



# **The New York City Department of Education**



# **Quality Review Report**

**Eleanor Roosevelt School**

**Middle School 143**

**511 West 182 Street  
Manhattan  
NY 10033**

**Principal: Ourania Pappas**

**Dates of review: February 4 – 5, 2008**

**Lead Reviewer: Jo Storrs**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Eleanor Roosevelt is a middle school with 853 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 2% Black, 97% Hispanic and 1% White or Asian students. The student body includes 38% English language learners and 18% special education students. Boys account for 56% of the students enrolled and girls account for 44%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006-2007 was 90.7%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 99% eligibility.

The school is situated in a Spanish speaking community with some student mobility due to families housed in temporary accommodation. Each September, most students enroll into grade 6 and about eighty students enroll into grade 7. Since September, 2007 thirty recent immigrants have joined the school with little experience of formal schooling. The school is dedicated to fostering academic excellence and promoting dignity and respect for individuals in the school community. It shares its building, auditorium, gymnasium, library, cafeteria and common spaces with two other schools.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal's vision, passion and determination act as an inspiration for teachers, staff and students.
- Consistently high expectations are evident in every aspect of school life and improve the students' learning and achievement.
- Compassionate leaders use data rigorously to gain a comprehensive knowledge of each student and to set challenging goals to raise standards.
- The talented cabinet works harmoniously with the principal, faculty and staff to promote the school's vision.
- Students enjoy, and benefit from, a rich, varied and challenging curriculum, and carefully targeted interventions.
- The dedicated, loyal staff are trusted and encouraged to be innovative in their instruction in pursuit of ever-rising levels of achievement.
- The mutual trust, respect and good relationships between students and staff cultivate students' personal and academic development.
- Impeccable procedures ensure the school operates smoothly and efficiently and attendance is high.
- Meticulous monitoring of all aspects of the school provides a clear vision for future improvements that is shared by the school community
- Parents are valued and the school provides a wide range of opportunities for them to understand and be involved in their children's learning.

### What the school needs to improve

- Review and refine pertinent data systems, so they are less cumbersome and easier for teachers to use.
- Evaluate and further develop programs in English language arts to raise students' levels of achievement.
- Further develop interdisciplinary programs that make significant connections and accelerate learning for higher-achieving students.

## Part 3: Main Findings

### Progress made since the last review

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

### Overall Evaluation

#### **This school is well developed.**

The principal's vision, high expectations, dedication and determination are an inspiration for all. She and the gifted cabinet work amicably with staff and students using data successfully to improve students' achievement. The school has excellent data systems. However they are unwieldy and therefore not easy for all staff to use to inform instruction or to evaluate closely developments in the English language arts program against achievement. Students enjoy and benefit from the rich and challenging curriculum, meticulously targeted interventions and many out-of-school activities. The highly motivating interdisciplinary programs are beneficial and being further developed to promote accelerated learning for all students. This especially includes higher achievers, who are not always sufficiently challenged.

Collegial leaders and staff create a purposeful and nurturing culture that is raising the academic and personal development of all its students. As a result, the school functions smoothly and efficiently in a calm environment. Teachers are empowered and trusted to be creative in planning instruction to advance learning. Leaders and staff know the students well and devise interventions focused on individual needs. Parents are valued and benefit from the many events that enable them to be involved in their children's learning. Rigorous monitoring procedures, closely aligned to goal-setting and planning, keep students' performance constantly under review and ensure the school's success.

The school has worked diligently on the recommendations of the last Quality Review. Measurable goals with interim goals and data on all subgroups are meticulously monitored and plans revised, if required. Teachers maintain consistent student records and improvements to community-based after-school programs are supporting students' achievement. The school's excellent inquiry team is making a significant contribution to improve the achievements of the focus group of English language learners. Data from monthly tests are meticulously tracked, progress graphs are closely monitored and programs swiftly revised as needed. The outcomes will inform plans for other students.

### How well the school meets New York City's evaluation criteria

**Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor the student's progress over time.**

#### **This area of the school's work is well developed.**

The principal's high aspirations for the school and thorough assessment drive decision-making and instruction. Methodically kept binders record all aspects of school life and provide her with a constant overview of its progress. Leaders collect and meticulously analyze a full range of external and internal tests and assessments, producing charts and graphs of the achievement of every subject, grade, class, individual and group of students. This is supplemented with portfolios, samples of students' work, homework responses and

relevant records of their attitudes and behavior to gain an accurate understanding of each student's achievements. Additional detailed information is gathered on the progress of English language learners and the individual education plans of special education students. Data analysis reveals much of value and enables leaders to provide focused support for these students. For instance, standards appeared to drop in English language arts last year. Reviews of school data showed this was due to a third of the school's Spanish-speaking population just qualifying to take the external test. In addition the results of the alternative assessment taken by special education students had been ignored due to a clerical error outside the school's control. This detailed knowledge enables the school to compare its external and internal performance year to year, showing results are actually improving progressively.

Enrollment, parental information, initial tests and data from previous grades are collected onto the data system and scrupulously analyzed. This enables students to join classes with the most suitable resources and programs to meet their needs. Every student's progress is vigilantly tracked and analyzed through on-going tests and assessments; programs are revised, if required. Within this excellent process, the school has recognized the importance of summarizing data. This would make it easier for all staff to use the data effectively to target instruction even more closely to meet each student's needs. The excellent inquiry team is spearheading this development through swift response to the detailed data analysis of the progress of English language learners. The early outcomes are very positive and are driving improvements for other students. This process of exact and continuous assessment, providing specific support for those students with learning difficulties, continues throughout the school. It also extends to its high achievers in some subjects and is being developed across the school.

**Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use data to understand each student's next learning steps and to set suitably high goals for accelerating each student's learning.**

**This area of the school's work is well developed.**

The compassionate principal and cabinet have an exceptional knowledge of each student. This is gained from valuable data tracking and regular formal and informal discussions between teachers and staff about individual students and subject-specific matters. Everyone works harmoniously to set highly challenging, specific goals for individuals and groups, so the school's vision of more than one year's growth for each student is achieved. This goal includes the numerous Spanish-speaking immigrants joining the school each academic year, whose learning skills needs are identified by initial tests and quickly addressed. Leaders and coaches collaborate with teams to establish regularly measured subject, grade, class and individual goals and plans aligned to the whole school goals.

The focus on student achievement is a key feature which is understood and supported by the whole school community. It arises from the principal's insistence upon consistently high standards and is evident in every aspect of school life. All programs and interventions are planned collaboratively. They effectively meet students' needs and considerably enhance their performance. Different groups are the focus according to identified need. Any student falling behind is given a personal program and receives intensive support. Equally, talented special education students join accelerated classes in some subjects to challenge and meet their specific needs. Through this range of collaborative approaches members of staff set demanding goals and enable grade and subject teams to plan instruction effectively. The school's welcoming, open-door policy encourages parents to provide and receive information regarding their children's education. Most are Spanish speaking, so regular meetings and workshops provide other events to strengthen the bond between school and home, and to promote the school's

goals. Parents take advantage of these opportunities, especially those who are recent immigrants. They feel the school is sympathetic and supportive of them and their children.

**Quality Statement 3 – Align Instructional Strategy to Goals: The school aligns its academic work, strategic decisions and resources, and effectively engages students around its plans and goals for accelerating student learning.**

**This area of the school’s work is well developed.**

The core curriculum is firmly related to interim tests and rubrics to provide valuable data about each student’s progress towards goal achievement. The very tight systems, pacing calendars and curriculum binders are replicated in the core subjects. They are being further refined in English language arts using the outcomes of the inquiry team. The school continues to evaluate the success of these programs and will make revisions, if required, to further raise students’ levels of achievement. Interdisciplinary, inquiry-based projects in social studies and science provide continuity and meaning for students. For example, key “skills of the week” are practiced in all subjects. Research into class-based themes, such as the Egyptians, through videos, leveled books and valuable museum visits bring learning to life. However, these very successful strategies are not yet fully consolidated to accelerate learning for all students, especially higher achievers. Extra support is supplied during after-school clubs, tutorials and through the useful partnership with Alianza Dominicana, an after-school service. Technology plays a valuable role in widening students’ outlooks and provides precisely targeted, beneficial interventions. Students enjoy and profit from numerous sports and arts programs, including basketball and a prestigious Saturday music program led by local musicians.

Loyal and talented teachers and staff play a vital role in the school’s drive for continuing improvement. They know they are accountable and trusted to be innovative in raising achievement. The mutual trust, respect and good relationships between students and staff successfully cultivate students’ personal and academic development. As a result, the school is a vibrant, but tranquil and industrious learning environment. The unyielding focus on raising achievement drives innovative and successful staffing and scheduling decisions that make maximum use of time and facilities. It plays an essential role in differentiating instruction for all students, including those with specific learning needs. Parents are delighted with the school. They support the principal’s high expectations and their children enjoy school so attendance is high and contributes significantly to the school’s success.

**Quality Statement 4 - Align Capacity Building to Goals: The development of leadership, teachers and other staff capacity is aligned to the school’s collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.**

**This area of the school’s work is well developed.**

The principal’s dedication and determination is an inspiration for staff and students. With the cabinet, she undertakes formal observations with immediate feedback against consistent rubrics, and evaluative conversations about students’ work and achievements. They are joined for informal observations by able coaches and consultants, who also provide excellent support with planning and instruction. Information gained from these observations, plus relevant data, keeps the administration constantly updated about instruction and students’ progress. It informs their decisions about school and student goals to improve student achievement and staff training. Professional development is extensive, comprehensive, and carefully designed to meet school and individual teacher needs. Teachers new to the profession appreciate the quality of their mentors and the enormous support from colleagues. The school’s collegial nature and the teachers’

professionalism ensure intervisitations are used effectively to evaluate and sharpen instruction for the substantial benefit of the students. Consistently implemented procedures ensure the school functions smoothly, efficiently and calmly. This is a major strength in a building in which so many facilities, including some hallways, are shared..

Youth development is a key focus of the school. Significant features are the consideration, respect and good relationships between students and staff. Students feel it has benefited them considerably to stay with the same class teacher for three years. They say it helps them to feel safe and gives them confidence to discuss personal issues with teachers, staff or medical staff at the on-site clinic. Considerable expert support from intervention staff working closely with the faculty further enhances students' academic and personal development. Specific programs and discussions from outside entities, community service projects and leadership classes all help students' personal development. Staff know the students well, so problems and concerns are soon spotted and resolved swiftly and students' progress is not impaired. The school has developed an impressive range of beneficial links with outside academic and community agencies, such as college-age tutors from Yeshiva University, that effectively support students' overall development.

**Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.**

**This area of the school's work is well developed.**

Thorough monitoring procedures take full account of students' academic achievement and progress as well as their attitudes and personal development. The principal has a valuable overview of the school's performance from each assistant principal's precise knowledge and detailed understanding of the comprehensive data of the grades, classes and subjects for which they are responsible. School goals are determined and agreed upon by the whole community based on data and with a focus on constant improvement.

The culture of planning, setting goals and assessing their impact is very well integrated across the school. Teachers and grade teams measure students' progress regularly from their work, portfolios, homework assignments, timely formal assessments and observations and discussions with students. Comparisons across grades and subject reviews show impact upon student achievement, and plans are revised as necessary. Classroom observations, meetings with different groups of teachers and staff and their analysis of data keep leaders effectively informed of developments and trends they need to address. This constructive and professional approach enables leaders and staff to go forward positively and confidently to further accelerate students' achievement. The whole school community supports the principal's clear vision and the rigorous monitoring procedures aimed at achieving this vision lead to the school's continuing effectiveness.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: Eleanor Roosevelt Middle School</b>	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
<b>Quality Score</b>				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		
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>				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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>				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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>				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	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>				X	

**Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for evaluating each student’s progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.**

To what extent do . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
5.1 the school’s plans for improving student outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?				X	
5.2 the school’s plans for improving teacher outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?				X	
5.3 teachers and faculty use periodic assessments and other diagnostic tools to measure the effectiveness of plans and interventions for individual and groups of students in key areas?				X	
5.4 teachers and faculty use the information generated by periodic assessments and other progress measures and comparisons to revise plans immediately in order to reach stated goals?				X	
5.5 school leaders track the outcomes of periodic assessments and other diagnostic measures and use the results to make strategic decisions to modify practices to improve student outcomes?				X	
5.6 school leaders and staff use each plan’s interim and final outcomes to drive the next stage of goal setting and improvement planning?				X	
5.7 the principal and school community have a clear vision for the future development of the school and implement procedures and systems to effect change?				X	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>				X	

◇	<b>Outstanding</b>
+	<b>Well Developed</b>
✓	<b>Proficient</b>
➤	<b>Underdeveloped with Proficient Features</b>
Δ	<b>Underdeveloped</b>