



**NYCDOE**

**Quality Review: Final Report**

# **The New York City Department of Education**



# **Quality Review Report**

**The Kennedy - King School**

**Public School 219**

**1060 Clarkson Avenue  
Brooklyn  
NY 11212**

**Principal: Winsome G. Smith**

**Dates of review: October 5 - 6 and 10, 2006**

**Reviewer: Clive Parsons**

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## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

The Kennedy-King School, Public School 219, has over 900 students enrolled across grades pre-kindergarten to 5. Over 90% of students are Black, with about 5% Hispanic students and very small proportions of students from other ethnic backgrounds. The school has more recent immigrants than similar schools and significantly more than in schools across the City. These students are mainly from Jamaica, with smaller proportions from Guyana and Haiti. Student stability is a little lower than in other schools, but attendance at 92.1% is about the same. Slightly fewer students, 65%, are Title 1 eligible than in other schools in the City.

There are more special education students than in other schools, with almost twice as many full-time participants than in similar schools. More students move out of full and part-time settings into a less restrictive environment than in other schools. At 3.3%, the school has fewer English language learners than other schools. PS 219 is placed in the high need similar schools group.

Staff are, overall, more experienced than elsewhere in the city, although there has been significant turnover in recent years, with 15 staff new to the school in one year. Grade 5 students are located in an annex of the main building. Two years ago the school experienced an asbestos crisis, which resulted in temporary relocation and extensive loss of resources.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal demonstrates excellent leadership and communicates a vision for the school that is shared by all.
- Collection of data for the youngest students is innovative.
- Systems for monitoring and evaluating students' academic progress and their personal development are coalescing so as to build as complete a picture of individual students as possible.
- Differentiated instruction based on good accessibility to a range of high quality data is increasingly common practice across the school.
- There is a very good emphasis on broadening the curriculum to provide as wide a range of learning opportunities as possible, in particular in technology and the arts, including music.
- There is tremendous concern for the broadest possible development of the 'whole child'.
- The principal has established very high expectations for students, which are supported by all and reinforced with rigor and tenacity by senior staff.
- Good systems are in place to ensure that professional development is aligned to students' needs and has a positive impact in classrooms and more widely throughout the school.
- Students who experience difficulties in their learning are very well supported so that they make good progress.
- The annex is used very effectively to maximize outcomes for grade 5 students.

### What the school needs to improve

- Continue to work to involve more families consistently in their child's education.
- Ensure that instruction in all classes is differentiated to have the same positive impact on learning, so that all students consistently make good progress.
- Insist that every member of staff consistently models and reinforces positive behavior for students in line with the school's culture.
- Broaden the use of educational technology to further enhance learning.

## Part 3: Main findings

### Overall Evaluation

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

State and City test results have steadily improved over recent years. PS 219 is closing the gap with other schools so that the 2005 results were close to the average for schools across the City. The school is rightly proud of the number of students who go on to specialized middle schools.

The school has developed an effective learning environment for students, with pleasant, well-maintained buildings that were established following the asbestos crisis. Although the school lost many treasured resources, it has subsequently been able to provide a good range of equipment, including desktop and laptop computers, interactive smart boards, electronic keyboards and violins. A 'State of the Art audio-visual system has been installed in the students' lunchroom, to afford students the opportunity to experience learning in an entertaining manner. The annex is used very effectively for grade 5 students.

The school is highly focused on the personal development of the students, as well as their academic success. Much attention is given to ensuring that potential barriers to learning are identified and overcome as early as possible. Intervention services are effective and very well managed. Many of the school community describe the school as a family, whose members have absolute determination to succeed on all fronts.

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

**Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor student progress over time.**

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

The school is very data-orientated. It has moved to a centralized, electronic collection system that covers a wide range of data. This includes areas such as vision and hearing status and academic intervention services provided, as well as interim assessments in literacy and mathematics, together with standardized test scores in all subjects. PS 219 is also implementing a positive behaviors program that will provide additional web based data and analysis for this aspect of its work. The school has developed its own innovative assessment survey and screening system to bring younger students into a monitoring and tracking system. This coalescing of academic, personal and social data is helping the school to build as complete a picture of the needs and progress of individual students as possible.

The use of electronic systems is enabling the principal and other senior staff to have an informed overview of all students, both as individuals and as groups, such as grades and classes, or any group that is of interest. Because the system is regularly updated, it also allows tracking of progress and provides a continually updated picture of the school. The use of highlights identifies individuals who stand out from a pattern. This is empowering teachers to evaluate the impact of the strategies they employ to maximize progress. Using

the data to make comparisons within the school is becoming an increasingly effective tool in raising students' achievements. It is also empowering teachers to ask questions of themselves and of their colleagues. The principal is also interested in learning from other schools, what is driving their success and what PS 219 might learn from it.

**Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use available data to understand each student's next learning step. Through collaborative planning and student and parent engagement, they set high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating each student's learning.**

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

The school is very conscious that collecting data is only the beginning of their strategy to raise achievement still further. The principal has established very high expectations for students and staff. These expectations are endorsed by all and reinforced with rigor and tenacity by the administration. There is an absolute determination to make a difference for students. Data drives the school's Comprehensive Education Plan, which is developed collaboratively.

Students are involved in establishing their own goals. Parents are also involved in this process, with the opportunity to express their expectations for the coming year. Knowledge and information from parents are sought at every opportunity and every effort is taken to work with families to support their child's progress. The school recognizes the importance of parental involvement and there is a determination to get more families more consistently involved.

Teachers constantly focus upon next steps in learning. Feedback to students, for example, will indicate the quality of a piece of work, as well as indicating what would be needed to move it to the next level. The school is committed to identifying individual student's issues as early and as accurately as possible so that interventions are targeted and timely to maximize their impact. Students who experience difficulties in their learning are very well supported. Their needs are analyzed closely and monitored well so that they make good progress.

**Quality Statement 3 – Align Instruction: The school aligns its instructional activity and resources, and student engagement around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.**

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

The principal demonstrates excellent leadership and communicates a vision for the school that is shared by all. There is a strong emphasis on developing the whole child and working to find strategies and activities that motivate every learner. Consequently, the curriculum is designed to provide as wide a range of learning opportunities for students as possible. Much effective work is taking place in the arts, including music, and in technology. The school is also careful to ensure that the curriculum meets mandated requirements and supports the school's approach to on-going and interim assessment.

A sense of family pervades and drives the work and culture of the school so that students feel safe and happy to learn. A few staff, however, do not consistently model and reinforce positive behavior for students and this conflicts very noticeably with the school's culture.

The principal ensures that resources, staffing and scheduling are always aligned very effectively with students' needs. The rigorous approach applied to the students' academic progress is also applied to attendance issues. The annex is used very effectively to maximize outcomes for grade 5 students and to provide an effective bridge between elementary and middle school. This helps students to develop greater independence and a sense of progression.

Good access to data is enabling more differentiated instruction, which is increasingly common practice across the school. The impact of this remains variable, however. Instruction in a few classrooms needs to have more impact on learning if students are to make consistently good progress in all classes. The school has made good progress in using educational technology to support this process. There is scope now to broaden this, through greater use of smart boards, for example. Some teachers are also ready to explore students' preferred learning strategies and the implications of this for their work.

**Quality Statement 4 - Build and Align Capacity: The development of instructional leadership, staff, and capacity are aligned around the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.**

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

The principal is careful to match new staff to the culture, expectations and requirements of the school. Staff are happy to join the staff, appreciating the personal touch shown by the principal. An effective collaborative working culture has been established which has provided good induction for incoming staff. Much emphasis is placed on professional development, with good systems in place to ensure that this has a positive impact in the classroom and throughout the school. Professional development is aligned fully with students' needs and targeted effectively at areas identified for improvement.

Classrooms are routinely observed to monitor the quality of learning occurring and to check on the progress of initiatives. Common preparation time enables teachers to plan and review together, evaluating what has worked well and what could be improved. There is an increasing openness in approaching these discussions, although a small number of teachers require continued support to evaluate their own work candidly and with rigor.

The principal is very highly respected by all. She is continually building the capacity of the school and empowering staff to take responsibility and effect change. The school is well organized and runs smoothly. Routines are established and generally adhered to. The school has many effective partnerships targeted at supporting the students' academic and personal development.

**Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has built-in structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year, recognizing weaknesses in its improvement plans and teaching practices, and flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerated learning.**

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

This is a school where monitoring and evaluating are integral to its culture. Consequently, the administration know the school well and has specific plans to address the remaining

areas of inconsistency in its work. Plans are modified and adapted as a result of accurate evaluation through a range of groups and committees. There is a determination to find what works most effectively, to implement it consistently and then to build on it further. Staff teams frequently use the available data to review how successful their plans have been in achieving their stated goals. Teachers use data and their knowledge about students to plan the next steps for individuals and groups, although there remains some variation in the impact of this.

The use of data informs decision-making on a day-to-day basis and the administration is constantly looking to link cause and effect. This is exemplified by recent work producing an in-depth case study of two students and their progress through the school. This was found to be particularly useful and so may be developed into a routine part of the school's evaluation procedures.

A strong emphasis is placed on the development of objective and reliable methods of diagnostic assessment to enable the school to compare outcomes across grades, subjects, classrooms and groups.

## Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

<b>SCHOOL NAME: The Kennedy-King School ( PS219)</b>	∅	✓	+
<b>Quality Score</b>			<b>X</b>
<b>Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor student progress over time.</b>	∅	✓	+
1.1 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• each student, classroom, grade level,</li> </ul>			<b>X</b>
1.2 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ethnic groups, English Language Learners, special education students*</li> </ul>			<b>X</b>
1.3 The school uses available data and generates its own data to provide an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all other categories of interest to the school*</li> </ul>			<b>X</b>
1.4 Performance and progress are measured based on comparisons with similar schools, with the school's own past performance, and among students, classrooms, grade levels, academic subject areas, ethnic groups, and other groupings of interest within the school.			<b>X</b>
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>			<b>X</b>

\* These criteria are partially aspirational as of now because schools do not have routine access to all of this data. The NYC DOE plans to provide schools with enhanced access to the necessary data in 2007.

<b>Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use available data to understand each student's next learning step. Through collaborative planning and student and parent engagement, they set high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating each student's learning.</b>	∅	✓	+
2.1 Using data, school leaders and faculty engage in a collaborative process to set demanding, objectively measurable goals for immediate and long-range improvement, and to develop plans and timeframes for reaching those goals.			<b>X</b>
2.2 Goals and plans focus on the school as a whole and on each student, classroom, grade level, academic subject, and group of students whose performance or progress has been identified by the school as a particular focus area.			<b>X</b>
2.3 Particular attention is given to improving the performance and progress of students in greatest need of improvement.			<b>X</b>
2.4 High expectations are conveyed to students and parents/caregivers. Students and their parents/caregivers are regularly invited to provide information about each student's performance and how to improve. This information is central to setting challenging goals and developing, evaluating, and revising plans.			<b>X</b>
2.5 Goals and plans for improving student performance and progress drive the activity of all members of the school community: leaders, staff, students, parents, and other partners.			<b>X</b>
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>			<b>X</b>

<b>Quality Statement 3 – Align Instruction: The school aligns its instructional activity, resources, and student engagement around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.</b>	Ø	✓	+
3.1 The school selects the curriculum based on how well it aligns with or implements the mandated curriculum and on the curriculum's capacity to generate meaningful interim data about progress towards goals and to support the school's high expectations and improvement plans.			X
3.2 Teachers are accountable for improving instruction and student outcomes. They plan and differentiate their instruction based on the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.		X	
3.3 Budgeting decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.			X
3.4 Staffing decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes.			X
3.5 Scheduling decisions about the use of teacher and student time are guided by the needs that emerge from examining student data and by the focused plan the school develops to improve student outcomes.			X
3.6 Instructional programs actively engage students.		X	
3.7 Staff know and respect students and respond to their academic needs, as well as their personal needs that affect academic performance. Each student knows and trusts an adult on the staff who is concerned about him or her.		X	
3.8 Student attendance and engagement are high priorities. High rates and patterns of absences trigger immediate intervention.			X
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>			X
<b>Quality Statement 4 – Build and Align Capacity: The development of instructional leadership, staff, and capacity are aligned around the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.</b>	Ø	✓	+
4.1 Leaders, faculty, and staff are selected based on their high expectations for student performance and progress and based on their commitment and capacity to use data, compare outcomes within and across classrooms and schools and develop and revise plans and methods to improve performance and progress.			X
4.2 Professional development decisions are driven by the needs revealed by student data and by the focused plan the school has developed to improve each student's and group of students' outcomes. Professional development is designed to help leaders, faculty, and staff use data, self- and peer-assessments, and collaboration with peers to achieve goals for improved school and student outcomes. Professional development and self- and peer-evaluation are aligned and overlap.			X
4.3 The principal frequently observes classroom teaching and has a considered strategy for improving the quality of each teacher's instruction. Teachers frequently observe and support each other's classroom instruction with the goal of improving student outcomes.			X
4.4 Planning, evaluation of results, and revision of plans takes place in teams. Leaders and faculty inform each other of their goals and results, candidly evaluate themselves and each other, and use what is learned to drive improvement.			X
4.5 The principal is respected and has capacity to effect change.			X
4.6 The school runs smoothly. Procedures are clear, communicated to all, and are generally followed.			X
4.7 The school aligns youth development and support services around stated academic goals. Partnerships with outside bodies are routinely used to achieve academic goals.			X
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>			X
<b>Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has built-in structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year, recognizing weaknesses in its improvement plans and teaching practices, and flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.</b>	Ø	✓	+
5.1 All school plans and other interventions include frequent interim goals and diagnostic assessments of progress designed to reveal in objectively measurable ways whether the plan is being effectively implemented and reaching stated goals.			X
5.2 Comparisons of student progress within and across classrooms and schools are used in making interim diagnostic assessments and measuring the progress of plans and interventions.			X
5.3 Information generated by periodic assessments and diagnostic measures of progress and comparisons is used to revise plans immediately in order to reach stated goals. Interim and final goals are modified when data objectively demonstrate that revision is required.			X
5.4 Each plan's interim and final outcomes drive successive phases of goal setting and improvement planning, and each successive phase is characterized by agile and flexible realignment of practices and resources to improve student academic outcomes.			X
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>			X