



The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Kappa V

**Middle School 518
985 Rockaway Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11212**

Principal: Anthony Shepherd

Dates of review: June 5 - 6, 2007

Reviewer: Richard Woolf

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Kappa V is a middle school with 260 enrolled students in grade levels 6 through 8. This year is its first cycle with all three grade levels in occupancy. It shares the building with a District 75 school and the annexes of two other local elementary schools. The principal has overall responsibility for the entire building.

The student population is made up of 95% Black, 3% Hispanic and 2% Asian and others ethnic groups. There are no English language learners and special education students make up approximately 15% of the school which is on a par with similar schools within the State and City. There are slightly more males than females in the school. The school is eligible for Title 1 funding for 100% of its population.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school is led by a principal who is an experienced educator, passionate about education and determined his students will succeed in life.
- The staff embraces the traditions of the Kappa philosophy in every aspect of their work.
- There is an excellent balance of new and experienced staff.
- The school is run like a military academy with discipline and hard work as its corner stones.
- The students are proud of their school and its achievements to date.
- The students wear their uniforms with pride as it sets them apart as being special.
- The school is beginning to use data with more confidence to impact upon learning.
- The support given to the school by the parent body is a growing strength.

What the school needs to improve

- Further develop the use of differentiated instruction to improve overall achievement at each grade level.
- Examine ways professional development can become more targeted and focused in the use of data and instruction.
- Develop ways of monitoring the effectiveness of the school against its Comprehensive Education Plan.
- Improve collaborative teacher working time and curriculum planning opportunities to further enhance instruction and student achievement.
- Increase teacher accountability.

Part 3: Main findings

Overall Evaluation

This is a proficient school.

Kappa V school encapsulates the philosophy of the Knowledge and Power Preparatory Academy (KAPPA) movement and this clearly is impacting upon the students it serves. The principal is an enthusiastic, focused educator and leader. He sets very high personal standards and demonstrates these to the entire school community on a daily basis. The students show high levels of good behavior and over the three years the school has been opened have risen to the challenges set before them. They wear their uniform with pride and the high rate of attendance acknowledges how important the educational process is to them.

The school is developing a reputation as a place where education is key to providing students with lifelong learning opportunities, developing self respect and raising self esteem. It is in a position where more students wish to apply than places can be offered. The staff are caring, hard working but above all are providing a safe and secure place in which to learn. Through effective use of data, the staff are being challenged to rethink their approach to differentiation in order to further improve their instruction and subsequently further challenge the students. The principal plans to take a more strategic overview of the school's future and in doing so set even more challenging goals with built in interim objective measures.

Parents are increasingly aware of the efforts being made by the staff to raise their children's expectations. The school has very good links with supportive outside agencies and this also impacts upon the student's learning.

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 proficient.

The school is building on the work developed over the last three years with regard to how it gathers data. However, it does use all data from State and City tests as a basis to plan teaching groups, demonstrate class and grade level progress and to identify students in need of extra support and guidance. This is supplemented by the better use of the Princeton Review to identify whole school and student specific issues.

This year more detailed data is being generated in house to inform instruction and to take into account performance of its ethnic groups and special education students. The school uses data to clearly identify concerns around the performance of Black males in English language arts and Black females in mathematics and science and their lack of comparative progress. These are being driven by the administration to effect change on instruction and to respond to student's individual or group needs. Each member of staff has an assessment portfolio for recording their student's achievements which is proving an invaluable tool to inform instruction. For those students displaying particular needs, a

system of additional support has been established through the use of specialist teachers. The school does not yet use the data to identify its higher achieving students in order to plan programs to meet their needs. As a result of the increased use of data, the principal feels that his teachers can discuss more authoritatively with parents about their children's progress.

There is evidence to demonstrate an increase in academic results during the last academic year, as the school compares its outcomes to both similar schools and other City schools. However the principal and his staff believe an increased emphasis on the use of data will provide a further improvement in academic achievement. This is especially important as it impacts upon instruction. The data is rigorously compared to previous performances of individual students and grade levels.

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 proficient.

The principal uses the Comprehensive Education Plan as a tool to further academic instruction by setting overall percentage targets to demonstrate achievement. However the school does not yet include objective measures for interim or long term plans. Over the last three years, more planning of a detailed nature has been undertaken. The targets are conveyed to staff members, students and parents and revisited at intervals during the school year. The school does not yet set teachers' or students' individual targets from these overall plans.

The school does not have any recognized English language learners however it does have special education students who are clearly recognized as a group in need of specific attention and they are set individual targets throughout the year. Their targets are similar to those in the general education population and, as a result, this is raising their achievement levels.

As the school has not yet developed an efficient way of allowing teachers to meet formally, rigorous systematic monitoring of subjects or grade levels is not impacting upon instruction. The principal is aware of this and is planning to address this issue.

The work of the lead professionals in supporting both teachers and students, and the impact this is having on instruction, is greatly appreciated at a professional and personal level by staff. Some students are aware of their individual progress and speak positively about what is expected of them. However, some intimated they would like more help in knowing how to progress to the next and higher levels by being shown appropriate strategies and understanding of testing structures.

The principal has very high expectations of all sections of the school community and they are conveyed each and every day. Parents are encouraged to be partners in their child's learning and this is a growing strength of the school. There is an active parent group and they are very supportive of the efforts the school is making with respect to improving their children's education.

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 proficient.

The school aligns itself with all aspects of the mandatory curriculum and this has the capacity to generate meaningful data. Students are provided with opportunity to receive instruction in Spanish and have access to music, art and physical education. The school has a very good advisory program.

There is evidence of differentiation taking place in some classrooms. The school does not yet analyze its effectiveness or how it is impacting upon individual or grade level learning. The school has not yet set challenging work for its higher achieving students. However, significant progress is being made with groups of special education students. The staff are now more aware of how disaggregation of data is providing them with the tools to impact instruction but, as yet, are not being held as accountable as they might to demonstrate that overall effectiveness.

The principal manages the school’s budget well and the extra time and resources allocated to identify classes in most need are a good example of this. A key feature of future planning is the identification, through data analysis, of the need to reduce class size by the appointment of more staff. Scheduling of classes before school and on Saturday morning for students is slowly beginning to show results, as is the move to allocate more time to special education students’ instruction during the school day. The students are aware of the need to try hard and be successful and evidence shows they are actively engaged in their lessons. They have a great deal of respect for their teachers and principal and there is always an adult prepared to help them.

The data suggests the school’s attendance policy is producing rates higher than similar schools. The students are very aware of the need to attend regularly and acknowledge that the incentives in place to fulfill this help. Students comment that ‘regular attendance means you do not slip behind as the teachers here are very demanding’. The parents are very eager for their children to attend school regularly in order to enhance their learning opportunities and appreciate the efforts the school makes in its pursuit of full attendance.

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 proficient.

The principal’s staff selection policy is very clear in that new staff have to be student centered, demonstrate an ability to learn personally and professionally and be able to use data effectively. He is building a team who appreciates and understands that their students can succeed in life by being given a positive and encouraging atmosphere in which to learn. Teachers accept that his management style allows them professional freedom to instruct in a manner appropriate to the needs of their students. There are good opportunities for professional development both within the school and from outside. However, the school does not yet fully appreciate how professional development can be used to raise individual teacher expectations to heighten student achievement. Staff use inter-visitations to help with instruction, but as yet the school does not have a planned program. The school does not conduct sufficient planning or revision of plans in teams.

The principal is respected for being approachable and is a constant presence in the school. He and his assistant principal visit staff informally as well as conduct formal classroom observations. These are planned with the view to improve instruction and closely monitor the impact on student progress. The school is well managed and runs smoothly, which encourages learning. All systems and procedures are clear and well integrated into normal routines. The principal has the capacity to effect and sustain change within the school. Parents respond very favorably to the administration. The principal realizes the vital role parents play in working in partnership with the school and the way in which this is having a positive impact on student learning.

In addition to an active and growing parent teacher association the school has excellent links with outside organizations. Many of the students participate in Beacon run programs and those provided by the Moore 4U organization which provides a strong arts program. Both programs encourage student participation and are impacting upon student achievement. Similarly, the courses that encourage students to broaden their horizons and look to entering college are well respected and effective.

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 proficient.

Monitoring takes place at a number of levels during the school year. However, the current system is not sufficiently rigorous. The school does not yet make the best use of comparative information available to them to set new and more challenging short-term and long-term goals.

The principal has a clear vision of how goals should be set and the measures necessary to demonstrate success in achieving them. However, his understanding of the way effective monitoring takes place is not yet sufficiently disseminated throughout the whole school. Checks against the Comprehensive Education Plan are undertaken during the year and any variances are addressed accordingly by the revision of student, class or grade level goals to demonstrate progress. There is evidence to show monitoring takes place amongst staff members to highlight individual concerns. However, this does not pay sufficient attention to the overall picture of what is needed to move the whole school forward.

Kappa V is a school which cares for its students and is endeavoring to create rich learning experiences for them. It is positioned to undertake the next phase of its development. However the school does not yet set the challenging targets for individual students, teachers and grade levels nor undertake the careful monitoring of progress toward the school's overall goals.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| SCHOOL NAME: Kappa V (MS 518) | ∅ | ✓ | + |
| Quality Score | | X | |

| 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. | ∅ | ✓ | + |
|---|---|---|---|
| 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"> • each student, classroom, grade level, | | X | |
| 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"> • ethnic groups, English language learners, special education students* | | X | |
| 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"> • all other categories of interest to the school* | | X | |
| 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. | | X | |
| Overall score for Quality Statement 1 | | X | |

* 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.

| 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. | ∅ | ✓ | + |
|--|---|---|---|
| 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. | | X | |
| 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. | | X | |
| 2.3 Particular attention is given to improving the performance and progress of students in greatest need of improvement. | | X | |
| 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. | | X | |
| 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. | | X | |
| Overall score for Quality Statement 2 | | X | |

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| 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. | ∅ | ✓ | + |
| 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 |
| Overall score for Quality Statement 3 | | X | |
| 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. | ∅ | ✓ | + |
| 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 |
| Overall score for Quality Statement 4 | | X | |
| 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. | ∅ | ✓ | + |
| 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 | |
| Overall score for Quality Statement 5 | | X | |