

Quality Review Report 2009-2010

**Kings College School
Elementary School 094
3530 Kings College Point
Bronx
NY 10467**

Principal: Diane Daprocida

Dates of review: October 26 - 27, 2009

Lead Reviewer: Sonia Menendez

Part 1: The school context

Kings College is an elementary school with 930 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 23% Black, 59% Hispanic, 2% White, and 14% Asian students. The student body includes 20% English language learners and 6% special education students. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 50%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2008 - 2009 was 91.9%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

The Kings College School is a growing school, led by an enthusiastic principal who works collaboratively with staff to create an environment where students feel safe, nurtured and valued. As a result, the whole community supports the principal's vision for the school enthusiastically. Staff are easily accessible to parents and this further encourages their support for the academic expectations that the school has for their children. Students are enthusiastic about their learning and are eager to share their learning with others.

The development and implementation of an integrated, content-based curriculum results in increased opportunities for students to engage in meaningful learning opportunities that link literacy with content. The curriculum is aligned to State standards and key indicators are emphasized to enhance student performance in key areas of the curriculum. The school is proactive in building its systems of data collection and analysis to disaggregate by sub-group and use the information to group students for instruction. However, teachers are not always effective in providing high levels of challenge for high achieving students or sufficient support for lower performing sub-groups

Collaboration and teamwork are strong features of the school and allow staff to share expertise effectively. Staff meet regularly in teacher teams by grade and across grades to share information about curriculum alignment and effectiveness. This encourages teachers to discuss best practices and student achievement. Second grade teachers said, "We have collegiality here. We mentor each other and we don't 'sink or swim' because we are learning from each other. We want to be the best." Teachers are reflective of their practice and work closely with literacy and math coaches to refine their lesson design and delivery which results in engaging learning activities.

Although the school collects and analyzes a wide range of formative and summative data to understand the performance and progress of students by sub-group, it acknowledges the need to use this information to set precise, measurable interim checkpoints to monitor student progress more effectively. Additionally, teachers use data to create flexible learning groups by language proficiency and academic instructional needs, but do not address the needs of all students consistently through differentiated activities or instructional strategies. Teachers value the support that they receive from the administrative staff and coaches. Professional development is embedded as part of the school's day-to-day activities. However, the feedback provided to staff is generic, lacking concrete, informative teacher development plans that build on staff expertise and identify areas for growth and precise next steps to accelerate student learning.

Overall, there exists a strong commitment to school improvement with a good level of collaboration which has resulted in the increased progress that students have made in English language arts and mathematics.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The students benefit from a well-planned, standards-based and engaging curriculum that integrates content area subjects with literacy.
 - The curriculum is well developed to align with State standards. Decisions are made on which key indicators to emphasize based on information gathered from an item skill analysis. The principal and her team ensure that the results of State tests, together with baseline assessment data, are presented clearly. Consequently, teachers now set more precise learning objectives in their lessons.
 - The development and implementation of an integrated, projects-based curriculum is supporting the school's vision for improvement. Students enjoy a wide range of experiences that include the arts, trips and use of technology. As a result, they demonstrate high levels of engagement, motivation, and enthusiasm for their learning leading to increased student outcomes.
- The school collects and analyzes a wide range of data to monitor the progress of sub-groups, and to plan instruction and intervention strategies aimed at effectively raise student achievement.
 - Teachers use a cohesive system for analyzing data that includes color-coding of assessment data to identify students by sub-group, including gender and ethnicity, who are at risk of falling behind and in need of additional support. As a result, teachers provide flexible grouping for English language learners and students in need of additional instructional support to ensure that these students are able to make good progress.
 - A school-wide, consistent approach to gathering, analyzing and using sub-group data provides the basis for many scheduling and staffing decisions. Consequently, English as a second language and academic intervention teachers team-teach with classroom teachers during the literacy block. As a result, effective instructional strategies are used to ensure that English language learners and struggling students are effectively supported.
- Teachers share the principal's vision for improvement, work collaboratively in teacher teams, and facilitate their own learning in order to increase student achievement.
 - Strong staff relationships and a well-developed culture of collaborative and collegial opportunities promote a willingness to learn from each other and continually improve practice and standards. As a result, teachers feel empowered and credit this collaboration to their commitment to improving outcomes for students.
 - The strategic use of common-planning time enables teachers to discuss and implement the new integrated curriculum consistently, to plan together, visit each other's classroom, and jointly examine student work. These good

levels of collaboration are at the heart of the school's improvement particularly in English language arts and mathematics.

- The supervisors and staff work hard to create a nurturing, caring, and respectful environment that results in effective supports for both students and their parents.
 - High expectations are clearly articulated and evident in conversations with teachers, students and parents. Parents are encouraged to take an active role in support of their children's learning. Consequently, parents are highly supportive of the school and as active members of the school leadership team engage in the decision-making process.
 - Students are engaged in many extra curricular activities, such as media journalists, peer mediators, and chorus. As a result, students enjoy coming to school and take on leadership roles impacting on their engagement in learning and desire to do their best.
- The principal, in collaboration with her instructional cabinet, regularly reviews data to evaluate the effectiveness of organizational and professional development decisions in order to accelerate student learning.
 - Collaboration and teamwork are strong features of the school and allow staff to share effectively. Teachers have good opportunities to develop their leadership qualities, engaging in professional development that fosters reflection as well as providing options for researching effective instructional tools. Because of teachers' involvement in their own professional development, they cite being proud of both the growth of their students as well as their own.
- The school helps families to understand student performance and to know how to help their children at home by engaging in an open exchange of information.
 - The school's good communication systems, which include a monthly calendar, parent workshops, newsletter and teacher feedback, keep parents fully informed of school activities and their children's progress. As a result, parents feel welcomed at the school and appreciate the accessibility of the staff in working in partnership with them to support their children's learning.
 - The school's outreach and efforts to better involve parents in their children's learning have led to improved communication and increased attendance at parent meetings and school events.

What the school needs to improve

- Improve the use of data to differentiate instruction that moves from flexible grouping to providing learning activities and instruction that meet the needs of all students.
 - Although the school has made a good start in collating and analyzing data about different sub-groups of students, a lack of differentiation beyond flexible grouping results in a lack challenge for higher achieving students and insufficient support for lower performing sub-groups.
 - Teachers do not consistently extend differentiation of lessons or instructional strategies to meet the specific needs and learning styles of all sub-groups within the school. Consequently, learning goals are not differentiated for all student sub-groups ensuring that all students are on track for improvement.
- Refine the goal-setting process across the school to provide clear, measurable, and time-related goals with interim checkpoints to periodically evaluate the progress in reaching long-term goals.
 - Administrators work with teachers to develop long-term goals collaboratively, but these lack precise, measurable outcomes for each interim checkpoint. Consequently, they lack benchmarks against which progress can be monitored and modifications made. As a result, teachers are unable to effectively measure progress towards meeting the long-term goals they have set for students.
- Further develop the use of regular interim assessments to monitor and evaluate the progress students are making and determine if modifications to curriculum, programs or additional support to students are needed.
 - The school's curriculum indicates the use of assessments to track student progress. However, it is unclear how this information is analyzed and used to provide a clear picture of how students are achieving. Consequently, data from predictive and other interim assessments are not used effectively to track progress or to inform planning in an increasingly strategic way. As a result, effective arrangements for modifications to programs or additional support for students are not clearly defined.
- Refine lesson observation feedback to formalize individual teacher professional growth plans to maximize student achievement and outcomes.
 - The school has lesson observation structures in place to provide teachers with formal written feedback. However, the generic nature of the feedback does not provide individual teachers with specific areas for development. Consequently, teacher support is not sufficiently differentiated to encourage self-evaluation and revision of instructional approaches with the am of maximizing student outcomes.

School Quality Criteria 2009-2010

School name: Kings College School	△	▷	✓	+
Overall QR Score			X	
Quality Statement 1 – Coherent Instructional and Organizational Strategies: The school has a coherent strategy to support student learning that aligns curriculum, instruction and organizational decisions.				
<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</i>	△	▷	✓	+
1.1 Design and deliver rigorous and coherent curricula, including the Arts, aligned to key State standards?				X
1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best, and ensure that it is: aligned to the curriculum, engaging, and differentiated to enable all students to produce meaningful work products?			X	
1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet student learning needs?				X
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?			X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 1			X	
Quality Statement 2 – Gather and Analyze Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, analyze and share information on student learning outcomes to understand school and student progress over time.				
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	△	▷	✓	+
2.1 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the school level?			X	
2.2 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the team and classroom level?			X	
2.3 Use or develop tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize and analyze student performance trends?			X	
2.4 Engage in an open exchange of information with students and families regarding students' learning needs and outcomes?			X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 2			X	

Quality Statement 3 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently engage the school community and use data to set and track suitably high goals for accelerating student learning.							
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	△	➤	✓	+			
3.1 Establish a coherent vision of its future development that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are understood and supported by the entire school community?			X				
3.2 Use collaborative and data-informed processes to set measurable and differentiated learning goals for student subgroups, and students in need of additional support?		X					
3.3 Ensure the achievement of learning goals by tracking progress at the school, teacher team and classroom level?			X				
3.4 Communicate high expectations to students and families, engage them in decision-making, and promote active involvement in the school community?			X				
Overall score for Quality Statement 3			X				
Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school’s goals and student learning and emotional needs.							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	△	➤	✓	+			
4.1 Use the observation of classroom teaching and the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection, with a special focus on new teachers?			X				
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning?			X				
4.3 Provide professional development that promotes independent and shared reflection, opportunities for leadership growth, and enables teachers to continuously evaluate and revise their classroom practices to improve learning outcomes?			X				
4.4 Integrate child/youth development, support services and partnerships with families and outside organizations with the school-wide goals to accelerate the academic and personal growth of students?			X				
Overall score for Quality Statement 4			X				
X							
Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for monitoring and evaluating progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	△	➤	✓	+			
5.1 Evaluate the quality of curricular, instructional and organizational decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school?			X				
5.2 Evaluate systems for assessing students, organizing data, and sharing information with student and families, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school?			X				
5.3 Establish and sustain a transparent, collaborative system for measuring progress towards interim and long term goals and making adjustments during the year and over time?		X					
5.4 Use data to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of structured professional collaboration, capacity building and leadership development strategies?			X				
Overall score for Quality Statement 5			X				
Quality Review Scoring Key							
△	Underdeveloped	➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features	✓	Proficient	+	Well Developed