



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Ronald H. Brown

Elementary School 155

130-02 115th Avenue

Queens

NY 11420

Principal: Dorothy Morris

Dates of review: May 29 - 30 2008

Lead Reviewer: Michele Lloyd- Bey

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

Ronald H. Brown School is an elementary school with 681 students from pre-kindergarten through grade five. The school population comprises 47% Black, 21% Hispanic, 1% White, and 31% Asian students. The student body includes 6% English language learners and 5% special education students. Boys account for 48% of the students enrolled and girls account for 52%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 92.6%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 91.5% eligibility.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal has a clear vision for the school and uses data extremely well to understand the performance and progress of all students.
- The school is highly skilled in the way it consistently collects and analyzes data in order to set goals and continuously revise school plans.
- The principal ensures that performance and progress based on its own past performance is consistently analyzed for growth across the school and subject areas.
- The school engages in effective partnerships to support students' instructional and social development.
- The school effectively and consistently analyzes and evaluates gender groups to improve student-learning outcomes.
- The school sets high expectations for students and they enjoy attending school.
- The school uses effectively its academic intervention specialists to support students with the greatest needs.
- Teachers receive a high level of professional development support to improve and enhance their skills and expertise.
- The principal ensures that funds are strategically budgeted in order to support the school's broad and challenging curriculum.
- The principal promotes excellent levels of trust and mutual respect throughout the school community.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that teachers develop strategies for establishing suitable timeframes in all content areas for student learning.
- Explore ways to expand extra-curricular activities to include more sports and arts to enhance students' academic and personal development.
- Extend the practice of differentiating instruction across all subject areas.

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 Ronald H. Brown School is dedicated to supporting all students achieve academic success. Students and parents indicate how much they feel respected and supported by the administration and school staff. Administrators convey high expectations for the entire school community. The principal enables school staff to engage in robust collaborative forums to plan and set goals for students. Instruction is adjusted as goals are achieved to ensure learning is ongoing. The school has improved well in the use of timeframes to measure overall progress in literacy and math. However, it does not yet do so across all content areas. The school is adept in the collection and use of sophisticated assessment data to analyze and evaluate student performance and to identify and provide suitable support for students in greatest need. Analysis of the school's data indicated a gender difference in literacy. The administration and teachers' formed a weekly book club and are now reading books related to gender differences. Their discussions relate to understanding gender differences in order to improve students' academic performance. The use of periodic assessment data highlighting item skills' analyses enables teachers to focus specifically on the strengths and weaknesses of students' thus providing for more effective planning. The collaborative exploratory processes of the inquiry team identified highly successful strategies for addressing the math needs of English language learners. The team's detailed analysis of assessment data and strategic planning serves as a model to support math progress of all students across the school. The school's knowledgeable and expert coaches provide high levels of professional development assisting teachers to improve their skills and expertise. The school recognizes its need to continue to strengthen teacher training in differentiated instruction, so that differentiation is evident in all subject areas. Since 2003, the school continues to implement a balance-literacy model in English language arts to support students' learning. The school integrates enrichment opportunities into its regular schedule and its extended-day programs. The gifted writers' club meets four periods a week to create various genre-rich writings to share with the school community. The math coach challenges students' math ability through computerized math programs. However, the school has yet to implement a sports program as part of their extracurricular program to enhance students' personal development. The school has successfully addressed the recommendations of the previous year's Quality Review by setting challenging targets for higher achieving students.

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.

Administrators and all instructional staff members are involved with collecting and analyzing effectively a wide range of data from a variety of sophisticated assessments to monitor student performance and progress. The administration closely tracks the progress of every student. They use interim-assessment data well to track yearlong student performance and to set clear goals. Review of authentic student work from instructional programs is ongoing, provides highly specific information about students' literacy strengths and weaknesses, and supports teachers' instructional planning. Teachers working with students in greatest need maintain extremely well documented data that clearly delineates students' strengths and weaknesses. Item skills analysis derived from assessments has been extremely instrumental in enabling teachers to fully address students' skill deficits and adequately differentiate their instruction. The school effectively measures its present performance and progress based on its past results of students, classes, by grade and subject. The principal maintains documentation on each student over his or her testing years and focuses on each student's needs to maintain progress. Students with low proficiency rates, and scale scores indicating performance at the higher and lower ends of Levels 2 and 3, receive additional academic intervention support. The school focuses intently on its subgroup populations. After closely analyzing English language arts data, the school identified a significant gap in performance levels between boys and girls. The school responded with instructional support, provided teachers with gender research, and introduced suitable materials for students' use. As a result, teachers indicated that they are now more sensitive to the needs of male students, and they are paying closer attention to learning styles to improve students' academic 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.

The school's Comprehensive Education Plan is the foundation for the school's long-term planning. Parents are integral to the formation of the Comprehensive Education Plan through the school's leadership team process. The school involves all staff in the consistent collection of data to ensure they are actively involved in knowing about and setting goals. The school is highly successful in setting clear and measurable improvement goals in literacy and math. The school has yet to extend this aspect of their work to other content areas and as a result, suitable timeframes are not reflected broadly across the school. Academic intervention teachers work closely with classroom teachers supporting them in their planning suitable next steps in setting goals for their students. Enthusiastic and skilled intervention teachers provide those students in greatest need with consistent intensive academic support. As a result of conscientious planning, assessment results indicate that these students are making very good progress. Teachers of English language learners use suitable programs, and the excellent data it generates, to inform instruction focused on building students' language skills. Close tracking of English language learners' performance data shows success in both English language arts and math. English language arts teachers set clear expectations for students. Teachers' comments and writing rubrics provide good guidance and help students become evaluative in analyzing their own work. The principal uses several progress indicators to

convey high expectations to staff and parents regarding ongoing students' progress results. Parent-teacher conferences and the school's "back-to-school holiday" enable parents and caregivers to learn about the progress of their children based on ongoing assessment test results. Parents comment on meaningful parent workshops facilitated by the school's instructional team to develop their capacity to help their children at home.

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 continues to implement the America's Choice Literacy Program that is supportive of student learning. Teachers conduct individual reading and writing conferences with students to discuss data findings in order to help them improve their performance and students' writing notebooks are monitored closely for improvement. Structured school wide activities such as the annual 25/30 book campaign and the Principal's Book of the Month Club engage the school in collaborative literacy activities to ensure academic success for all children. Students participate in an experiential science-learning environment that promotes the integration of technology and research. However, the school currently has limited programs that include sports and arts, such as basketball and chorus that would support students' academic and social growth. Students indicated that they would like to see more choices in these areas. The organization of classrooms allows students to engage in lessons that promote group participation. Teachers use a variety of teaching methodologies that support different learning styles of students. Teachers' questioning during instruction are on a continuum and provide students with many opportunities to think critically through challenging learning experiences. The school has enhanced the delivery of differentiated instruction to address each student's individual learning needs. The school's use of developmentally appropriate assessment data, materials and resources has improved the planning efforts by teachers to engage students in flexible groups. Differentiated instruction is evident during student engagement in center activities, during guided reading and small group sessions conducted by the academic intervention teacher. However, not all teachers differentiate instruction in all content areas. Students commented that they know that their teachers like and respect them based on the assistance and help they receive. The school is well organized and creative budgeting, and scheduling support teachers' successful instructional planning for their students. Based on the school's strong literacy focus, the principal uses funds to purchase the many books found in classrooms to support students' independent reading. The 37.5 minutes of additional instructional time supports students in greatest need and those who require specific targeted instructional assistance. There are rigorous and strong procedures in place to monitor student attendance. Through telephone calls, letters and the school's messaging system, the school community is aware of attendance procedures. The school celebrates students who come to school regularly by highlighting their attendance in the building. Parents commented that their children enjoy attending and as a result, student attendance continues to improve.

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 is effective at ensuring that all teachers engage in high-level professional development to improve their professional growth. Teachers participate in professional

development workshops during and after-school, at lunch-and-learns, and by participation in study groups. The math and/or literacy coach, contingent on administration or teacher's requests provide differentiated professional development. A supportive and effective teacher center enriches the school's existing professional development program by offering teachers resources and individualized training. The principal views professional development as a way for the school to improve student performance. Regular planning sessions enable teachers to share best practices that will strengthen their students' ability to make continuous progress. Administrators and teachers participate in structured intervisitations and attend out-of-town conferences together. New teachers receive continuous support by the administration, colleagues on the grade, and coaches. The school collaborates effectively with Old Westbury College who provides a lab site for student teachers to learn best practices for teaching and learning. The school offers its students exciting opportunities to participate in effective partnerships to enhance their social development. A leadership program teaches students about tolerance and respect for others. The school addresses effectively student's social needs. The pupil personnel committee discusses students not making progress and makes recommendations as needed. "Periwinkle", a conflict resolution program, broadens students' social development and ability to make good choices.

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.

Effective school structures enable the administration to collaborate with support staff and teachers to continuously analyze and evaluate students' performance and progress. The administration and all teaching staff maintain data binders. They include a wide range of available and school-generated assessment information that is used well to monitor students' achievement and growth. Binders are updated continually as new information becomes available. Administrators work closely with support staff to ensure that teachers understand how to establish and revise goals based on the compilation and analysis of data. While the school does well at developing interim goals in literacy and math, measureable timeframes for measuring student success are not apparent in other content areas. The school participates in regular discussions during various kinds of school meetings to determine if goals are being met. The school's leadership team meets regularly to ensure that long- term goals outlined in the school's Comprehensive Education Plan are reviewed to ensure that the school is on track. At the end of each school year, the school analyzes its long- and short-term goals using the data as a measure of success. Based on the analysis by gender, the school found that its boys were not performing as well as its girls. This information encouraged the school to modify its instructional program in order to best accommodate students' needs. The school purchased books to address male students' interests and engaged them in more experiential lessons to motivate and help improve their performance. Progress of special education students is monitored ongoing and instructional practices promptly revised based on the students' assessment data and their individual education plan. The school engages in constant sharing of ideas and strategies as they continue to look to improving students' outcomes.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Ronald H. Brown	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 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	
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 and tardiness?				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, 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	
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 make 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