



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Franklin Delano Roosevelt

High School K505

**5900 20th Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11204**

Principal: Steve Demarco

**Date of review: April 20, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Michael Prayor**

The School Context

Franklin Delano Roosevelt is a high school with 3,220 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 12% Black, 29% Hispanic, 19% White, and 40% Asian students. The student body includes 37% English language learners and 14% special education students. Boys account for 57% of the students enrolled and girls account for 43%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 85.3%.

School Quality Criteria

Instructional Core		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	Area of:	Rating:
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	Additional Findings	Developing
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	Focus	Developing
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	Additional Findings	Developing
School Culture		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	Area of:	Rating:
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations	Celebration	Proficient
Systems for Improvement		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	Area of:	Rating:
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning	Additional Findings	Proficient

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders and staff consistently communicate high expectations connected to the Danielson Framework for Teaching and college and career readiness, and offer support to families towards those expectations.

Impact

Effective structures and systems support communication of high expectations and accountability for members of the teaching community, students and their families.

Supporting Evidence

- During an interview, all of the parents confirmed that they are pleased with school leaders and staff who support their children and whom offer consistent feedback via *Pupilpath* about their child's academic progress. For example, one parent mentioned that her son was struggling with geometry and the teacher tutored him at lunch. Another parent mentioned that the school provides freshman orientation and they meet the guidance counselor before school starts.
- During the teacher team interview, special education teachers spoke of the support they receive that strengthens their teacher practice. An Integrated Collaborative Teaching (ICT) English teacher spoke of various professional learning supports offered throughout the school year that has improved based on the feedback from her supervisor which included: accountable-talk strategies, multiple entry-points strategies, and teaching strategies to incorporate close reading. For example, in November 2014, teachers' engaged in a training called *Argumentative Writing: The Five Step Argument Process to Support Struggling Writers*, and in April 2015 teachers engaged in departmental professional development geared at promoting greater student engagement and providing targeted academic assistance to all students according to needs, strengths, and interests.
- Feedback from school leaders revealed trends aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching that offer next steps to communicate school-wide expectations and serve as a structure for accountability. For example, a teacher that received highly effective ratings on a recent observation was still provided detailed feedback on how to improve the Socratic seminar technique to improve the quality of collegial discussions. Strategies suggested included using rubrics for both the inner and outer circles, and having students select individual goals for each lesson to allow time for self-reflection of those goals. In addition, the feedback mentions that school leaders will return within two weeks to monitor the teacher's progress.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Teaching practices are becoming aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Levels of student work products and discussions are uneven.

Impact

Teachers' use of strategies based on the instructional shifts were inconsistent across classrooms leading to missed opportunities for all students to be engaged at high levels of thinking through student-to-student discussions and developing strong work products.

Supporting Evidence

- In one math class, students reviewed sample Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) questions at their desks, which were organized in rows. The teacher used questions aligned to Depth of Knowledge (DoK) levels 1 and 2 and most student responses were directed to the teacher during the mini-lesson. The teacher displayed problems on the smart board to review the properties of all triangles. The teacher reviewed the problem with the students, and during the activity, called on an individual student to elicit a response to solve with multiple solutions. Several students did not participate or show evidence of their understanding and the teacher did not provide an opportunity for collaboration between peers.
- During a visit to a living environment class for English language learners (ELLs), the agenda flow was aligned to the workshop model, however the pacing of the lesson was not maintained and students were unable to complete their group tasks. The pacing of the beginning, middle, and end of the lesson ran for short periods of time for the portion of the task. For example, during the activity, students worked in groups, and each of them had a case study to complete. Each group was provided a choice of roles and had six or more students. None of the groups completed the case study in its entirety.
- During a geometry class, students were given a chance to move into groups during the main activity. Soon after, there were some groups of students working collaboratively pushing each other's thinking to solve the equation, and others, who were not working on the task. In addition, there were students who did not fully understand the lesson objectives. For example, when students were working in groups to find the perimeters and areas of polygonal regions as defined by the systems of inequalities, some groups were on task and having discussions related to the topic and learning objective, and student responses reflected DoK levels three and four. However, other groups were not as focused and did not complete the task requirements nor did they provide evidence of meeting the learning objectives.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Curricula and academic tasks reflect planning yet inconsistently emphasize rigorous habits, higher-order skills and use of data to cognitively engage all learners including English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities (SwDs).

Impact

Across all subjects and grades, planned curricula and lesson plans for a diversity of students lead to inconsistent rigor and access to tasks towards cognitive engagement.

Supporting Evidence

- Across grades and classrooms, curricula and academic tasks inconsistently reflect rigorous habits and higher-order skills. For an example, in an economics lesson plan, the aim was “Should the federal minimum wage be raised?” In addition, a chemistry lesson plan’s aim read, “How can we apply acid-base equilibrium to solve different problems?” aligned to DoK levels 3 and 4. This level of questioning used for planning was only reflected in some lesson plans.
- Some lesson plans and curricula contained scaffolds for students with disabilities and ELLs. For example, in an English 2, grade 9 lesson plan, shared reading and guided reading strategies were used in some of the curricula. However in other English and additionally in the social studies curricula, strategies to support these target subgroups were not evident in lessons plans or curricula.
- Student work and data are informing special education teachers of which curricular adjustments they need to make. Time is allotted for co-teachers to plan working in six-week cycles. Special education teachers analyze where their students struggled in past Regents exam results and make revisions to current curricula. For example, they determined that students would benefit from an emphasis on academic vocabulary and revised lesson plans and tasks in different subject areas and grade levels.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Teacher's use of rubrics aligned to the school's curricula, ongoing checks for understanding, and self-assessments were inconsistent across classrooms.

Impact

Teachers' feedback and assessment practices during and after lessons, lead to missed opportunities to make effective adjustments in meeting the needs of all learners.

Supporting Evidence

- During an Advanced Placement (AP) chemistry lesson, students were expected to work in groups and apply their knowledge of acid-base equilibrium to solve different problems, create a PowerPoint presentation and present to their peers with no expectations or rubric for the task. During the group work time, the teacher did not circulate to groups to check for understanding of progress. One group completed their task and was waiting to present while the other groups continued to work, yet no instructional adjustments or extensions were made for those students who finished early.
- During a visit to a geometry class, students sat in groups to work on the same task relative to graphing a system of inequalities. During group work, the teacher circulated and offered some groups of students, who were on task, with feedback. However, the teacher offered very little support and next steps for students within groups that struggled with the assignment. Several students did not achieve the lesson objectives at a proficient or mastery level. Two students in one group became disengaged and packed their books up. Another student said he would finish his task for homework because he was unable to keep up with the pace of the other students in the class.
- Across some classrooms, feedback containing strengths and next steps was visible only on certain selected bulletin boards and student work folders. For example, during a visit to a global studies and English language arts (ELA) class, the majority of student work reviewed either in notebooks or on bulletin boards contained checks or numerical scores with little to no comments such as the symbol "check plus" and written on a sticky note was, "Good work, next time hand in your work on time", and the word "Excellent".

Quality Indicator:	4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations by content and grade level. Teachers are contributing their ideas to the creation of school goals and the instructional shifts across the school.

Impact

The implementation of school-wide teams has strengthened instructional practice and the inclusion of teacher’s voice to affect student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- During the observation of a ninth grade teacher team that included a guidance counselor, the inquiry focus was on a student who recently transferred into the school as a safety transfer. All teachers shared their reflection of how the new student is making increased academic progress in school. The team spoke about other targeted students who they support after school, and identified specific areas of improvement which students are overcoming based on the reflection and action plan sheets used during these meetings. Documents reflected one student who completed his diagnostic writing assessment and met his goal to write an argumentative essay. The team reviewed the completion of the student action plan, monitoring assignments on *Pupilpath*, and after-school support. In addition, one experienced teacher on the team communicated that he has requested for the last six years to be on the ninth grade teacher team and the collaboration has enhanced his pedagogical skills.
- Agendas and minutes of all inquiry meetings identified a “Focus of Inquiry” teacher team matrix. The document consists of target student names and their goals, and timeframes for the focus of inquiry. For example, from November 3, 2014, to January 12, 2015, the focus on inquiry for five students was note-taking skills and the final evaluation of the teacher team work was that students were taking more class notes than before based on the increase of class participation.
- Teachers articulated they felt empowered to collaborate and co-create instructional resources at the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) Teacher Center. One special education teacher worked with other teachers to develop graphic organizers to support struggling writers produce strong, argumentative essays. All resources created become readily available for all teachers to use with their students.