

# **Quality Review Report 2008-2009**

**Eleanor Roosevelt High School**

**High School 416**

**411 East 76 Street  
New York  
NY 10021**

**Principal: Dimitri Saliani**

**Dates of review: April 28 - 29, 2009**

**Lead Reviewer: Elaine Gorman**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Eleanor Roosevelt is a high school with 500 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 9% Black, 12% Hispanic, 58% White, and 21% Asian students. The student body includes 0% English language learners and 2% special education students. Boys account for 35% of the students enrolled and girls account for 65%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2007-2008 was 95.3%. The school is not in receipt of Title 1 funding.

### Overall Evaluation

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

The Eleanor Roosevelt High School has a well-established and highly regarded culture of challenging coursework resulting in college entry for all students that bind leaders, staff, students, and parents in a common vision for the school and each student. The new principal has sustained this highly academic and supportive culture that also embodies the ideals of an informed and involved citizenry espoused by the school's namesake. Students and parents describe teachers as highly competent, charismatic, and caring. They appreciate the course of study, which is individualized based on student interest and broad in scope. There are many examples of high-quality instructional practices, including multi-media projects requiring intensive writing and analysis of multiple resources, as evidenced by student work. Students and parents welcome the rigor of expectations and the level of feedback and support received to continuously improve academically and socially. The school culture promotes "learning for learning's sake" and the importance of gaining meaning from facts and applying learning to real world applications in the classroom, through community service, and extracurricular opportunities. Parents, students, and staff describe with passion the "family" of the Eleanor Roosevelt High School. This is not just because of the school's high levels of performance in all accountability measures but because, as several students said, "We are better people for having been here."

Building on recommendations from previous Quality Reviews, differentiated grouping practices and multiple options to demonstrate learning are now embedded practices, as is the development of learning goals for individuals and groups through the school's well-developed advisory program. This work is evolving, though not yet consistently aligned to the schools' substantial curricular goals. Teachers are not precise enough in identifying instructional modifications at the student and classroom level. This means they are not able to maximize the use of the significant information emerging from individual goal setting and teacher-to-student conferencing by enhancing inquiry as a school-wide practice, utilizing the rich collaborations that exist organically and by design. An instructionally-focused school leader plans to enhance the analysis of actionable information about individual student strengths and needs so that he can develop even more robust school goals, including timelines and benchmarks for monitoring of progress. All members of the school community seek to build their own capacity and support each other to improve in the delivery of instruction and assessment of student work.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The well-established and highly regarded culture of challenging coursework, resulting in college entry for all students, binds leaders, staff, students, and parents in a common vision for the school and each student.
- Through advisory, grade level, and department meetings, there is consistent use of data to inform instruction and organizational decisions, resulting in an increasing understanding of individual, group, subject and school performance.
- Parents have valuable opportunities to be involved in their child's learning through regular and open communication with teachers and staff about their child's academic and personal progress.
- A well-defined and developmentally appropriate advisory curriculum engages students in setting and reviewing short-term and long-term goals in academics and the skills necessary to be an informed and productive citizen.
- Broad application and substantial integration of technology permeates organizational planning, school and community communications, and classroom practices.
- A highly capable and committed staff consistently differentiates instruction through flexible grouping and multiple options, supported by professional development and high-quality feedback on their practices.
- A supportive and trusting school environment and substantial partnerships with colleges and community organizations ensure that the personal, social, emotional, and academic needs of students and families are met.

### What the school needs to improve

- Expand and enhance the inquiry process among staff, maximizing the use of the information emerging from individual goal setting through advisory sessions and teacher-to-student goal setting within classes.
- Enhance the collection and analysis of actionable information about individual student strengths and needs to develop even more robust school goals that include timelines and benchmarks for monitoring progress.
- Build on existing best practices to further embed ongoing formative assessment practices in daily lessons to ensure all students are meeting their learning targets.

## Part 3: Main Findings

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

**Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, generate and analyze information on student learning outcomes and use it to understand what each student knows and can do and to monitor the student's progress over time.**

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

The school principal and staff collect and analyze multiple sources of data on student achievement on several levels. Utilizing a new school-developed tracking system, the school monitors individual student progress toward graduation requirements and elements of the school Progress Report, including attendance. This enables the administrators and faculty to have an up-to-date picture of students' performance and progress in all subjects. At the school level, the principal and the leadership team analyze trend data quarterly and make instructional and organizational decisions for the school and all subgroups of students, with particular attention to students receiving special education services. At the classroom level, special education and general education teachers have implemented a weekly communication system to share information about students' performance resulting in greater alignment of work and services.

Through a developmentally appropriate advisory curriculum, students are engaged in short-term and long-term goal setting with regular self-monitoring of progress in academics and the skills necessary to be an informed and productive citizen. Teachers meet in advisory, grade level, and department teams, where there is consistent use of data. These rich collaborations result in an increased understanding of individual, group, subject and school performance. However, the loose alignment all sources of information limits the identification on the precise instructional change strategies for classrooms and individual students that will maximize achievement.

Parents have valuable opportunities to be involved in their child's learning through regular and open communication with teachers and staff about their child's academic and personal progress, which occurs formally or by request through conferences, emails, phone calls, and websites. Progress reports are distributed between report cards and an extra parent conference evening is held to further engage an actively involved parent community. Parents speak knowledgeably about the school and the goals the school has for their children. They appreciate the school for its sense of family. The school has identified but has yet to implement a plan to expand the data tracker to provide immediate and ongoing information to students and parents.

**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.**

There is a well-established and highly regarded culture of challenging coursework resulting in college entry for all students that binds leaders, staff, students, and parents in a common vision for the school and each student. School staff have developed

curricular goals, sequenced by grade, and course goals frequently delineated by essential questions and project expectations for academic performance. Writing expectations are foundational across the curriculum. Very high expectations for academic and behavioral performance are not only communicated and valued by staff, students, and parents, but met by most students as evidenced by State and local accountability measures. The school makes strategic decisions based on data analysis. One example is the sequencing in mathematics, with a mind's eye on high levels of course completion and mathematical understanding, supporting the school's mission to have its graduates succeed in post-secondary endeavors and life pursuits. The principal and team are measuring the effectiveness of the change.

As a result of a recommendation of an active school leadership team, the school implemented individual goal setting and formal conferencing through its advisory program. School-generated quarterly progress reports inform student self-reflection and the development of their goals. Formal grade level meetings that identify individual student needs and informal, but widely practiced, teacher-to-student classroom conferences provide students with feedback and support to meet short-term and longer-term expectations.

The work of the inquiry team has been effective. The team identified fifteen students in the bottom third of the school's population who were struggling in class due to weak writing skills. Using ARIS, the team determined that the students were former English language learners, which has raised interest in learning more about this subgroup of students. English and social studies teachers on the inquiry team are working in small groups to instruct students more explicitly on the writing process, which is resulting in both better essay writing and increased motivation. The team and other staff welcome the expansion and enhancing of inquiry as a school-wide process, to further refine instructional practices by maximizing the use of individual goal setting through advisory sessions and teacher-to-student goal setting within classes.

**Quality Statement 3 – Develop Coherent Instructional and Organizational Strategies: The school uses rigorous curricula, teaching and organizational decision making to engage students and faculty in meeting all students' learning goals.**

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

The Eleanor Roosevelt High School has earned its reputation as a high-performing school in a supportive environment as evidenced by student outcomes and surveys. Rigorous curricular goals are aligned to State standards, while focusing on success in future educational and life endeavors. School leaders make purposeful decisions to offer a broad range of Advanced Placement courses and interest-based courses to engage and challenge students. Analyses of student results inform programming, which is regularly reviewed and flexibly adjusted. School leaders also balance instructional decisions against resource priorities. Considerable resource allocation has produced exceptional integration of technology, which permeates organizational planning, school and community communications, and classroom practices. Staff and students expand the use of multiple resources to enrich delivery of instruction, which is helping students to become better researchers and more independent learners. The effective use of technologies continues to evolve, with staff sharing ideas freely.

A highly capable and committed staff consistently differentiates instruction. Although there are differences in the sophistication of these practices across classrooms, the use of flexible grouping practices and multiple options for students to demonstrate mastery of curricular goals are embedded practices. In many classrooms students are deeply

engaged through high levels of questioning and strategies for increasing student responsibility for their own learning. Teachers widely use high quality projects with clear content and process standards provided through the use of rubrics, exemplars, and substantial feedback. However, there are less consistent practices of ongoing formative assessment practices in lessons to ensure all students have acquired the aim and objectives for the day.

The school demonstrates an exceptionally trusting environment among all constituencies. Even with high marks on the Learning Environment Survey, the school delineated specific areas for improvement. Specifically, in the area of setting challenging goals, the school conducted its own survey to determine if the new work in the advisory class was making a difference, and found that significantly more students felt they were assisted in developing and achieving challenging learning goals.

**Quality Statement 4 - Align Capacity Building to Goals: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school's goals for accelerating student learning.**

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

The current school leader has made an effective transition from assistant principal. One-on-one goal conferences held with each staff member used a standard format but varying levels of specificity to inform staff's progress toward stated goals. The principal and teachers used these goals, system and school data, classroom observations, and staff interests to develop and implement a multi-faceted professional development program. School-wide sessions on differentiation and interest-based study groups are led primarily by knowledgeable staff members, and new practices learned through professional development are being implemented in classrooms. Efforts to continuously improve are supported by substantive feedback by the principal, rich collaborations by staff and opportunities to develop through outside conferences. The school supports teachers' efforts to continuously improve their practice. Mentoring is provided for and appreciated by new teachers. The use of staff goals to further refine individual professional development plans is not yet sufficiently developed.

Common planning time is provided for grade level meetings as well as for department and advisory teacher meetings. Teachers frequently use these to collaborate on the instructional and organizational changes necessary to further advance the performance of individual and groups of students. These practices are well-embedded, as are informal collaborations that have resulted in effective instructional practices, such Shelfari, a computer-based reading log and integration of English language arts and global studies curricula. The inquiry team and some additional staff are astutely considering how to build on strong teacher leadership and their capacity as a staff to refine their work through the expanded application of inquiry processes. Groups of teachers engaged in inquiry on specific areas of need for small groups of students make use of all sources of data in the identification of precise classroom instructional practices and the assessment of their impact. This work is currently is not yet embedded schoolwide.

Input from the supportive and involved staff, including highly-regarded college counseling and substantial partnerships with colleges and community organizations ensure that the personal, social, emotional, and academic needs of students and families are met so that high expectations are achieved.

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

The school's mission to provide a challenging curriculum results in its realized vision of college entry for each student, with 100% of seniors pursuing post-secondary studies. This vision and regular review of system and school-developed data inform school plans, including the Comprehensive Educational Plan and the principal's professional goals. School leaders and staff consistently review the performance of individual and groups of students, both formally and informally, through regularly scheduled grade level and advisory teacher meetings, periodic department meetings, and on-going teacher collaborations. Pre-assessments, school-designed periodic assessments, student work, quarterly transcript information, and yearly accountability measures are effectively used in planning and revising the work. The principal's analysis of student performance on Regents and in courses by ethnicity and by gender has resulted in a school focus on students receiving special education services and former English language learners. Great attention is paid to developing interventions for students struggling to meet their goals and to advancing the opportunities for students who need enrichment, including before, during, and after-school programs and coursework.

The principal and leadership team have delineated benchmarks for goals in the Comprehensive Educational Plan. This is an evolving process for a new school leader, and loose alignment between the new individual student goal setting, teacher-to-student class goals, and the curricular goals, has somewhat limited the development of highly robust school goals. Additionally, all school plans have yet to consistently delineate precise measurable benchmarks with timelines.

The school's well-written self-evaluation accurately describes evidenced-based strengths and areas for improvement, including new practices in response to previous Quality Reviews and performance data. The school is motivated to continually improve, and systems are in place for students and staff to regularly self-reflect on their goals and progress toward meeting them. Staff and students challenge and support each other and celebrate the many group and individual accomplishments. Evidence supports the school's assertion that "Together we are designing and nurturing a school that fosters life-long learning and provides students with the joy of discovery; a place where questions are as important as answers."

## School Quality Criteria 2008-2009

<b>School name: Eleanor Roosevelt High School</b>	△	➤	✓	+
<b>Overall QR Score</b>				<b>X</b>
<b>Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, generate and analyze information on student learning outcomes and use it to understand what each student knows and can do, and to monitor the student’s progress over time.</b>				
<i>To what extent do school leaders and faculty regularly...</i>	△	➤	✓	+
1.1 collect and analyze actionable information, including assessment results and attendance data, to provide a complete view of the learning outcomes and needs of individual students and groupings of students?			<b>X</b>	
1.2 focus analysis on the learning outcomes and needs of all sub-groups of students?				<b>X</b>
1.3 engage in an open exchange of information with students and families about students’ learning needs and outcomes, including assessment results and attendance data?				<b>X</b>
1.4 design or adapt tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize and analyze student performance, identify trends and inform instructional and organizational decisions, and to enable students and their families to assess and track each student’s progress?				<b>X</b>
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>				<b>X</b>
<b>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.</b>				
<i>To what extent do school leaders and faculty...</i>	△	➤	✓	+
2.1 use collaborative and data-informed processes to set measurable, actionable and differentiated learning goals in core subjects for individual students and groupings of students and develop differentiated plans and timeframes for reaching these goals?			<b>X</b>	
2.2 use collaborative and data-informed processes to develop the school’s Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP)?				<b>X</b>
2.3 ensure that the achievement of learning goals, and the implementation of plans and timeframes for reaching these goals, is the central focus of school leaders, faculty, students and families?				<b>X</b>
2.4 communicate high expectations to all students and families, and involve students in developing their learning goals and plans and in taking their next learning steps?				<b>X</b>
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>				<b>X</b>

### DEFINITIONS

“**Analyze**” or “**analysis**” includes, but is not limited to, comparisons of:

- the current and past outcomes of . . . individual students, administrative groupings and sub-groups of students and the school itself in core subjects;
- the outcomes of different classrooms and sub-groups in the same grades and core subjects; and
- the school’s Progress Report and other outcomes to those of peer/other schools

“**Assessment results**” include student outcomes on summative assessments (e.g., state ELA, math, science and social studies tests, NYSESLAT, Regents Exams, and Performance Based Assessment Tasks) and formative assessments aligned to the school’s curriculum (including Periodic, DY0, and teacher-developed Classroom Assessments).

“**Core subjects**” are ELA, math, science, social studies/history, the arts, foreign language, and physical education/health.

“**Data-informed processes**” include analysis of Progress Report, Quality Review, Learning Environment Survey, Inquiry Team findings, assessment results and attendance data

“**Groupings of students**” include classrooms, grade levels and high school cohorts.

“**Organizational decisions or strategies**” refer to a school’s use of budget and resources, staffing, planning, scheduling, grade structure, departments and teacher teams and other aspects of the school’s structure and organization that can affect student outcomes.

“**Sub-groups of students**” include special education students, English Language Learners, the other NCLB sub-groups, boys, girls, and other groups significant to the school.

**Quality Statement 3 – Develop Coherent Instructional and Organizational Strategies: The school uses rigorous curricula, teaching and organizational decision making to engage students and faculty in meeting all students’ learning goals.**

<i>To what extent do ...</i>	Δ	➤	✓	+
3.1 school leaders and faculty deliver challenging and engaging curricula in core subjects, including the arts, that are aligned to state standards?				X
3.2 teachers plan and teach lessons that are differentiated to meet the needs of individual students and student groupings and are designed to enable all students to reach their learning goals?				X
3.3 school leaders make strategic organizational decisions to support a coherent and rigorous instructional approach that enables students to reach their learning goals?				X
3.4 school leaders maintain a culture of mutual trust and respect and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?				X
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>				<b>X</b>

**Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building to Goals: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school’s goals for accelerating student learning.**

<i>To what extent do school leaders...</i>	Δ	➤	✓	+
4.1 use their own observation of classroom teaching and the analysis of student outcomes to implement an explicit, differentiated strategy to improve each teacher’s instruction, with a special focus on new teachers?				X
4.2 encourage teachers to take part in Inquiry Teams and other structured professional collaborations (informed by the examination of student work, assessment outcomes and their own peer observations) and share in the instructional leadership of the school with the goal of improved student learning?			X	
4.3 provide professional development that encourages teachers to continuously evaluate and revise their classroom practices to improve student outcomes?				X
4.4 utilize youth development, support services and partnerships with families and outside organizations to accelerate the academic and personal growth of students?				X
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>				<b>X</b>

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

<i>To what extent do...</i>	Δ	➤	✓	+
5.1 the school’s plans for improving student outcomes and its strategies for improving each teacher’s instructional practices include measurable interim goals and suitable time frames for evaluating success and making adjustments during the year?				X
5.2 school leaders and faculty use interim checkpoints and data to inform lessons, improve curriculum, differentiate instruction and revise student learning plans throughout the year?			X	
5.3 school leaders use data to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of and modify organizational decisions, structured professional collaborations and teacher improvement strategies?				X
5.4 school leaders and the school community have a clear vision for the future development of the school and implement procedures and systems to support academic, personal and professional growth?				X
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>				<b>X</b>

Quality Review Scoring Key							
Δ	Underdeveloped	➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features	✓	Proficient	+	Well Developed