Quality Review Report

2016-2017

Franklin Delano Roosevelt High School
High School 20K505
5800 20th Ave.
Brooklyn
NY 11204

Principal: Melanie Katz

Dates of Review:
May 18, 2017 - May 19, 2017

Lead Reviewer: Jennifer Eusanio
The Quality Review is a two-day school visit by an experienced educator. During the review, the reviewer visits classrooms, talks with parents, students, teachers, and school leaders and uses a rubric to evaluate how well the school is organized to support student achievement.

The Quality Review Report provides a rating for all ten indicators of the Quality Review Rubric in three categories: Instructional Core, School Culture, and Systems for Improvement. One indicator is identified as the **Area of Celebration** to highlight an area in which the school does well to support student learning and achievement. One indicator is identified as the **Area of Focus** to highlight an area the school should work on to support student learning and achievement. The remaining indicators are identified as **Additional Finding**. This report presents written findings, impact, and site-specific supporting evidence for six indicators.

### Information about the School


### School Quality Ratings

#### Instructional Core

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the instructional shifts and Danielson Framework for Teaching, aligned to the curricula, engaging, and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Developing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessment and grading practices, and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels</td>
<td>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Developing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# School Quality Ratings continued

## School Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school…</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults</td>
<td>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Systems for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school…</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school’s instructional goals and meet student learning needs, as evidenced by meaningful student work products</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Establish a coherent vision of school improvement that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are tracked for progress and are understood and supported by the entire school community</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Observe teachers using the Danielson Framework for Teaching along with the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Evaluate the quality of school-level decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school, with particular attention to the CCLS</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.4 Positive Learning Environment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings

The school’s approach to diversity and culture building is filtered through structures that are in place to support and maintain positive behaviors and attitudes of the students throughout the school.

Impact

Supportive structures ensure students are known well and align to student learning needs resulting in a safe, inclusive environment conducive to learning and where students' voices are valued and welcomed.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders utilize a variety of approaches to build a culture that promotes respect and learning throughout the school. Students shared they believe the strength of the school lies in its approach to multiculturalism with the many initiatives that support and celebrate the diverse cultures of the students who attend the school. These initiatives include festivals, dances, and even a hallway map that points to several countries represented in the school and treasured by the entire community. In addition, school leaders have ordered culturally relevant books to further student interest in reading. Both teachers and students all reported they feel safe and respected. The implementation of these schoolwide programs has led to a decrease in infractions evidenced in the Online Occurrence Reporting System (OORs).

- There are several opportunities for students to act as leaders for their peers. The student council meets to decide student fundraising events and acts as a voice for the students during School Leadership Team meetings. Ambassadors are chosen to recruit students from middle schools and provide information about the school during high school fairs and Touring Tuesdays. The Sustainability Club, a student-led conservation group, embarked on a schoolwide initiative to set up recycling stations to reduce and address waste issues.

- This year, a ninth grade advisory program has been implemented to support academic and personal behaviors including effective study and homework skills. During an advisory session, students developed strategies to help resolve conflicts, manage their behaviors with breathing techniques and learned how to refocus on more positive outcomes. Other supports include the School Implementation and Pupil Personnel team who work to review Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and determine whether services are appropriately assigned to students and the level of their effectiveness. The work of the team has led to a decrease in the number of students receiving more restrictive services. The attendance team worked on initiatives to increase the level of attendance especially during the seventh and eighth periods each day.
Area of Focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Developing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings

Teachers use curricula-aligned rubrics but have yet to engage in assessment practices that consistently check for student understanding and self-assessment.

Impact

Inconsistent use of actionable feedback and effective instructional adjustments result in missed opportunities for students to improve the quality of their work and receive the necessary support that aligns to their learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- In an interview, students discussed their reflections on their work and how to improve its quality. Some students used their teachers’ feedback to improve their grades on projects. One student explained that by using the rubric scores and his teacher’s comments, he added more details to his Algebra writing project to improve his score on his next writing task. Similarly, another student in English Language Arts (ELA) wrote an essay and at first received a low score because he did not organize his writing properly. Using this information, the student was able to improve on the next essay he wrote and received a higher grade. However, a review of student work products shows that only some work products and assessments contain grades and teacher or peer feedback with clear next steps.

- Teachers use multiple methods to check for student understanding during the lesson. In some classes, teachers provided a do now or pivotal question to gauge student understanding. In other classes, the teacher conferred with the students and made ongoing adjustments as needed. In a pre-calculus classroom, the teacher worked with several students both individually and in groups to help them determine the best ways to solve multi-level questions using first and second derivative tests. In some cases, students self-assessed their own abilities and requested assistance from the teachers or their peers to help them find the correct solutions to the problem. However, this level of mid-lesson adjustment and re-teaching were not consistently observed in the classes visited.

- In a social studies Integrated Collaborative Teaching (ICT) class, students worked on using information about three explorers to determine the impact of their discoveries. Yet, when the teacher checked for understanding, the teacher provided most of the answers. In some cases, checks for understanding were not observed. Additionally, in an English as a New Language (ENL) class, adjustments were limited to the teacher observing and reminding students to stay on task.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings
School staff ensure that the curricula is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and content standards, integrate instructional shifts such as text-based answers, and emphasize rigorous habits across subject areas.

Impact
Planned tasks provide opportunities for all students to engage in higher-order thinking, build coherence, and promote college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- School staff utilizes a variety of resources to develop a school-wide curriculum, which reflect the Common Core Learning Standards. In English Language Arts (ELA) teachers are using modules from EngageNY and supplement with materials from an online reading resource site. Using the Association of Math Assistant Principals Supervision of New York City (AMAPS) units as well as EngageNY, the math teachers created their curriculum emphasizing the specific focus standards that are frequently assessed on state examinations. The teachers revised the content sequence and moved the Algebra II unit with its focus on statistics to the beginning of the year since the state test has an emphasis on this content. Statistics was also taught as a pre-requisite concept in Algebra I. In social studies, teachers use the New Visions curriculum to reinforce rigor through discourse. In science, teachers supplement their curricula with multiple resources including student-friendly articles and magazines to reinforce the content and develop academic vocabulary.

- Across subject areas, citing evidence and focusing on developing claims are the instructional shifts, which are reflected in units and lesson tasks. In a United States History lesson plan, students are required to use a political cartoon and other documents to write an argumentative paragraph. They are tasked with taking a for or against position on the indictment of Richard Nixon and cite evidence to support their claim. In an ICT ELA/ENL plan, students are required to address text dependent questions and discuss possible answers in small groups using evidence from the book, Rebel.

- Guiding questions and subject tasks promote higher-order thinking. In a calculus lesson plan, students engage in a jigsaw activity with multi-level questions, which incorporate the use of first and second derivative tests. Students are expected to analyze the behavior of the given functions as well as create them to be reflected upon and discussed with their peers. In a global studies task, students are expected to analyze the rubric of a Document-Based Question (DBQ) and write another rubric in student-friendly language. Students are then to use the rubric and complete an outline to develop a DBQ essay.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Developing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings

Teacher practice is in the process of reflecting practices connected to the school’s core beliefs on how students learn best aligned to the instructional shifts and the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Opportunities for student discussion are developing across classrooms.

Impact

Teacher pedagogy is beginning to reflect practices that result in work products that evidence high levels of student thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- The core beliefs of school leaders and staff involve student-centered learning where instruction is designed to be accessible to all learners and where student to student discussion is prevalent in the classroom. Additionally, the core beliefs center on instruction that increases the cognitive engagement of all students. In an English class, students engaged in discussion and shared their thoughts about whether the main character in a story deserved forgiveness. Some students used details from the story to defend their claim. Others in the class agreed with the student’s statement and expanded on each other’s comments using statements like “I agree…” or “I disagree…” while citing evidence to support their thinking. However, this level of cognitive engagement was not observed across classrooms.

- In a social studies class, students were asked to engage in a do now activity on whether they had trust in their government. Although students were asked to share their thinking with a partner, discussions between students were limited to a few students. In addition, much of the questioning and leading of the conversation was conducted by the teacher. In another social studies ninth grade class, students were placed in groups to read and then discuss their thoughts about explorers. Students worked to complete the task in its entirety but were unable to share out their findings. Additionally, working in groups, they further analyzed the focus question addressing the impact of the major discoveries on future exploration.

- In an Integrated ENL/ELA class, teachers posed questions to prompt student thinking about the text, Rebel, as a whole class and then in groups. Although one opportunity was given for students to discuss their thinking while in groups, much of the work conducted was done independently or through teacher direction. In a Spanish class, students were asked to complete sentence frames with the appropriate prepositions. Students worked in groups and were prompted by the teacher to support their understanding of the task; however, students’ responses were limited to answering questions and sentence completion. In an ENL class, students were asked to complete true and false statements based on information they gathered from a text on Roberto Clemente and then work on creating a biographical sketch. Although all students participated in the task, much of the work was done independently with few opportunities to engage in discussion to further analyze their thoughts about the main characters. Students’ responses were limited to one word or short phrases.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings

School leaders communicate high expectations to the entire staff emphasizing a focus on formative assessment and vocabulary development. School staff communicates a culture of learning and offer structures to engage students in college and career readiness opportunities.

Impact

Training and support, as well as a system of accountability for staff, assist them to be able to meet schoolwide expectations. Students are offered feedback and clear next steps for achievement, which prepares them for the next school level.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders use a variety of structures to communicate the schoolwide expectations relative to the instructional foci on assessment and vocabulary development. The principal communicates with the staff through the “state of the school” presentation at the beginning of each semester and provides updates on data such as the graduation rate and progress towards meeting school goals. Additionally, school leaders provide each department a newsletter and the principal emails a bulletin entitled, “This is the Deal” which outlines important instructional expectations and also provides practical support strategies for teachers. In one bulletin, school leaders provided an “Instead of/Try” chart to offer suggestions on how to improve the quality of feedback to students.

- Post-observation feedback is provided and offers teachers support in meeting the school expectations. A review of reports indicates teachers receive ongoing suggestions for improvement by providing ways to revise activities based on student outcomes and reinforcing the school’s emphasis on assessment and vocabulary instruction. Suggestions included the use of Plickers, which are computer-based cards used for checking student understanding, conferring or revisiting question prompts to ensure opportunities for students to engage in higher-order thinking. Teachers reported that the professional development sessions are effective as they focus on the instructional foci.

- The college and career readiness message is reinforced through teachers and guidance counselors via one-to one scholarship meetings in the college office. A specialized Students In Need of Formal Education (SIFE) advisory, the “Are You Green?” campaign provides students visual reminders of credit accumulation and class visits. Students are provided opportunities to obtain credits through the College Now program and several Advanced Placement courses. Students reported that awareness of grading policies and the ongoing meetings with staff helps them further understand the requirements towards graduation and provide assistance in their developing action plans to meet those expectations.
**Additional Finding**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Team and Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Findings**

Content-level teams engage in structured, inquiry-based collaborations. Distributive leadership structures via grade and content-level teams are in place.

**Impact**

Instructional and leadership capacity is strengthened through ongoing collaborative meetings towards achieving school goals on the use of formative assessment to inform instruction and the implementation of Common Core Learning Standards.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teacher teams meet weekly to review student work, determine next steps, and share best practices to improve instruction. A review of student data in global studies revealed that students needed more exposure to political cartoons, graphs and charts, and content vocabulary. The team decided to increase these types of questions for students to review as part of a DBQ response and use more visuals for unpacking content vocabulary. In ELA, data indicated that teachers' target students have difficulty with vocabulary as well. To that end, they are using charts to help students share their thinking regarding unknown words and engage them in discussion. Overall teachers reported that looking at student work through the inquiry process has helped them understand the need to incorporate more visuals when planning and using checklists in their instruction.

- In a teacher meeting, the math team reviewed and sorted student responses related to a question on equations. They analyzed the effectiveness of the strategies they introduced to determine whether the students were using them correctly and independently. Teachers shared that the students were able to demonstrate understanding of strategies previously taught. Practices included unpacking and rewriting the question, underlining or circling key terms and isolating the variables. However, teachers noted that the students had difficulty with the coefficient in the equation since it was a fraction. The team decided to move forward with providing more practice on questions, which isolate the variable and modify their current checklist to remind students to identify the operations involved. In addition, the team purposed to increase the number of questions where a fraction is used as the coefficient.

- Teacher teams work collectively with school leaders to make instructional decisions and advise at the team and school level. In lieu of regular test preparation for the math Regents exams, one suggestion was to implement project-based teaching where students teach each other in groups based on data that supports those areas of improvement. This would increase the engagement of students in math Regents preparation. Additionally, resources to support the large ENL population was suggested which led to the purchasing of specific online programs.