



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Franklin Delano School

Public School / Middle School 34

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

Principal: Joyce Stallings-Harte

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Reviewer: Cheryl Baker

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Franklin Delano Roosevelt School serves 403 students in grades pre-kindergarten through 8. This is a decrease of nearly 125 students over the period 2003-2006. Seventy-three percent of students are Hispanic, 18.5% Black, 5.6% Asian and 1.6% White. Thirteen percent of students are English language learners and 25% are special education students. The school is Title I eligible with the number of qualifying students on a par with City-wide schools but below the average for similar schools. Females represent 55.5% of the population while males represent 44.5%. Attendance averages just over 90%, which is below the average for both similar and City-wide schools. Suspensions and incidents, higher than similar schools in 2005, have fallen in subsequent years. Less than 50% of teachers have more than five years experience and nearly 60% have taught at the school for more than two years.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- It provides strong, informed, committed, focused leadership for all aspects of school improvement.
- A bright welcoming environment supports students' learning.
- Numerous programs and interventions address the social and emotional needs of students.
- An array of programs and services support students in need of extra instructional interventions to address their academic learning needs.
- The school provides a warm supportive atmosphere in which students, teachers and parents feel respected, known and welcomed.
- Professional development through the work of coaches, consultants and staff developers is well established and effective.
- Senior staff set clear expectations and leadership for the increased use of data to plan instruction.
- Staff communicate clear expectations and tangible rewards for positive student behavior.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure consistency in the analysis of data to understand what students know and can do in order to plan instruction tailored to individual needs and extend teachers' knowledge of techniques for doing so.
- Further develop the use of formative and summative common grade level assessments to establish grade and classroom goals and to monitor and revise instruction and learning.
- Establish formal procedures for tracking short- and longer-term progress of all students in order to make timely adjustments to their individual goals.
- Explore mechanisms for increasing support and retention of newly hired teachers during and beyond their induction year.
- Continue to nurture collaborative leadership among administrators, coaches, support staff and instructional staff.
- Explore ways to increase the support of youth development partners in furthering students' academic goals.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school.

The administration and teachers at Public School 34 have undertaken vigorous efforts to improve the quality of education offered to students since the principal assumed leadership in 2003. Since then balanced literacy practices have been adopted, Everyday Mathematics has become the uniform mathematics program, and several programs have been developed to address the social and emotional needs of students. The school supports a network of academic and social service experts who provide assistance to teachers and students. The school's goals with respect to the use of data to drive instructional decisions are clear and focused.

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 student progress over time.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The school uses data from State tests and assessment practices embedded in their English language arts and mathematics curricula to aid in the understanding of the performance and progress of students, classes and grade levels. The attention to data increased sharply at the inception of the 2005-2006 school year when the school formed a data committee to aid in the analysis of school-wide performance. The committee's progress has, however, been hampered by staffing changes and other demands on teachers' and administrators' time. Recently, data from the Princeton Review has been used to measure interim progress and the school has identified mechanisms by which results of teacher-made tests may be scanned and analyzed to provide disaggregated data on student performance.

With respect to ethnic groups, English language learners and special education students, the school undertakes careful analyses of scores on State tests and other measures of progress of these groups when preparing the Comprehensive Education Plan. The school also analyzes and tracks the progress of students by gender and race. Progress of English language learners and special education students is updated according to the requirements of their respective programs.

Cohort performance data provides information regarding overall annual progress in English language arts and mathematics. Less focus is placed on progress in other academic areas. Comparisons of classroom progress are made by administration. However, the routine use of common grade level assessments in all academic areas is not a feature in the school. The school is aware of its progress relative to similar schools in the region and is quick to note that its students often perform better than their peers at these schools. Overall student achievement over the last three years has fluctuated by grade level and content area, with some success seen recently at grade 3 in both English language arts and mathematics, and in mathematics at grade 7.

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use available data to understand each student’s next learning step. Through collaborative planning and student and parent engagement, they set high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating each student’s learning.

This area of the school’s work is proficient.

The school leadership team collaborates to analyze assessment and survey data to create the Comprehensive Education Plan which sets out goals, primarily for long-range improvement. Some components of the plan, such as those addressing English language learners, academic intervention services and professional development also include interim goals and measures of incremental progress. The principal’s annual goals for the period 2005-2007 are explicit with respect to the expectation that assessment data be used to plan for instruction in reading and mathematics in order to maximize student learning. These goals include well-developed action plans for implementing the expected practices. Together, the Comprehensive Education Plan and the principal’s annual goals inform the activity of leaders, staff, students and parents with respect to improving student performance for the school as a whole.

Goals and plans for grade levels or classrooms are less well developed, although the small size of the school engenders collaboration among staff at grade level where lesson planning or assessment analysis may take place. In response to problems with the sequence of topical coverage in the Impact Mathematics program, the pacing guide for middle school mathematics was revised to improve achievement. Grade 7 mathematics scores increased in 2006 as a result.

Students in greatest need of improvement receive extensive attention through programs for English language learners, special education students, and students needing academic interventions. This is a strength of the school. The school has systems in place to identify students, diagnose their specific needs, and provide specialized interventions for them, especially in English language arts and mathematics. Students serviced through these structures are closely monitored with respect to program effectiveness. Recent State scores for these students reveal modest improvement overall. The school also attends to the social and emotional needs of students through numerous programs designed by guidance and other social service providers to address developmental issues that may interfere with learning.

The school conveys expectations for student learning to parents through written communications and through meetings with teachers. Parents report feeling welcomed in the school and well informed as to their children’s progress. Teachers and students set individual goals for achievement and some teachers set class goals, such as one grade 8 teacher whose class goal is, “Finish the first lap in your race to college.” Annual increases in student scores remain a goal for the school.

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instruction: The school aligns its instructional activity and resources, and student engagement around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.

This area of the school’s work is proficient with well-developed features.

In 2005, the school began the implementation of a balanced literacy approach to the teaching of English language arts and adopted the Everyday Mathematics and Impact Mathematics programs as mandated by the City. The school supports this effort by

providing coaches, staff developers and consultants to aid teachers in learning these new approaches to instruction. The school references the State and City standards when planning instruction in science and social studies. The lack of a science laboratory, school library and computer lab hamper, somewhat, the fullness of students' learning experiences. These deficits are being addressed through local efforts.

Teachers are learning how to generate and use meaningful interim data about student achievement in planning for instruction that is differentiated to match individual understanding. This is a particular focus for the school. While instruction engages students in some form of active learning, differentiation is currently at the program rather than at the student level. Teachers are held accountable for increasing student achievement through the review of class learning logs, lesson plans, and overall student achievement, by administrators and other instructional support personnel.

Budgeting, staffing and scheduling decisions are driven by needs identified through the analysis of student and other data. For example, to support the implementation of the mandated curricula coaches and consultants were hired. Staff developers and training for balanced literacy are supported through the local budget. Guidance and student support staff were increased to address behavior and attendance issues that were impeding achievement. Specialized programs such as Project Read and Wilson reading are accommodated through funding and scheduling adjustments and the morning extended-day program was designed to provide targeted interventions by classroom teachers trained in the delivery of specialized programs.

Teachers know their students well and students feel safe and respected in the school. They especially appreciate the calming effect that the presence of the new guidance counselors and the dean has brought to the school. Recent efforts to improve attendance through tangible rewards, such as tickets to a METS game, have begun to show positive results. Attendance for the year to date is above the typical 90% mark.

Quality Statement 4 - Build and Align Capacity: The development of instructional leadership, staff, and capacity are aligned around the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The principal is respected by all constituents, has a focused plan for school improvement and continues to effect changes in the curriculum, the delivery of instruction and support mechanisms for students' affective needs. The school is well organized, has well-understood practices and runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis.

To the extent possible, staff are selected based on their academic performance, quality of training and commitment to working with a population that is at times challenging. Capacity to use data is an increasing focus in teacher selection. The retention of staff, however, is a primary goal. Staff turnover has hampered the pace of change and requires the annual training of new staff in the practices being implemented. Recent relationships forged with institutions of higher learning have begun to provide sources of new teachers interested in working in the school. Teachers are supported in their growth through informal and formal intervisitations within the school and to other schools. Administrators and instructional support personnel regularly observe classes and provide constructive feedback to teachers.

Professional development programs have been directed to the implementation of the mandated curriculum in recent years and have included activities such in-class coaching, staff development by Teachers' College personnel, model lessons, and support in lesson planning. Training germane to addressing the needs of English language learners and the implementation of academic interventions has also been provided. Topics are also informed by results of teachers' surveys. Some opportunities have addressed the analysis and use of data to design and differentiate instruction, though this is an identified area for concentration in the future.

Collaborative planning and decision-making takes place among administrators and often includes coaches, consultants and guidance personnel. In a school with just two teachers at a grade level, collaboration is frequent and informal. Formalized opportunities for collaboration across grade levels schools are less frequent.

The school partners with numerous universities, cultural institutions, civic groups, social service agencies and private corporations to broaden and support students' life experiences. While some groups do provide academic support through tutoring or test preparation, partnerships with outside bodies are not routinely used to achieve students' identified academic goals.

Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has built-in structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year, recognizing weaknesses in its improvement plans and teaching practices, and flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerated learning.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

Plans such as the Comprehensive Education Plan, the principal's annual goals, and some curricular pacing guides contain interim goals and benchmarks by which to measure achievement. These plans, and progress towards achieving their goals, are reviewed at various intervals as indicated in their action plans. In a global sense, these plans drive the activities in the school as they pertain to improved student achievement.

Informal comparisons of student progress within and across classrooms are used to judge the effectiveness of instruction especially as it pertains to the growing implementation of the mandated curricula. Teachers increasingly use interim diagnostic measures to measure student progress. Progress across grades and schools is reviewed and compared less frequently, most often by the annual comparison of cohort data.

For students with plans that address their identified needs, such as English language learners, special education students or students needing academic intervention services, periodic assessments and interim measures of progress are embedded in the school's monitoring procedures. Frequent formalized practices aimed at measuring progress and adjusting interventions for these students are well developed in the school. The use of periodic or interim assessments to measure progress of all students is an emerging practice and the school has identified mechanisms by which it intends to build a school-wide database to track the short and long-term achievement of its students.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The Franklin Delano Roosevelt School (PS/MS 34)	∅	✓	+
Quality Score		X	

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 student progress over time.	∅	✓	+
1.1 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> each student, classroom, grade level, 		X	
1.2 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ethnic groups, English language learners, special education students* 		X	
1.3 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> all other categories of interest to the school* 		X	
1.4 Performance and progress are measured based on comparisons with similar schools, with the school's own past performance, and among students, classrooms, grade levels, academic subject areas, ethnic groups, and other groupings of interest within the school.		X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 1		X	

* These criteria are partially aspirational as of now because schools do not have routine access to all of this data. The NYC DOE plans to provide schools with enhanced access to the necessary data in 2007.

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use available data to understand each student's next learning step. Through collaborative planning and student and parent engagement, they set high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating each student's learning.	∅	✓	+
2.1 Using data, school leaders and faculty engage in a collaborative process to set demanding, objectively measurable goals for immediate and long-range improvement, and to develop plans and timeframes for reaching those goals.		X	
2.2 Goals and plans focus on the school as a whole and 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 Particular attention is given to improving the performance and progress of students in greatest need of improvement.			X
2.4 High expectations are conveyed to students and parents/caregivers. Students and their parents/caregivers are regularly invited to provide information about each student's performance and how to improve. This information is central to setting challenging goals and developing, evaluating, and revising plans.		X	
2.5 Goals and plans for improving student performance and progress drive the activity of all members of the school community: leaders, staff, students, parents, and other partners.		X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 2		X	

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instruction: The school aligns its instructional activity, resources, and student engagement around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.	Ø	✓	+
3.1 The school selects the curriculum based on how well it aligns with or implements the mandated curriculum and on the curriculum's capacity to generate meaningful interim data about progress towards goals and to support the school's high expectations and improvement plans.			X
3.2 Teachers are accountable for improving instruction and student outcomes. They plan and differentiate their instruction based on the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.		X	
3.3 Budgeting decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.			X
3.4 Staffing decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.			X
3.5 Scheduling decisions about the use of teacher and student time are guided by the needs that emerge from examining student data and by the focused plan the school develops to improve student outcomes.			X
3.6 Instructional programs actively engage students.		X	
3.7 Staff know and respect students and respond to their academic needs, as well as their personal needs that affect academic performance. Each student knows and trusts an adult on the staff who is concerned about him or her.			X
3.8 Student attendance and engagement are high priorities. High rates and patterns of absences trigger immediate intervention.		X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 3		X	
Quality Statement 4 – Build and Align Capacity: The development of instructional leadership, staff, and capacity are aligned around the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.	Ø	✓	+
4.1 Leaders, faculty, and staff are selected based on their high expectations for student performance and progress and based on their commitment and capacity to use data, compare outcomes within and across classrooms and schools and develop and revise plans and methods to improve performance and progress.		X	
4.2 Professional development decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes. Professional development is designed to help leaders, faculty, and staff use data, self- and peer-assessments, and collaboration with peers to achieve goals for improved school and student outcomes. Professional development and self- and peer-evaluation are aligned and overlap.		X	
4.3 The principal frequently observes classroom teaching and has a considered strategy for improving the quality of each teacher's instruction. Teachers frequently observe and support each other's classroom instruction with the goal of improving student outcomes.		X	
4.4 Planning, evaluation of results, and revision of plans takes place in teams. Leaders and faculty inform each other of their goals and results, candidly evaluate themselves and each other, and use what is learned to drive improvement.		X	
4.5 The principal is respected and has capacity to effect change.			X
4.6 The school runs smoothly. Procedures are clear, communicated to all, and are generally followed.			X
4.7 The school aligns youth development and support services around stated academic goals. Partnerships with outside bodies are routinely used to achieve academic goals.		X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 4		X	
Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has built-in structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year, recognizing weaknesses in its improvement plans and teaching practices, and flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.	Ø	✓	+
5.1 All school plans and other interventions include frequent interim goals and diagnostic assessments of progress designed to reveal in objectively measurable ways whether the plan is being effectively implemented and reaching stated goals.		X	
5.2 Comparisons of student progress within and across classrooms and schools are used in making interim diagnostic assessments and measuring the progress of plans and interventions.		X	
5.3 Information generated by periodic assessments and diagnostic measures of progress and comparisons is used to revise plans immediately in order to reach stated goals. Interim and final goals are modified when data objectively demonstrate that revision is required.		X	
5.4 Each plan's interim and final outcomes drive successive phases of goal setting and improvement planning, and each successive phase is characterized by agile and flexible realignment of practices and resources to improve student academic outcomes.		X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 5		X	