



NYCDOE

Quality Review: Final Report

The New York City Department of Education



Quality Review Report

Kingsborough Early College Secondary School

Middle - High School 468

**2001 Oriental Boulevard
Brooklyn
NY 11235**

Principal: Connie Hamilton

Dates of review: April 10 - 11, 2008

Reviewer: Santiago Taveras

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Kingsborough Early College Secondary School is a middle-high school with 163 students in grades 6 - 7. The school population comprises 22% Black, 21% Hispanic, 50% White, and 7% Asian students. The student body includes 5% English language learners and 10% special education students. Boys account for 46% of the students enrolled and girls account for 54%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2006 - 2007 was 96.3%. The school is in receipt of Title 1 funding with 69% eligibility.

This is a new school in its second year. It will continue to grow every year until it reaches a full complement of students from grade 6 through grade 12.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal has a clear vision and high expectations of students and staff, which results in consistency in structures and teaching strategies.
- The school has an interesting core and enrichment curriculum that focuses on writing as a priority and includes an effective advisory program.
- the principal schedules frequent professional conversations with the staff, Following regular observations, to address their needs quickly and effectively.
- The school has structures in place that has developed an environment of mutual respect between parents, staff and students.
- The school has an excellent relationship with Kingsborough College, as well as other partnerships.
- The school continues to develop good ways to collect data on its special education students and English language learners, and to use them to drive instruction.
- There are good opportunities for differentiated professional development at the school, which is strategically based on the needs of the staff.
- The school is a safe and orderly place and the administration has developed good structures that allow for its smooth day-to-day running.
- The school makes effective use of its finances, as in meeting students' needs through developing support for their writing.
- Staff know they are accountable for student outcomes, and appreciate the opportunities they have to share in school decision-making.

What the school needs to improve

- Calibrate all rubrics to ensure that they are measuring what they are intended to measure and ensure that there are consistent expectations of how class assignments and homework tasks match student needs.
- Expand the professional development program to include interschool visits based on an analysis of data relating to similar schools.
- Explore additional ways to get more parents involved in the workshops offered by the parent teacher association.
- Continue to develop strategies for looking at data, discovering patterns and developing action plans to address the needs of all students.
- Draw up detailed plans on how the school will develop from year to year as it grows into a grade 6 through grade 12 school.

Part 3: Main Findings

Progress made since the last review

The school has made good progress in addressing the issues identified in the previous Quality Review report

Overall Evaluation

This school is well developed.

The principal has a very clear vision of what she wants for the school as it grows to encompass grades 6 through 12 over the next five years, although plans do not yet contain the level of detail needed to ensure that its growth continues in an equally effective way as it has over the last two years. She has developed an environment of mutual respect between parents, staff and students and is building a warm and supportive learning community.

The principal has high expectations of both students and staff, and with her staff has established consistency in structures and strategies. Staff know they are accountable for student outcomes, and appreciate the opportunities they have to share in school decision-making. The school has developed a strong and effective process for professional development and goal setting for all staff. The principal and the UFT teacher center conduct on going professional conversations that monitor and support teacher development in meeting their professional goals. There is the potential for inter-schools visits based on data analysis

The school continues to develop good ways to collect data on its special education students and English language learners, and to use them to drive instruction. However, there is more work to be done to develop strategies for looking at data, discovering patterns and developing action plans to address the needs of all students.

An interesting core and enrichment curriculum has been implemented that focuses on writing as a priority and includes an effective advisory program. The staff have worked hard to develop the curriculum, but they have not yet calibrated the rubrics to ensure that they are measuring what they are intended to measure and that there are consistent expectations of how class assignments and homework tasks match student needs.

Since the last review, the school has started to implement structures that allow for the monitoring of student progress at different times of the school year. They have started to use an electronic grade book, which they are now exploring on how to best use it to analyze data by student, by class, and by grade. In addition, they have initiated a goal setting process for both students and teachers. The inquiry team is monitoring the lowest third of students and is using the findings to refine its interventions.

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 the student's progress over time.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

The school has developed several systems to track student progress. Through the use of self-made assessments, periodic assessments and theme-based projects, most of the staff are beginning to follow an online system. This enables teachers and administrators to analyze the data by grade, by teacher, and by subject area, in order to detect patterns and make instructional decisions.

The principal and the UFT teacher center staff meet with the teachers on an ongoing basis to provide support and monitor the progress of the lowest third, the higher achieving students and all sub-groups. The Inquiry Team meets weekly to share data and discuss the progress made by special education students and English language learners, as well as develop strategies for addressing their needs. This is where the school has developed good practice in its gathering and analysis of data.

The school is developing systems that will allow them to maintain the level of vigilance of all students' progress as they grow from a school of 163 students to a school with more than 500 students. The current progress reports are pen and paper and the school is moving to develop the progress report electronically. The school is learning how to use the Engrade system to see the data by grade, by teacher, and by subject area, in order to detect patterns and make instructional decisions. There are not many schools similar to this school, which makes it difficult to compare itself to others schools.

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use data to understand each student's next learning steps and to set suitably high goals for accelerating each student's learning.

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

The principal sets specific and challenging goals for the school, which are widely known by staff, students and parents. The school's focus is on character development, college prep and literacy. Upon analyzing the previous year's outcomes, both in the English language arts and math State exams, the principal sets clear goals for the current academic year. The principal meets with the staff throughout the year to analyze and review the goals teachers set for all the students. As an early college school, the school has determined that they must improve the writing skills of all students. Students take corrective reading and college prep classes. The writing teachers have developed standards-based rubrics and curriculum using the writing process. The teachers and the administration have noted a vast improvement in the students' writing as a result of their efforts.

Students are involved well in their own learning. They set personal goals in advisory and academic goals in math and English language arts. They also self-assess their areas of need in math. Students alongside their teachers create plans for how they will attain their goals. Teachers administer diagnostics tests in the beginning of each unit to

assess the students' prior knowledge and help make goals that challenge the students. The teachers track progress on the plans by maintaining records that indicate if the student is exceeding, meeting, approaching or below standard. Through regularly scheduled conferences with students, the teachers are able to gauge the progress for each goal. Advisors regularly provide parents with information about events, academic progress and issues that may arise.

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instructional Strategy to Goals: The school aligns its academic work, strategic decisions and resources, and effectively engages students around its plans and goals for accelerating student learning.

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

The staff of the school have invested a lot of time in developing their own curriculum. Teachers work through the summer to develop effective and engaging programs that capture the students' interests. For example, the staff developed a writing curriculum for each grade and created monthly units with benchmarks for the students. The enrichment clusters provide the students additional opportunities to learn and engage in areas of interest. The curriculum allows the teachers and students to set goals and monitor their progress made in meeting them. However, teachers do not calibrate their rubrics to ensure that they are measuring what they are intended to measure. As a result, there is no consistency in the expectations of how class assignments and homework tasks match student needs.

The parents, staff and students have a love for their school that permeates all its work. Teachers feel a sense of ownership, as they are involved in the decision-making and development of the school. They are responsible for a variety of areas, including the advisory program, which is the backbone of the school's close-knit family-like culture. The principal supports the advisory program by developing the curriculum based on needs and requests that arise from teachers and students. Parents and students feel that the school is a safe and orderly place. The school has successfully developed a nurturing, caring culture of mutual respect and trust among the parents, students and teachers.

The school has done a lot of professional development on differentiation of instruction. Most staff understand how to differentiate instruction for their students, but this is not yet a consistent practice in all of the classrooms. The teachers have the freedom to develop the curriculum, and they acknowledge that with that responsibility comes accountability for their students' progress and outcomes. The school has made good use of its finances. After the first year of the school, the principal noticed that the students needed additional support in their writing. The principal decided to invest in hiring two additional writing teachers, which has made a noticeable improvement in the students' writing.

Quality Statement 4 - Align Capacity Building to Goals: The development of leadership, teachers and other staff capacity is aligned to 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 sees herself as the instructional leader of the school and sets the tone for professional growth, holding teachers accountable for their getting involved and identifying areas for improvement. She asks each teacher to set their personal

professional growth goals, identify strengths and areas for improvement and set goals for student outcomes. The process calls for the principal and UFT center coach to visit the teachers' classrooms on a regular basis. The impact of this approach is evident in the classrooms, as teachers adapt their instructional strategies based on the feedback they receive. The school provides differentiated professional development for all of their teachers. The principal and coach model teaching strategies and support teachers by sharing different techniques and approaches for teaching students with a variety of needs and learning styles. There is a good inter-visitation process, where the teachers visit each other's classrooms, learn from each other and share effective strategies.

The school's highly effective advisory program provides the students with the necessary youth development and guidance for their support and nurture. The school's guidance counselor meets with the teachers on a regular basis and follows up with students that need additional intervention. The advisors get to know the students and their family by calling the home on a regular basis and talking with the family about their child's progress and areas of need. The school's impressive relationship with Kingsborough College provides students with an opportunity to be part of a college campus and starting in the ninth grade, the students will start taking college courses. The college works very well with the principal to accommodate the needs of the school and provides tutors and mentors for students.

Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.

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

The school has put in place effective systems for monitoring and revising its goals. Monthly curriculum units include benchmarks for measuring students' progress throughout the year. In addition, teachers monitor this progress on a daily basis by using "exit slips" which students fill out at the end of each class. This "exit slip" provides the teachers with useful information about each student's understanding of the day's lesson and enables them to address each student's needs. The student's goals are revised if necessary and the progress made is noted and sent home to parents every two months on the progress reports.

The school uses information gathered from periodic assessments, teacher-made tests and projects to revise their monthly unit plans to meet the needs of individual students and reorganize their extended day groups to better meet the needs of the students. The teachers' progress in meeting their own personal professional goals is monitored by the principal and coach through their professional conversations and the regular classroom visits. The administration uses that information to provide appropriate professional development for all teachers and to revise the teachers' goals when necessary. The decision to modify teachers' goals is done through conversations, classroom observation and by analyzing the data.

The principal has a crystal clear vision of the school that she and her staff are building and is developing plans for its growth from a 6 and 7 grade school to a 6 through 12 grade school. The principal is thinking about ways they can maintain the culture and tone of the school, as well as the high level of professional development and support for the teaching staff, as it grows from year to year. These plans do not yet contain the level of detail that is necessary.

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

SCHOOL NAME: Kingsborough Early College Secondary School	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
Quality Score				X	

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

To what extent do school leaders and faculty provide . . .	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
1.1 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of each student, classroom, grade level?			X		
1.2 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of special education students?				X	
1.3 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of English language learners?				X	
1.4 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of ethnic groups, gender groups and all other categories of interest to the school?			X		
1.5 a measurement of performance and progress based on the school's own past performance, and among students, classrooms, grades and subject areas?			X		
1.6 a measurement of performance and progress based on comparisons with similar schools?			X		
1.7 training, management systems and structures that support teachers in the use of school data to inform planning and instruction and to track the progress of students?			X		
Overall score for Quality Statement 1			X		

Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use data to understand each student's next learning steps and to set suitably high goals for accelerating each students learning.

To what extent do school leaders and faculty . . .	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
2.1 engage in collaborative processes to set rigorous, objectively measurable goals for improvement, and to develop plans and timeframes for reaching those goals?				X	
2.2 focus 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 identify and improve the performance and progress of those students in greatest need of improvement?				X	
2.4 share whole school goals with all members of the school community to rigorously improve the performance and progress of students?				X	
2.5 convey consistently high expectations to students and their parents/caregivers?				X	
2.6 regularly provide students and their parents/caregivers with information about the goals set for each student, and about each student's progress and performance, and how they can improve?				X	
2.7 invite and enable parents/caregivers to provide useful information to teachers and the school about the learning needs and capacities of their children?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 2				X	

Quality Statement 3 – Align Instructional Strategy to Goals: The school aligns its academic work, strategic decisions and resources, and effectively engages students around its plans and goals for accelerating student learning.

To what extent does the school . . .	Δ	▷	✓	+	◇
3.1 select core curricular approaches that facilitate and provide meaningful interim data about progress towards goals and focus on raising the achievement of students?			X		
3.2 provide a broad and engaging curriculum, including the arts, to enhance learning both within and outside the school day?				X	
3.3 hold teachers accountable for the progress and learning of the students in their charge, for making instruction interesting and compelling, and for creating a positive safe and inclusive learning environment?				X	
3.4 ensure that teachers use school, class and student data to plan for and provide differentiated instruction that meets the specific needs of all the students in their charge?			X		
3.5 make budgeting, staffing and scheduling decisions strategically, based on data, to meet the school's academic goals for all students?				X	
3.6 ensure that there is an environment of mutual trust and respect between all staff and students to support personal and academic development?				X	
3.7 ensure that there are effective and consistently applied procedures to encourage and monitor student attendance and tardiness?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 3				X	

Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building to Goals: The development of leadership, teachers and other staff capacity is aligned to the school’s collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.					
To what extent does the school . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
4.1 use frequent observations of classroom teaching by the principal and other available information to develop a differentiated strategy for improving the quality of each teacher’s instruction?				X	
4.2 make professional development decisions strategically, based on data, to help meet the improvement goals of students and teachers?				X	
4.3 provide frequent opportunities for teachers to observe each other’s classroom instruction and to meet together in teams to plan, share effective practices, and evaluate one another’s instruction in an open and reflective professional environment?				X	
4.4 develop effective procedures for the induction and support of teachers who are new to the profession or the school?				X	
4.5 align youth development, guidance/advising and other student support services around stated academic and personal development goals?				X	
4.6 consistently implement clear procedures that enable the school to run smoothly and encourage effective student learning, and effectively address discipline related incidents?				X	
4.7 create effective partnerships with outside entities that support the academic and personal growth of the students?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 4					X

Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for evaluating each student’s progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.					
To what extent do . . .	Δ	➤	✓	+	◇
5.1 the school’s plans for improving student outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?				X	
5.2 the school’s plans for improving teacher outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?				X	
5.3 teachers and faculty use periodic assessments and other diagnostic tools to measure the effectiveness of plans and interventions for individual and groups of students in key areas?				X	
5.4 teachers and faculty use the information generated by periodic assessments and other progress measures and comparisons to revise plans immediately in order to reach stated goals?				X	
5.5 school leaders track the outcomes of periodic assessments and other diagnostic measures and use the results to makes strategic decisions to modify practices to improve student outcomes?				X	
5.6 school leaders and staff use each plan’s interim and final outcomes to drive the next stage of goal setting and improvement planning?			X		
5.7 the principal and school community have a clear vision for the future development of the school and implement procedures and systems to effect change?				X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 5					X

◇	Outstanding
+	Well Developed
✓	Proficient
➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features
Δ	Underdeveloped