

Quality Review Report 2013-2014

P.S. 034 Franklin D. Roosevelt

K-8 01M034

**730 East 12th Street
Manhattan
NY, 10009**

Principal: Rosemarie Gonzalez

**Dates of review: January 29 - 30, 2014
Lead Reviewer: Daniella Phillips**

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

P.S. 034 Franklin D. Roosevelt is a K-8 school with 393 students from pre-k through grade 8. The school population comprises 27% Black, 63% Hispanic, 3% White, and 7% Asian students. The student body includes 6% English language learners and 29% special education students. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2012 - 2013 was 90.9%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

What the school does well

- School leader and faculty align curricula thoughtfully to Common Core Learning Standards and make purposeful decisions to emphasize key standards in order to close the achievement gap across all grades. (1.1)
 - The school embraces curricula adjustments that reflect the citywide instructional shifts to more balance between nonfiction and fiction and deeper study and application of math. Staff did not adopt wholesale the recommended Core Curricula offerings last spring; instead, they reviewed vendor-created materials carefully, and elected to remain with Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP) for English language arts, while shifting to Go Math and Connected Math Program² for math curricula. All teachers utilize the on-line portal Atlas Rubicon for posting revised curricula maps, which helps ensure vertical alignment of curricula across grades. Furthermore, all teachers seek to increase rigor of what students do and know by adapting planned units of study to align with Common Core Standards. For example, first grade teachers expect students to include details in their retelling, eighth grade students solve real world, complex math problems using algebraic equations and written explanations, and students across grades use the RACE (restate, answer, cite evidence, and explain) strategy for short answer responses. As a result, most students know and state easily the lesson's teaching points and big ideas which then validates students' deeper understanding and ownership of what and why they are learning, thus promoting career and college readiness and steady learning progress of all student sub-groups.
- Teachers assess student learning effectively which leads to targeted interventions, varied scaffolds, and shared instructional planning to meet all students' learning needs. (2.2)
 - There is good consistency in how teachers collect, analyze and share feedback with students and other teachers, as they adjust lesson and unit planning based on their analysis of students' data. For example, teachers meet with grade-level colleagues to norm their scoring of students' performance assessments, which then leads to shared planning of lessons to address learning gaps. Most teachers check for students' understanding during lessons with exit slips, 5-minute checks, conferences, and journal entries. This common approach to reviewing assessments provides teachers with a clear portrait of student progress towards mastery of Standards, using Teachers College reading and writing assessments, pre- and post-unit assessments in math, and IXL on-line math skill monitoring among other assessments. Additionally, students reflect on their work and middle school students access their interim grades through Engrade on-line grading system, which further motivates students to take charge of their learning. Students speak knowledgeably about their achievement and next step goals with references to common rubrics across subject areas, which serve as practical guideposts for understanding how to maximize academic achievement.
- Principal and staff effectively model and convey high expectations to students and parents that reinforce the school's positive culture. (3.4)

- The school leader and staff communicate high expectations for themselves, students and families that reinforce a culture of shared accountability. Stakeholders invest thoroughly in school improvement as their candid input is solicited via internal surveys and as they engage in meaningful advisory bodies such as the School Leadership Team. Additionally, the school leader commits significant resources and outreach to targeted intervention and enrichment programs, with 80+ students attending Saturday Academy and 155 students participating in the daily after-school academic program for grades 2 through 8. The school community celebrates academic achievement, with enthusiastic support for Scholars of the Month and the Honor Roll, and notes that sports teams and arts performances have explicit academic criteria for participation, which reaffirms high expectations. Two years ago, middle school teachers piloted and then adopted fully an electronic grading system whereby students and families access daily homework assignments, grades, and quarterly progress reports. This close monitoring of students' academic progress and consistency of effective feedback to students about their work have improved students' ownership of and completion of assignments, as well as parents' awareness of expectations. Furthermore, teachers maintain rigorous standards in their grading policies, which has helped graduating 8th grade students to achieve success in credit accumulation in high school and push themselves to pursue Regents Living Environment as an after-school enrichment class. Thus, the school's consistent focus on high standards and expectations results in a productive learning environment for children and adults.
- Teachers set a high bar for professional collaboration and support that result in deep investment in continuous improvement. (4.2)
 - All teachers meet at least weekly as teams with well-established routines for agenda setting, facilitation, sharing notes, and protocols for reviewing student work. Together, they update curricula, design performance tasks, and norm their understanding and evaluation of student work. In some cases, the teams are supported by outside consultants and in-house coaches as well as ample meeting time through strategic use of common prep times. This purposeful and collaborative planning time leads to effective instructional use of all adults in co-teaching classes and many opportunities for individualized instruction in classes through push-in support services. As a result, an exceptionally strong culture of professional learning communities has taken root with increased trust in distributed leadership, better communication about what is happening across grades, and coherence of team planning work. Moreover, the layers of instructional supports in classes have advanced student achievement toward goals at this school, especially in math, to a level beyond student performance at all forty peer schools.

What the school needs to improve

- Improve teaching practices that engage all students with challenging tasks in student-centered environments to promote further high level thinking. (1.2)
 - Teachers increasingly align curricula and instructional expectations with Common Core Learning Standards. As examples, in many classes, students engage in text-based discussions, solve multi-step math problems, and share explanations using reasons and evidence. Some teachers provide differentiated supports for all learners and vary

approaches for students' different learning styles. For instance, a 5th grade Integrated Co-Teaching class structured a Book Club lesson by first role-playing two characters having a conflict and then having different groups identify internal versus external conflicts in their books, with leveled questions as guides. While this and many other lessons have good routines in place for small group work and discussions, there is an over-reliance on the teacher in some classes to mediate the discussion and push students' thinking. In some classes, teacher questions are thoughtfully open-ended, which then facilitates responses, yet there is still little expectation for students to deepen their thinking by questioning each other or building on comments made by others. As a result, too many learning tasks remain teacher-directed which then hampers students from demonstrating higher order thinking.

- Refine teacher observation and development processes to systematize the managing and professional growth of staff. (4.1)
 - Teachers at the school benefit from constructive pedagogical support by two coaches and keen insights from the principal. Additionally, the school organized a recent Learning Walk protocol which included students, providing teachers with feedback about class learning environments from the stakeholder perspective of students. However, at the mid-year point, only 20% of the requisite formal and informal classroom observations have occurred and several teachers have not yet received any explicit feedback on their teaching practices. All teachers report in person and via School Survey that they have exceptional trust and confidence in their principal's instructional expertise, but some teachers also state that they do not receive regular feedback. As a result, there are missed opportunities for teacher development and several staff issues have arisen, including teacher licensure and assignments, which require more oversight and action planning.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2013-2014

School name: Franklin D. Roosevelt	UD	D	P	WD			
Overall QR Score			X				
Instructional Core							
<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</i>	UD	D	P	WD			
1.1 Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards?			X				
1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the instructional shifts and Danielson Framework for Teaching, aligned to the curricula, engaging, and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products?		X					
2.2 Align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessment and grading practices, and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels?			X				
School Culture							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	UD	D	P	WD			
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults?			X				
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations?				X			
Systems for Improvement							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	UD	D	P	WD			
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				
3.1 Establish a coherent vision of school improvement that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are tracked for progress and are understood and supported by the entire school community?			X				
4.1 Observe teachers using the Danielson Framework for Teaching along with the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection?		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			
5.1 Evaluate the quality of school-level decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school, with particular attention to the CCLS?			X				
Quality Review Scoring Key							
UD	Underdeveloped	D	Developing	P	Proficient	WD	Well Developed