the report indicates it is not effective and there is no evidence of policy. These changes reduce the score by 2 points.
- Department staff recommends rescoring indicator #B4e because the narrative of the evaluation team indicates that Jersey City has used confirming orders even though it is not very often. This change reduces the score by 1 point.
- Department staff recommends rescoring indicator #D1c because records in the department show that the district has returned grant funds to the department. This change reduces the score by 3 points.