



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Food and Finance High School

**525 West 50 Street
New York
NY 10019**

Principal: Mr. Roger Turgeon

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Reviewer: Sue Alton

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Food and Finance High School opened in 2004. It has an enrollment of 308 students for grades 9 through 11. The population comprises approximately 45% Hispanic students, 45% Black students, 3% Asian and other ethnic groups and 3% White students. There are approximately 18% special education students and a further 5% who are English language learners. The attendance rate is steadily improving and is now 89.37% which is above the rate for similar and City schools. The school was established in 2003, with a core purpose of attracting students interested in food and finance as a career choice. The principal has been in post since the school's inception. The school shares the building with 4 other schools.

In September 2006, the school was designated an empowerment school. As an empowerment school, it has more flexibility to make key decisions and control the resources for their school community. Empowerment schools are free to develop or purchase professional development services, choose which schools to affiliate with and benefit from reduced reporting and paperwork requirements.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal is respected and has significant capacity to effect change and continuous improvement.
- The school runs smoothly and procedures are clear and communicated to all.
- There is an effective program for the induction of new teachers.
- There is a strong collaborative culture within the school and teachers work well together to bring about change and to raise achievement.
- Professional development is planned according to need with a clear focus on raising students' achievement.
- Existing systems and processes are clear and staff are involved effectively in their review and development.
- Excellent partnerships with a range of agencies and organizations enhance the curriculum and support planning for improvement.
- The school understands its strengths and weaknesses and there is a whole school approach to planning improvements.
- Students enjoy learning, respect their staff and value the support and guidance they receive in order to achieve.

What the school needs to improve

- Further develop the use of data to include analysis of the performance of individuals and groups including those of middle and high achievement and those from different ethnic groups.
- Develop the use of data to set and track progress towards long and short term goals for individuals, groups, subject areas and specific activities.
- Establish systems to evaluate the impact of specific activities including those outside the regular curriculum.
- Further develop systems for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of teaching across grades and subjects to further improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- Consider how to include measurable success criteria based on data, into the Comprehensive Education Plan and establish systems to evaluate progress towards the goals.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school.

Food and Finance High School has achieved much in a short time. Developments have improved students' achievements and attendance. The principal is a strong leader with a clear vision for the school, which is shared by an enthusiastic and dedicated staff. The staff are eager to discuss practice and try out new ideas. They have high expectations for all students. Professional development and mentoring programs provide good support for teachers and are closely linked to improving achievement. Data from formal assessments is analyzed by class and grade and used to identify support programs and intervention. However, more detailed analyses of the performance and progress of different groups and the impact of interventions are not in place.

The Comprehensive Education Plan identifies the key priorities for improvement in the year. The school knows that it needs to develop the use of measurable success criteria within the plan to evaluate and quantify progress.

The curriculum aligns to high school graduation requirements and reflects the needs of the culinary industry. There is a strong emphasis on preparing students for life. The curriculum is reviewed regularly. Projects with partners enhance opportunities and experiences, providing a good range of career experiences for older students. Students and parents value the commitment and approachability of staff. One student said, "The relationship between staff and students is unlike any other school."

The school was designated as an empowerment school in September 2006. It has used this designation to employ additional staff and add new programs according to needs identified from data, to raise achievement. Decisions over professional development are related to need and purchased from a range of providers.

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.

All staff know students well and expect them all to graduate each year. Staff collect and share a range of assessment data to understand the performance of individuals, identifying areas of knowledge and skills, which need improvement. Trial Regents exams have been introduced, which are particularly effective in helping those who are English language learners, special education students or underperforming general education students.

Data on students' achievements on entry to the school is used to identify special education students and English language learners so that appropriate intervention strategies can be planned for them. The progress of individual students with particular needs is tracked by teachers, the guidance counselor, social worker, speech therapist and educational psychologist as appropriate. If a student is not progressing, leaders will discuss this with the teacher to identify reasons and consider the issues. They consider strategies for future improvement, which may include reprogramming. When a student is not achieving in one

area, staff involved with the student consider his or her performance in other areas. For example, difficulties in English may be supported in social studies classes.

The school uses reports from the City to compare its progress with the City and similar schools. The data collected by the school enables it to establish a clear picture of the overall performance of individual students, classes and grades, but the performance of specific groups and in subjects is an area for development.

The school does not evaluate the relative performance of different ethnic groups as systematically as it does for middle and higher achieving students. However, it has identified gender issues. For example, the school has brought in outside organizations to work with a number of issues, relating to female or male students. Advanced classes are planned for targeted students who achieve well in specific subjects. Identification will be based on the progress shown by data and recommendations from teachers. However, the school has not established systems to evaluate the effectiveness of these programs.

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 with some well-developed features.

The school works collaboratively to set demanding goals for improvement. It acts quickly to support students who are new to the school. Goals are set for each grade, but are not generally set for individuals and groups, other than those who are English language learners, special education students or who are underachieving. The school does not set goals to further raise achievement for specific groups and subject areas.

The principal uses data to review progress and discusses this with individual teachers to ensure their students are on track. At class and grade level, teachers consider the progress of all students towards graduation. They identify individual learning needs from progress in lessons and evaluation of data. Department meetings identify class goals and timelines as well as strategies to achieve them. These include course placements, extension activities and work across subjects. Interventions are identified and targeted as needed, including collaborative team teaching.

There is a particular focus on those students who underachieve. When the school opened, 32% of pupils were special education students, so the school adjusted programs, plans and groupings. It reviews these each term. It created extra class periods at the beginning and at the end of the day to support credit recovery. These sessions are popular and most of the targeted students attend and make progress. The group of students in greatest need, changes in response to tracking and data analysis. These systems have not yet been formalized with objective goals for individual students and groups, other than the requirement that all students must graduate.

The school analyzes performance data and uses the teachers’ very good knowledge of individual students’ progress to identify key priorities for improvement. The Comprehensive Education Plan summarizes these priorities, but does not include measurable outcomes or processes for evaluation and review.

High expectations are shared with students and achievement is widely celebrated to further raise expectations. Parents are very positive about the school. One parent described the changes in her child, “The school has helped him to gain confidence. It has

raised his aspirations. He wants to go to college now. He wasn't like that when he came here." Parents value the easy access they have to all staff including the principal. Newsletters, parent teacher conferences and report cards provide essential information about the school's priorities and the progress of their children. Students enjoy school. They respect their teachers, because they listen to them and treat them fairly. They appreciate the teacher's efforts to make learning interesting. Partnerships with other organizations enhance the curriculum and strengthen the focus on continuing education.

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.

The school delivers the mandated curriculum. Its focus on culinary skills and finance, has led to high quality culinary efforts by students. As a result, some students have placements in prestigious restaurants. Parents value the opportunities that the school's partnerships with other organizations provide for their children. They comment that these help to provide incentives, new opportunities, work experience and raise aspirations.

The organization of classes in each grade is based on students' performance levels and this helps to differentiate work for students across the grade, although not usually within individual classes. Data is used to show the overall progress of individual students towards graduation and to decide programming and additional support.

The principal and the staff know all the students very well. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and lessons are delivered in a flexibly, which engages students well. They commented, "They want all of us to pass and have good grades and to be successful. They do everything they can to get us there."

Teachers are fully aware of their accountability for the achievements of their students. They meet to discuss progress formally and informally, using classroom performance, behavior and data for this. The school has not yet established systems to monitor the progress across subject areas or of other groups such as those from different ethnicities.

The school has used its designation as an empowerment school to hire additional staff, such as guidance counselors and special education staff to support the school's priorities. It has used its data to identify the needs of students.

Attendance is a high priority. The school has purchased electronic scanning systems to read registers more efficiently and parents are telephoned by automated electronic phone message if their child is absent. This and the work of the key personnel including the guidance councilor has led to attendance improving to almost 89% this term.

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 with some well-developed features.

The school selects staff on their expertise, capability to deliver the school's vision and according to the specific needs it identifies through data. The effective induction program ensures all staff are trained and supported to use data effectively. The guidance

counselor is skilled in data use and works with all staff to develop their skills in this area. Staff continually review and discuss their own performance to make improvements. Teachers use opportunities to observe each other and with confidence, turn to one another for advice and support. More formalized systems of peer mentoring are being introduced.

The principal is highly respected by students, staff and parents. One teacher said, "I have never worked for anyone like him. He's amazing. He values our suggestions." The principal actively involves a range of staff in decision making through the leadership team. As a result, teamwork between all staff is very strong. They work well together to bring about change and to raise achievement. Change is effectively managed because staff are involved closely in the process.

The principal has a close knowledge of the quality of instruction across the school because he observes teaching systematically. He evaluates strengths and weaknesses, giving formal feedback on how to improve, linking this to professional development. These discussions are always followed up to ensure improvements are made. A formal system involving all leaders is being established.

The school runs very well on a day to day basis. There are clear routines, which are well understood and followed by the whole school community. Partnerships with various professional organizations and external consultants effectively develop and enrich the curriculum and provide opportunities for work placements.

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.

The Comprehensive Education Plan is produced in collaboration with all staff and identifies the key priorities for improvement. This ensures a broad understanding of the expectations for students and the actions required to achieve them. The school is beginning to use data to drive the plan, particularly for those students from other ethnic groups or those who perform at a high level. The school has yet to develop the use of measurable success criteria to evaluate and quantify progress. The achievement of priorities determines what needs to be modified, carried over to the next year or signed off.

This school has recently introduced the Princeton Review system, but this is still being established. It uses comparisons of students' progress to measure progress against expected levels for the class and grade and to plan interventions. Staff meet regularly to discuss the ongoing evaluation of progress for individuals, classes, grades and those taking part in specific intervention programs. They use data from interim tests to support these discussions and planning. The school knows it needs to formalize these systems to include long and short term goals for specific groups as well as individuals. Intervention strategies have formally planned outcomes, but these are not always systematically recorded. The school does not yet evaluate the impact of intervention programs or of those activities outside the general curriculum, to ensure that they make a difference.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Food and Finance High School (HS 288)	∅	✓	+
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.	∅	✓	+
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.	∅	✓	+
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.	∅	✓	+
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	