



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Franklin Delano Roosevelt School

Elementary – Middle School 34

**730 East 12 Street
New York
NY 10009**

Principal: Joyce Stallings- Harte

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Lead Reviewer: Martin Newell

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Franklin Delano Roosevelt School is an elementary - middle school with 421 students from kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 20% Black, 71% Hispanic, 1% White and 5% Asian students. The student body includes 25% English language learners and 22% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance is 90%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 77% eligibility.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal provides very good leadership and is the driving force behind the continuous push for school improvement.
- There is very strong collaboration and a fervent commitment amongst all school leaders to making the school an even better place.
- The school collects extensive and relevant data which is used well as a tool for accelerating students' learning.
- Many teachers provide challenging and engaging instruction because they make good use of data to match work to the individual needs of students.
- Teachers make students well aware of their individual goals and levels and provide good guidance on what they need to do to improve.
- The curriculum, both in and out of the school day, contributes much to students' love of school.
- The regular formal and informal observations of lessons and teachers' commitment to sharing good practice result in ongoing improvement in instruction.
- Many professional development activities are specifically geared to meeting the school's high expectations of good progress for all students.
- Students are well behaved and share a bond of strong mutual respect with staff.
- Budget and staffing decisions are based on the detailed analysis of data and then implemented to ensure intended goals become a reality.

What the school needs to improve

- Further refine data analysis to gain a better picture of how well students are progressing in strands of subjects and in classes within grades.
- Develop the good practice of data utilization evident in English language arts and math to other subjects.
- Ensure all teachers emulate the practice of many in making good use of data to drive instruction.
- Provide more opportunities for students to take responsibility and to have a greater voice in how the school functions as a community.

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 pace of improvement since the last review has been rapid. Strategies and initiatives that have been introduced, particularly in improving data utilization and instruction, are embedded and have had a direct impact on accelerating students' progress. The school's march forward owes much to the leadership skills of the principal whose high expectation, rigor and professionalism inspire confidence. She brings staff, students and parents with her and is the first to recognize that this is not a one man band. There is a very strong sense of team spirit and collaboration. School leaders are on board and play their part to the full in constantly seeking to move the school forward.

The school recognizes the potential of data analysis and utilization as a tool for raising the stakes in student progress and performance. The school collects much data and uses it well to set goals from individual student to whole school. It compares the progress of students by grade, ethnicity and ability so that leaders and teachers have every opportunity to see where progress is stronger and weaker. Key to the school's success is the readiness and rigor in which it identifies areas for improvement and does something about it. This has resulted in the accurate identification of the need to drill deeper into the data so that leaders and teachers get a better picture of how well students are progressing in strands of subjects and in more subjects of the curriculum, and that they can compare classes within the same grades. At the core of good learning lies good instruction and there is much to celebrate. Many teachers go out of their way to make learning demanding but fun, challenging but achievable. Instruction is at its most potent when data is used to provide activities that are pitched in line with the differing ability levels of the students. This good practice is not yet fully embedded in all classes.

There are other factors that account for the school's success, including the good progress and incisive work of the inquiry team. The curriculum provides stimulus and challenge and hooks the interest of the students. Teachers are effective in the way they make students aware of their individual goals and give them plenty of guidance as to what they need to do to improve their work. Students play their part too. They behave well, show trust in and respect for all staff and want to do well. However, despite the school's strong culture of support and trust, students do not have enough say in what they feel would make the school an even better place. Under the strong leadership of the principal, instruction improves because lessons are observed regularly and teachers are given many opportunities to share good practice and to learn from one another. Professional development opportunities are targeted to the needs of individual teachers so that instruction improves and student goals are met. Budgeting and staffing decisions are shrewd and incisive and enable goals at many levels to become a reality. These factors together show clearly why students leave the school with well honed personal and academic skills to face future challenges confidently.

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.

This is a school that is data rich. The principal has ensured that there is a great deal of data available that measures not only the performance of students but also their progress. Results from tests and interim assessments are discussed at grade meetings, professional development and teacher meetings. Importantly, areas of weakness are identified and intervention strategies put in place to tackle them. The school is effective in analyzing and comparing the performance and progress of students by gender, ability, ethnicity and grade. This enables leaders and teachers to have a clear grasp on where progress is strongest and where improvement is needed. Work has been done on comparing how special education students perform in different settings and there is regular liaison between the teachers of English language learners to ensure that students' progress is on track. The school is making very good use of the 'scanatron' system to identify baseline scores, the next steps of learning for individual students and student progress at each testing point. The school looks at how well it is doing when compared to similar schools and this sets the school's performance in a wider context. The principal has a constant desire to push the school further and is always looking to take data utilization on to a more sophisticated level. For example, she has identified that there is good practice in English language arts and math on which to build by looking at how students are progressing in different strands of these subjects and in different classes within a grade. Not all subjects use data so effectively and, while many teachers are confident and adept at utilizing data to inform their instruction some do not capitalize enough on its potential as a learning tool.

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.

Through regular meetings at cabinet, inquiry and grade level, all at the school have a good awareness of the whole school goals and understand their respective role in ensuring that these goals become a reality. The focus of these meetings is often on how data is to be utilized to enable students reach their individual goals. Teachers plan collaboratively and, through the regular evaluation of students' work, they gain a good picture of which students are on track to reach their stated goals. In addition to State and City tests the school carries out many interim assessments. The results of these are analyzed and amendments to goals by subject, grade and at an individual level are made if needed. It is this attention to detail that enables leaders and teachers to know where progress may not be as strong as it could be, for example, in 8th grade math. The school recognizes that making data analysis and utilization even more cutting edge will enable it to refine goals and targets within strands of subjects. A strength is the manner in which students at risk are identified at an early stage and good quality intervention strategies put in place to help accelerate their rate of learning. The good work of the inquiry team is adding to this process and further strengthening the progress of those students in greatest need of improvement.

The principal leads the way in setting high expectations which transmit to staff and students alike. Students are under no illusion as to what is expected of them. They have a good knowledge of their current levels and goals, which, in some classes are laminated on the desks and used constantly as a reference point. Because conferencing is well focused and marking of students' work is very good, students have concise but very pertinent pointers as to how to improve their work. They are very ready to take these on board. Parents are kept well informed about their child's progress through meetings, written communication and by coming into the classroom on 'First Friday.' Parents are also quick to point out that the open-door policy of the school means that staff are always ready to listen to any concerns they may have about their child's learning needs.

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 a broad and stimulating curriculum that enhances students' learning. As well as the core areas of English language art, math and science, the school provides many extra curricular activities. Trips to places such as Carnegie Hall and Broadway, instrumental tuition, music and technology are all given high priority. The school utilizes data well to identify where learning is strongest and weakest. Programs before and after school, workshops and summer tuition support and challenge learners at both ends of the academic spectrum. The principal's drive to ensure that teachers use data to match work to the needs of students has had an impact on some, but not all staff. While much of the instruction is packed full of pace, challenge and humor and students' interest is hooked and maintained throughout the lesson, there is not a consistent picture across the school. Some teachers are less adept at differentiating work to students' individual needs.

The principal is astute in making important staffing, scheduling and budgeting decisions that impact on the quality of students' learning. Books are chosen so that students of different ethnicity and gender can empathize with the characters. Key staffing appointments such as that of data specialist, the utilization of specialist teachers and the deployment of staff to make best use of their skills have all reaped rewards in raising expectations. The principal is also quick to tap into grants to improve facilities and resources for students. The strengths in instruction and curriculum together with the strong and tangible bond of mutual respect between staff and students are a winning combination in helping make the school what it is. Students say, rightly, that they do not have enough opportunity to take responsibility and contribute to the life of the school as a community and they are more than ready to accept the challenge. The school puts much effort to promoting the importance of good attendance and has rigorous systems in place to follow up any absences. Despite this a minority of students do not have good attendance records.

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.

There is a strong team spirit throughout the school. Staff are given much support to enable them to carry out their roles and responsibilities well. They are also accountable

for the students in their care. Regular formal and informal observations of lessons are carried out by the principal and other key staff and are part of the school culture of accountability. Teachers work together very well in grades and recognize that learning from each other can be a powerful tool. With this in mind they visit each others class, team teach, present model lessons, and evaluate students' work. These factors, together with the help they receive from coaches, have proved pivotal in improving the quality of instruction.

Staff surveys are carried out to identify teachers' own professional development needs as well as what is needed for whole school goals to be realized. The principal is aware that some staff require further training in how to get the best out of data to accelerate students' learning. Teachers new to the school or profession benefit greatly from the collaborative working culture of the school as well as the more formal support, such as 'buddy mentors', and well planned and scheduled support from coaches. The principal has left few stones unturned in her quest to accelerate the school's progress and she has made determined and successful efforts to improve behavior. Staff reinforce her high expectations through the consistent implementation of the code of discipline which is supported by the effective work of guidance counselors. Together these create a harmonious climate for learning where students behave well, enjoy work and, as a consequence, make good progress. Links with staff developers and community partnerships such as 'Third Street Music School', 'Jump Start', 'Urban Dove' and 'Schools Attuned' bring further benefit to students' learning experiences.

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 principal has a very clear and strategic vision of where she wants the school to be. Her very good leadership skills have resulted in the school improving at a rapid pace. Despite the school's many successes she shows no complacency in her determination to take the school on to the next level. This vision is shared by other key leaders. The school's track record of implementing and sustaining change indicates a good capacity for continued growth. There is a shared recognition by staff and leaders that if whole school goals are to be realized then classroom, grade and subject goals have to be reached within a predetermined time frame. A great deal of data is collected and it is reviewed periodically to assess its impact on instruction and progress. Revisions to practice are made at grade, coach and inquiry team meetings as well as cabinet and data meetings. The school is seeking to refine this further so that it can use the outcomes of interim tests to set new targets and goals. An increase in moderation exercises in writing and the standardization of reading levels across grades has resulted in greater consistency and accuracy in leveling students' work and is further evidence of the school readiness to modify practice to secure improvement. Students who are underperforming benefit from strategies that help address their needs well. Whether this comes about through adaptations to the curriculum, changes in grade teachers, modification to learning styles or more focused instruction, the impact is evaluated rigorously.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Franklin Delano Roosevelt	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	