

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

**Frederick Douglass Academy II
Middle School - High School 860
215 West 114th Street
New York
NY 10026**

Principal: Osei Owusu Afriyie

Dates of review: May 30 - 31, 2012

Lead Reviewer: Esther Friedman

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Frederick Douglass Academy II is a middle school-high school with 391 students from grade 6 through grade 12. The school population is comprised of 78% Black, 18% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 1% English language learners and 15% special education students. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 87.0%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Teacher teams develop curriculum and lessons comprehensively aligned to Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and use evidenced student response to instruction to continuously refine lessons and curriculum. (1.1).
 - The school has effectively placed additional focus on CCLS standards, particularly the use of text that is more complex, text evidence, and argument writing. This focus, supported by professional development and the work of the teacher teams, provides for an effective concentration on creating rigorous units that support all students' learning across all content areas, classes, and grades.
 - In their lesson development work, teacher teams embed scaffolds that differentiate entry points for the range of student needs. Staff analyze student data in order to identify needs and as a result, student engagement, participation, and level of discourse are high, and all students have access to rigorous curricula.
- There is a specific and coherent protocol for differentiation of questioning that provides opportunities for participation by all students, allowing teachers to check for understanding and level of student thinking. (1.2).
 - All teachers use a differentiation protocol that involves using data to develop three groups within classes and then to apply differentiated strategies, including use of rigorous questioning protocols, to specific students within these groups. Thus, all students are provided with sufficient entry points into even the most complex text, resulting in a high level of student engagement.
 - Teachers emphasize use of complex and compelling text coupled with use of questioning strategies that raise students' level of thinking and use of vocabulary. This creates lessons that move students towards high levels of interaction with text and academic achievement, resulting in increased credit accumulation and graduation rates.
- The principal has made strategic changes to the schedule and program, which has provided supports for students and time for teachers to meet in grade-bands twice each week. (1.3).
 - The principal has moved academic intervention services to the early morning periods and provided structure and content to the lessons. An embedded software program assists with ongoing progress monitoring, thus providing specific pro-social skills supports for students and teachers with a system to monitor student progress. This has resulted in reduced incident reports and increased enrollment.
 - Teacher teams meet twice per week in regularly scheduled meetings that focus on curriculum mapping, unit development, and lesson refinement, as well as ongoing analysis of student work. Additionally, teachers have

a daily common preparation period. This strategic scheduling has provided teachers with several periods per week in which they can meet and work together to develop rigorous curriculum that is sensitive to student needs. As a result students are engaged in curriculum that has integrated CCLS-aligned learning and topics.

- The administration engages in regular oversight of the instructional program and use of resources to ensure alignment to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and to address evidenced student needs. (5.1).
 - The principal has a quarterly system of oversight of curriculum units, focusing on coherence and alignment with CCLS. He also uses this information during classroom visits to ensure that lesson aims are aligned with unit objectives. This creates a school culture where curriculum is transparent resulting in coherence between lessons and the curriculum products created in the teacher teamwork.
 - The principal has structures in place, including Schedule software, to track individual and group trends in achievement, ongoing progress, credit accumulation, individual education plan objectives, and other student data. This allows the administration to adjust interventions and realign resources in a timely manner to ensure students' needs are met.
- The leadership provides opportunities for all teachers to receive frequent feedback, supported by targeted professional development opportunities, resulting in an ongoing focus on personal growth. (4.1).
 - The principal engages in ongoing cycles of classroom observation providing teachers with informal and formal written feedback, and he meets with teachers frequently to review feedback and link observed teaching behavior to student outcomes. This creates a continuous loop of information regarding teacher practice, resulting in a conversant faculty able to engage in planning and lesson refinement that is informed by specific, actionable feedback from leadership.
 - The principal maintains a transparent system to keep track of student achievement and other student data, which is used to develop teacher portfolios and that is linked to frequent classroom observations. A 'teacher tracker' meeting takes place at least twice per year to jointly identify data related to teacher development. This assists in identifying areas of teacher growth, professional contributions, and areas of need, resulting in a system used to determine teacher retention and professional development needs.
- The staff connects the evidenced needs of students to a set of actionable goals that are continuously informed by ongoing progress monitoring of all students. (3.1).
 - The school has established clear goals known to all members of the school community, including parents and students, based on evidenced student needs. This creates coherence in instructional supervision and teacher planning, resulting in growth in achievement and attendance and reduction in incident reports.

- The staff collects a range of summative and formative student data, including data related to attendance and safety, which they analyze through various perspectives to determine student needs. They use this data to establish a course of action for the school year, as well as review the information at interim points to determine and adjust goals suitably to ensure progress. As a result there are clear expectations for staff and students, increases in English language arts and math scores, reduced incident reports, and increased attendance is evidenced.

What the school needs to improve

- Broaden the range of assessments used to include those that provide information about all students' underlying skills in reading in order to identify skill gaps requiring instructional intervention. (2.2).
 - The administration gathers a range of data and maintains these in accessible formats that are shared with staff. Teachers generate and maintain ongoing formative data that is analyzed at teacher team meetings. However, in English language arts, assessments address the comprehension level of reading without attention to underlying skills that may be impacting students who struggle, resulting in teacher planning based on incomplete data.
 - Teachers engage in formative assessment practices and use this data to refine lessons and units. Teachers utilize questioning strategies to check for understanding. However, questioning is not fully differentiated for all individual students, and student responses do not always provide sufficient evidence of mastery. This results in incomplete information regarding student understanding.
- Differentiate short- and long-term goals so that they reflect mastery of standards for the varied needs of individuals and groups of students. (3.2).
 - Teachers look at data trends in terms of student levels and engage in rigorous analysis during teacher teams and in a formal analysis three times each year. These trends are used to set goals for groups of students. However, goals for individual students are subsumed within these group goals, resulting in objectives that are not fully differentiated to meet individual student needs.
 - The data analyzed in teacher team meetings is used to set and revise goals. There is differentiation of goals for subgroups of students. However, the identification of specific, targeted supports for mastery of or acceleration towards mastery of the core curriculum is inconsistent, resulting in lack of suitable differentiation of instruction for individuals and small groups.
- In communication with parents regarding student progress, include next steps for both needed supports as well as enrichment strategies to be provided by the school and reinforced at home. (3.3).
 - The administration and teachers track and communicate ongoing student progress to parents. Data is used to adjust practices, and there is a system to convey these adjustments to parents. However, specific

granular adjustments are not consistently told to students, resulting in a lack of knowledge about next steps.

- Students are aware of their performance and know the systems in which their performance is communicated to them and their parents. This provides a basis for ongoing discussion of progress. However, information is not consistent across classrooms and, thus, there are missed opportunities for all students to be kept well informed.
- Include analysis of trending patterns in the component areas of reading to fully inform instructional decisions and broaden the options for flexible groupings that address gaps in all components of the reading process. (2.3).
 - The administration and teachers analyze large amounts of student data, including summative data, data provided through Castle Learning software, ongoing progress monitoring data, and other sources. Trending patterns are noted and used in planning. However, because data sets do not include the underlying pillars of reading, this aspect of reading data is unavailable, resulting in an inability of teachers to differentiate instruction for specific reading skills.
 - Teacher teams and individual teachers use data sources including Castle Learning software, interim assessment results, and local data tools, to analyze trends in student performance. This information is used to inform lesson planning and refinement and identify subgroups. However, because these typically address the top pillar of reading, information that is more granular is not always available. This results in groupings that address students' major needs, but misses out on addressing needs of struggling students.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: Frederick Douglass Academy II	UD	D	P	WD
Overall QR Score			X	
Quality Statement 1 – Instructional and Organizational Coherence: The school has a coherent strategy to support student learning that aligns curriculum, instruction and organizational decisions.				
<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</i>	UD	D	P	WD
1.1 Design engaging, rigorous and coherent curricula, including the Arts, for a variety of learners and aligned to key State standards?				X
1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best, and ensure that it is: aligned to the curriculum, engaging, and differentiated to enable all students to produce meaningful work products?			X	
1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet student learning needs as evidenced by meaningful student work products?			X	
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?			X	
Quality Statement 2 – Gather and Analyze Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, analyze and share information on student learning outcomes to understand school and student progress over time.				
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	UD	D	P	WD
2.1 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the school level?			X	
2.2 Align assessments to curriculum, use on-going assessment practices and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom level?		X		
2.3 Use grading policies and tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize, aggregate, and analyze student performance trends to inform instruction and curriculum?			X	
2.4 Engage families in school decision-making, activities and an open exchange of information regarding students' progress toward school and class expectations?			X	
Quality Statement 3 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently engage the school community and use data to set and track suitably high goals for accelerating student learning.				
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	UD	D	P	WD
3.1 Establish a coherent vision of future development that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are understood and supported by the entire school community?			X	
3.2 Use collaborative and data informed processes to set measurable and differentiated learning goals for student subgroups, and students in need of additional support?			X	
3.3 Ensure the achievement of learning goals by tracking progress at the school, teacher team and classroom level?			X	
3.4 Communicate high expectations to staff, students and families, and support students and families to achieve them?			X	

Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school’s goals and student learning and emotional needs.							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	UD	D	P	WD			
4.1 Use the observation of classroom teaching and the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection, with a special focus on new teachers?			X				
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning?			X				
4.3 Provide professional development that promotes independent and shared reflection, opportunities for leadership growth, and enables teachers to continuously evaluate and revise their classroom practices to improve learning outcomes?			X				
4.4 Integrate child/youth development, guidance/advisement support services and partnerships with families and outside organizations with the school-wide goals to accelerate the academic and personal growth of students?			X				
Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for monitoring and evaluating progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	UD	D	P	WD			
5.1 Evaluate the quality of curricular, instructional and organizational decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school, with particular attention to the CCLS?			X				
5.2 Evaluate systems for assessing students, organizing data, and sharing information with student and families, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school?			X				
5.3 Establish and sustain a transparent, collaborative system for measuring progress towards interim and long term goals and making adjustments during the year and over time?			X				
5.4 Use data to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of structured professional collaboration, capacity building and leadership development strategies?			X				
Quality Review Scoring Key							
UD	Underdeveloped	D	Developing	P	Proficient	WD	Well Developed