

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

The Kennedy-King School

Elementary School 219

**1060 Clarkson Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11212**

Principal: Winsome G. Smith

Dates of review: October 26 - 27, 2010

Lead Reviewer: Beverly A. Wilkins

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Kennedy-King is an elementary school with 744 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 92% Black, 6% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 4% English language learners and 10% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 92%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school has established sound systems for monitoring instructional practices with a clear focus on improving student outcomes.
 - The school's commitment to a common instructional focus energizes frequent and ongoing articulation between administrators and teachers that leads to a list of proper professional development options. Intervisitations, observation snapshots, individualized goal setting, attendance at national and international conferences, and exemplars assigned to new teachers provide strategic next step feedback. Professional development aligned with a high-paced, dense curriculum aims at improved teacher performance. School leaders identify professional areas in need of development and make large investments in human and material resources. Because of this, professional growth and student performance are enhanced.
- Through regular use of a comprehensive range of relevant school-wide data, leaders and faculty have a transparent understanding of the performance and progress of individuals, by group and by subject, which effectively informs instruction and organizational adjustments.
 - An internal data collection system, shared across the school, augments the school leaders and teachers' effective utilization of ATS data. This compilation of information includes interim assessments, support service data, results of vision and hearing screening, list of previous teachers, students' reading and math performance levels, proficiency levels, referral data, attendance data, and accumulated disciplinary incidents. Consequently, an organized and extensive record-keeping system empowers school-wide goal setting.
 - Regular analysis of connected data leads to curricular and instructional adjustments that fuel the forward movement of all students. An effect of the school's careful analysis of last year's math scores resulted in the recent adoption of a sequentially organized math program equipped with tailored entry points that buttress engagement of students at varying levels of mastery, including special education and English language learners.
- Effective communication with families, who have high praise for the academic and personal support their children receive from the school, results in productive home-school partnerships.
 - Monthly parent pen pal letters written by students and endorsed by administrators and staff, actively engage parents in the learning process. Personalized messages provide ongoing updates on class events, topics of study, testing data, academic strengths and weaknesses, teacher-student conferences, academic and social-emotional goals, and recommendations and suggestions to better performance. In turn, parents submit written feedback as to how they will help their children at home. This exchange of information strengthens value placed on learning and reinforces expectations that result in performance gains. One parent proudly told the Reviewer that kindergarteners also write to parents so they are aware of resources and materials they can use at home to support their children.

- The vast majority of parents interviewed said they feel welcome at the school. Hence, they eagerly attend workshops, grade meetings, and interim conferences. Due to collaboration between the parent coordinator and guidance department, families keep abreast of inherent challenges and innovative programs that impact school life. Purposeful and timely dissemination of information via parent workshops, training sessions, or whole-school meetings provoke parent use of ARIS and aids their understanding of college and career readiness standards.
- The principal has created a learning community well focused on data driven assessment to accelerate levels of proficiency and hasten progress for all students.
 - Highly effective and thoughtful discussions about data and its relevance toward school improvement foster interim and long-term goal setting anchored in deliberate action plans. As a result, by grade, teachers visit each other classrooms to determine what students should know and must be able to do in order to meet key standards. Subsequently, they make modifications to curriculum maps and adjust lesson plans based on their findings.
 - Through cohesive organizational structures that inspire collaborations toward achievement of school-wide goals, school leaders ensure involvement of all stakeholders in whole-school planning. Faculty conferences, the school leadership team, monthly parent-teacher association gatherings, and school consultations serve as decision-making forums that garner input and feedback on suitably high goals that enable accelerated student learning.
- School leaders make informed and effective instructional decisions across all aspects of school culture that maximize adult and student performance.
 - Precisely aligned organizational decisions firmly support the school's expectation for academic excellence and teacher scholar. Consequently, cohorts of students along with their teacher move to the next grade. Accordingly, teacher understanding of student strengths and learning needs lead to commendable progress as evidenced by overall student performance.
 - Consistent with the school's goal of increased time on task, pairs of teachers work alongside each other daily in order to complement individual practice and implement instructional methodologies and techniques best suited to meet goals for targeted groups of students. Implementation of new programs such as Reading Street and its counterpart Envision math has improved student engagement resulting in increased participation during lessons.
- Teachers work in collaborative teams to develop tools to analyze and organize data, plan curriculum, and to share practice for improved student outcomes.
 - Teams of teachers effectively devise a range of tools to aggregate, disaggregate, and organize data so that information about trends in student performance, especially relating to special education and English language learner students, is readily available for making sound curriculum and instructional adjustment. The use of DY0 assessments to measure students' learning against literacy standards prompts a coherent focus on vocabulary development to better student writing skills across the school.
 - At the classroom level, teachers thoughtfully utilize formative and diagnostic assessments, such as pre-assessments, student goal sheets, interim assessments, unit tests, and teacher-made tests. This widespread practice

results an accurate picture of individual students' strengths thereby stimulating greater concentration on content teaching.

What the school needs to improve

- Structure collaborative inquiry to provide all faculty with regular opportunities to share key insights anchored in best practices for improved teaching and learning.
 - The Movers and Shakers inquiry team has made a good start in following the progress of a group of twenty bottom third students in English language arts. The team shares instructional approaches to remediate low-level performance. Nevertheless, they have yet to delve into a casual analysis in order to leverage their practice toward closing the achievement gap.
 - Teacher teams meet on grade to share best practices, develop lessons, and make collaborative decisions regarding instructional strategies. However, special education teachers and service providers do not meet as a distinct group as frequently as other teams. Although teachers state they regularly meet on their own, structured time to engage in an inquiry approach to enhance their professional expertise is not systemically in place.
- Deepen instructional practice so that delivery of lessons, across the school, include effective questioning that elicits higher-order thinking, extends learning, and offers suitable challenge for all students.
 - The school's rich curriculum, including two foreign languages, visual arts and an exceptional music program, reinforces expectations that all students can engage in purposeful activities and participate in a rigorous standard based learning process. To the contrary, the planning of lessons does not consistently incorporate higher order skills or abundant opportunities for complex and sophisticated thinking. Therefore, the acceleration of student capacity is not sufficiently sharp.
- Promote greater consistency in differentiated instruction based on data so that lessons reflect purposeful grouping and tasks that accommodate different learning styles in order to maximize student potential.
 - Students report that their teachers work with them individually or in small groups which gives them confidence to be successful. However, in the vast majority of classrooms, students engage in whole group activities and they utilize the same materials. Consequently, varied and multiple entry points to maximize individual student learning and enrich subgroup performance are limited.
- Extend written feedback to students to include precise next steps for improvement and to enhance self-monitoring of progress toward their learning goals.
 - School leaders and teams of teachers have firmly entrenched structures in place to share many sources of evaluative data. As a result, students make progress, but articulate what they must do to improve in broad and general language. Because feedback on a majority of student products does not provide detailed next steps for improvement, self-assessment is not yet securely in place.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: The Kennedy-King School	UD	D	P	WD
Overall QR Score			X	
Quality Statement 1 – Instructional and Organizational Coherence: 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>	UD	D	P	WD
1.1 Design engaging, rigorous and coherent curricula, including the Arts, for a variety of learners and 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	
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>	UD	D	P	WD
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 Align assessments to curriculum and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom level?			X	
2.3 Use or develop tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize, aggregate, 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

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>	UD	D	P	WD			
3.1 Establish a coherent vision of 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				
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>	UD	D	P	WD			
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				
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>	UD	D	P	WD			
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				
Quality Review Scoring Key							
UD	Underdeveloped	D	Developing	P	Proficient	WD	Well Developed

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