



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

The Carroll School

Elementary School 58

**330 Smith Street
Brooklyn
NY 11231**

Principal: Giselle Gault

Dates of review: February 7 - 8, 2008

Lead Reviewer: David Glick

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Carroll School is an elementary school with 485 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 13% Black, 29% Hispanic, 50% White, and 8% Asian students. The student body includes 5% English language learners and 11% special education students. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 93.1%. The school is not in receipt of Title 1 funding.

The principal and assistant principal joined the school approximately two years ago. Enrolment increased almost 10% from 2006 to 2007. School facilities include an auditorium and gymnasium.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The administrators model collaborative learning and management in ways that successfully encourage staff to learn together and support each other.
- The administrators and teachers make all students feel valued by knowing the personal and academic traits of each individual student.
- The administration removes barriers to parent participation and successfully creates a welcoming community with a high level of mutual trust.
- The school consistently maintains high expectations for students resulting in students who enjoy challenge.
- The broad and engaging curriculum provides all students with multiple avenues for discovering their strengths and expressing themselves.
- Consistently compelling and creative instruction engages students and promotes enthusiastic learning.
- A comprehensive and collaborative induction process helps new teachers quickly find the answers and resources they need to feel successful.
- Clear procedures in the school and classrooms result in strong attendance and few discipline problems.
- Students and parents enjoy being part of the school community.
- Partnerships with many individuals and organizations from the community enrich all aspects of the curriculum in meaningful ways.

What the school needs to improve

- Use collaborative processes to clarify specific whole-school goals with clear timelines and success criteria.
- Fully communicate rigorous, objective and measurable goals for students with the parents and community.
- Use lessons learned from detailed comparisons with similar schools to improve teachers' awareness of the need for whole-school improvement.

Part 3: Main Findings

Progress made since the last review

The school has made some progress in addressing the issues identified in the previous Quality Review report.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

The principal and assistant principal have a magnetic enthusiasm for the school, its teachers and its children. It is obvious that everyone from the students to parents to the security guard share this pride. In the two short years since these leaders took control of a challenging environment, they have clearly made great strides forward in establishing a collaborative school climate that is well-loved by its community. Parents make regular contributions to all aspects of school life and help to create the rich curriculum that further endears the school to everyone involved.

The school effectively models shared leadership and collaborative learning and extends this to all teachers. Good use is made of similar strategies to make all parents feel valued by the school. Although not all parents can contribute by designing the new library, as one parent architect did, the school is clear that all parents can help by doing something. This attitude results in an enriched curriculum with strong connections to the community.

Since the last Quality Review, the school has made advances in collecting large amounts of data on all students. It keeps a number of data binders focused on English language arts and math. Each teacher maintains an assessment binder that tracks the progress of each individual student in multiple areas.

The inquiry team is effectively using Acuity to drill into data and now has a process for routinely extracting specific information efficiently. The team is enthusiastic about sharing these techniques and the information gained from them with the entire staff.

The current systems used to set goals do not yet result in measurable and time-bound goals, nor are they shared with parents and the community. The school and its teachers have a growing awareness that a more detailed, focused analysis of the achievement of ethnic and gender groups will provide support in enhancing teacher's ability to help each student achieve their highest possible levels. The inquiry team and the school's data specialist are accelerating this awareness effectively. Teachers and parents have a limited understanding of how the school compares to similar schools.

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 proficient.

The school maintains detailed data binders that effectively track student progress in English language arts and math. All teachers keep assessment binders that include additional detail regarding the performance of all students, including those designated as special education students and English language learners. The teachers use this information to carefully monitor each individual student's progress in all subject areas and quickly recognize individual student needs. Teachers apply flexible grouping strategies to provide students with differentiated opportunities to learn. Although teachers do this effectively on an individual basis, inconsistency in data-keeping systems makes it difficult to compile this data on a school-wide basis.

The school is beginning to aggregate the data on individual students to analyze the performance of ethnic and gender groups. For example, the school has carefully looked at the performance of Black and White students with and without individual education plans. The school is aware of the need to enhance practices in this area and recently hired a data specialist to expand this type of analysis to other subgroups of students. The inquiry team and data specialist are increasing teachers' awareness of the use of data to inform instruction.

The administration participates in a wide range of opportunities to learn from other schools. It is beginning to look at meaningful data comparisons. However, teachers and parents are largely unaware of how the school compares to other similar schools except in very general ways.

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 proficient.

The school consistently promotes high standards of learning for all students and communicates those expectations to parents and the community. The school invites continuous communication and participation from parents, and welcomes and encourages parents to provide information regarding a child's academic or social needs. The school and teachers send parents regular information regarding the progress their child is making. That information sometimes includes specific goals for a particular student. The school provides parents with many opportunities to share information with teachers such as parent workshops, open houses and curriculum nights.

In cases where the school has identified an area of concern, it acts efficiently to adjust curriculum or instructional practices to address that concern. Teachers quickly identify students who are falling behind and focus efforts as necessary before the problems become severe. For example, fifth grade math instruction included a small group recording sheet to track individual student progress.

Although there is a great deal of collaborative practice, teachers are only just beginning to center their collaboration around the use of data to establish goals. The school's recently hired data specialist is already proving instrumental in moving the conversation into areas of much greater focus and specificity. The school knows that it needs to develop clear, time-bound, measurable goals with concrete success criteria, along with

the plans to achieve those goals. It also recognizes the importance of sharing those goals, once developed, with parents and the community.

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 proficient.

Teachers engage students through a wide variety of instructional approaches and a broad, exciting curriculum. If the school identifies weaknesses in a particular area, it addresses them effectively through creative instruction and varied use of resources. For example, the school began a chess program to assist students in learning mathematical reasoning and vocabulary. All students in grades 3 through 5 play a musical instrument. By marrying enriching experiences with core curriculum in this way, teachers create an engaging learning experience cherished by students and parents. The school also offers after-school basketball teams and volleyball games.

The school promotes a high level of mutual trust between students and teachers. The principal and assistant principal not only know each student by name, they often know the particular interests and strengths of each child. Teachers consistently demonstrate deep affection and respect for the students and their families. An atmosphere of collaborative work and shared learning contributes to the mutual respect between teachers, students and the administration. Students enthusiastically mentioned their teachers when asked what they liked best about the school.

Although many teachers effectively differentiate instruction, the school is in the early stages of differentiation based on the use of clear, objective data. The school’s data specialist has just begun working with each grade level to analyze specific test items to better identify specific areas in need of focused instruction. The inquiry team enthusiastically anticipates sharing the power of this type of analysis with the rest of the school.

The school monitors attendance effectively and responds quickly to any attendance or tardiness problems that arise.

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 proficient.

The school has numerous structures in place that effectively assist teachers in supporting the learning of each student. A very effective induction process for new teachers makes use of an extensive handbook, mentoring opportunities and grade-level teams. Consequently, the school is able to quickly assimilate new teachers into the school culture. This multi-faceted, collaborative approach also extends to experienced teachers. They visit each other’s classrooms regularly to share materials and exchange ideas on teaching techniques and individual students.

The efficiency with which the administration handles behavior problems impresses teachers, students and parents. Each teacher establishes effective classroom management procedures and clear behavioral expectations for all students. Teachers quickly respond to distracted students by drawing their attention back to the relevant tasks.

Numerous partnerships with individuals and community organizations bring an impressive array of activities to the school. The school is consistently expanding its repertoire of resources to support students' academic and personal growth. A chess master, well-known authors of children's books, and visitors from the Guggenheim museum regularly enhance the school's core curriculum in meaningful ways. Parents contribute actively. One parent, an architect, designed the school's new library while another parent, an artist, made a new puppet stage for the kindergarten class. The school worked with the French Embassy to establish its kindergarten French bilingual class and French lessons for parents.

Professional development responds flexibly and creatively to teacher needs. The school is aware that specific follow-up is necessary to ensure that the professional development has its desired impact on specific testing strands. There is a lack of measurable, data based goals to focus its well-developed processes.

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 proficient.

The principal and the assistant principal have a clear vision for the future development of the school. They have had a significant impact in enabling the school to move forward during the last two years and have the confidence of the school community. Using an empowering and collaborative leadership model, they are developing a climate to support development and engage the whole community in bringing about change.

The school tracks student progress through periodic assessments and responds effectively when individual students do not meet expectations. It addresses general test preparation with voluntary "Test Prep Saturday" sessions for students. Teachers involve students in helping with test preparation by having the fourth grade students develop a "Secret Book" for third grade students with tips on preparing for and taking the tests. There are currently no interim goals to predict how well students are prepared and so be able to make timely interventions. The school has already understood the need to establish specific, time-bound goals with measurable success criteria used as benchmarks for individual students and groups of students. The inquiry team is making progress in this area. For example, they analyzed test data and determined that number sense was a weak area on the math test. They responded by changing the curriculum and instruction throughout multiple grade levels to better prepare students for that section of the test. However, these practices are not yet consistent or systemic.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: The Carroll School	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 makes strategic decisions to modify practices to improve student outcomes?			X		
5.6 school leaders and staff use each plan’s interim and final outcomes to drive the next stage of goal setting and improvement planning?			X		
5.7 the principal and school community have a clear vision for the future development of the school and implement procedures and systems to effect change?			X		
Overall score for Quality Statement 5			X		

◇	Outstanding
+	Well Developed
✓	Proficient
➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features
Δ	Underdeveloped