

## Fact Sheet: Proposed Phase-out and Replacement of Knowledge and Power Preparatory Academy VII (13K596)

### Overview

In a concerted effort to ensure that all students have high-quality educational programs, the Department of Education (DOE) annually reviews the performance of all schools Citywide. Over the past several years, despite the best efforts of the community and the DOE to support Knowledge and Power Preparatory Academy VII (“KAPPA VII”), the school has struggled to meet basic requirements for student success.

On October 11, 2011, District 13 Community Superintendent James Machen held a School Leadership Team and parent meeting at the school to discuss what is working at KAPPA VII, what needs to be improved, and how the community can work together to serve students better.

Based on an extensive review of qualitative and quantitative data and community feedback, the DOE has determined that KAPPA VII does not have the capacity to improve quickly and is proposing that the school be phased out.

**Proposing to phase out a school is the most difficult decision we make. We are proposing to phase-out KAPPA VII because it is the right action for current and future students in this community.** If the proposal to phase out KAPPA VII is approved, the school would phase out gradually over the next several years. The school would close in June 2014 after its phase-out is complete. A new middle school will be proposed to open in September 2012 in the building where KAPPA VII is located.

We hope you share our view that we can—and must—do better for students. The DOE will continue to work closely with KAPPA VII staff and families to ensure that all students receive the support they need to succeed.

### Performance Summary

Proficiency: % of Students on Grade Level		Progress Report Grade			Quality Review
English	Math	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2009-2010
10%	18%	C	D	F	“Underdeveloped with Proficient Features”

- The majority of KAPPA VII students remain below grade level in English and Math. Last year, only 10% of students were performing on grade level in English – putting the school in the bottom 6% of middle schools Citywide in terms of English proficiency. Only 18% of students were performing on grade level in Math – putting the school in the bottom 4% of middle schools Citywide in terms of Math proficiency.
- KAPPA VII is not adequately helping students to make progress. KAPPA VII is in the bottom 4% of middle schools Citywide in terms of learning growth in English and the bottom 3% of middle schools Citywide in terms of learning growth in Math. Learning growth measures annual student growth on State ELA and Math tests relative to similar students. If these outcomes persist, KAPPA VII students will fall farther behind their peers in other schools.
- The Progress Report measures the progress and performance of students in a school as well as the school environment, compared to other schools serving similar student populations. KAPPA VII earned an overall F grade on its 2010-11 Progress Report, including F grades for Student Progress and Student Performance and a C grade for School Environment.
- The Quality Review uses a four-tiered rubric (well-developed, proficient, developing, and underdeveloped) to measure how well a school is organized to support student achievement. On its most recent Quality Review in 2009-2010, KAPPA VII was rated “Underdeveloped with Proficient Features,” indicating deficiencies in the way

that the school is organized to support student learning.

- The school's attendance rate is one of the lowest among middle schools Citywide. The 2010-11 attendance rate was 87% compared to the Citywide middle school average of 92.6%, putting KAPPA VII in the bottom 5% of New York City middle schools in terms of attendance.
- Safety issues have been a concern at the school. On the 2011 New York City School Survey, only 58 % of teacher respondents agreed that discipline and order were maintained at KAPPA VII. Additionally, only 57% of student respondents agreed that they felt safe at school.

## Overview of Past Strategic Improvement Efforts at KAPPA VII

Staff members have worked hard to improve KAPPA VII, but even with support the school has not produced adequate outcomes for students. To help the school's efforts to improve performance, the DOE offered numerous supports including:

### Leadership Support:

- Provided extensive leadership training and mentoring for the principal and assistant principals to help them set clear goals for the school.
- Coached and trained leadership on implementing plans in support of Citywide instructional initiatives and teacher effectiveness.
- Coached and trained administration on elements of distributive leadership to build capacity of school staff.

### Instructional Support:

- Supported and trained teachers in improvement strategies for addressing the various needs and learning styles of English Language Learners and students with disabilities.
- Facilitated training for teachers in assessment design and the improvement in nonfiction writing strategies.
- Provided professional development opportunities for teachers on best practices for addressing the needs of various learners through differentiated instruction and co-teaching.
- Trained staff in successful ways to increase student outcomes through data analysis and various tools to understand student progress.
- Offered professional development opportunities for teachers on numeracy and the development of best practices within math curriculum.
- Facilitated on-site training to leader and staff on organization consistency and effective implementation of Citywide instructional initiatives.
- Conducted walkthroughs of classrooms and provided targeted feedback on ways to raise academic rigor and increase student engagement.

### Operational Support:

- Advised school staff on budgeting, human resources, teacher recruitment, and building management.

### Student Support:

- Trained the school staff in comprehensive analysis of student needs and evidence-based counseling strategies targeted at developing and improving the capacity for social and emotional supports at the school level.
- Trained leaders in strategies and interventions for attendance improvements.
- Supported staff in identifying resources and strategies for the improvement of school culture and safety through training and professional development opportunities for staff.

## What would the proposal mean for current students?

If this proposal is approved, KAPPA VII would be phased out gradually over the next several years and would not admit new sixth grade students after the end of this school year. All currently enrolled students would have the opportunity to continue their education at KAPPA VII and would be supported through graduation.

In school year 2012-13, KAPPA VII would serve students in grades seven and eight. Then, during the following school year, it would only serve students in grade eight. The school would close in June 2014 after its phase out is complete.

## Supporting Current Students

The DOE remains focused on helping KAPPA VII students to succeed. If this proposal is approved, KAPPA VII would be provided targeted, customized, and intensive supports aimed at the unique needs of the school and its students. This support would be in the areas of budget, staffing, programming, community engagement, guidance, and enrollment including, but not limited to:

- Helping the school provide students with options that support their advancement, and fully prepare students for their next transition point;
- Working with school staff to foster a positive culture; and
- Supporting school leadership in efficiently and strategically allocating resources to ensure a consistent and coherent school environment focused on student outcomes.

## Plans for New Schools for the KAPPA VII and District 13 Community

As we work together to create better options for the KAPPA VII community and all students in District 13, we will keep in mind what has worked at KAPPA VII and do our best to incorporate those positive elements into the plans for a replacement school. For example:

- We will work with the community to retain partnerships with community organizations that are offering valuable services to the school; and
- We will consider what elements of the school structure are working and do our best to include those features in a replacement school.

## Next Steps and What You Can Expect

In January, the DOE will invite the KAPPA VII community to participate in a joint public hearing co-hosted by the DOE, the District 13 Community Education Council, and KAPPA VII's School Leadership Team. As soon as the hearing has been scheduled, we will notify you of the date and also share with you the formal proposal to phase out KAPPA VII. During the joint public hearing, community members, including parents and students, will be able to share their thoughts on the phase-out proposal.

The proposal to phase out KAPPA VII will be voted on by the Panel for Educational Policy, which is composed of members appointed by Mayor Bloomberg and the five Borough Presidents, during a public meeting scheduled for **February 9, 2012**. During this meeting, the public will have another opportunity to comment on the proposal. If the PEP approves the proposal, KAPPA VII would not accept new students next school year. If the proposal to open a new middle school in the building where KAPPA VII is located is approved, the new school would open in September 2012.

## Sharing Your Concerns and Questions

The DOE is seeking your feedback on the proposal. We will record your comments and include them in our Analysis of Public Comment, which is presented to the PEP prior to the vote on the proposal. Please submit your comments at:

Phone: 212-374-0208

Online: <http://schools.nyc.gov/community/planning/changes/brooklyn/proposal?id=73>