

# Quality Review Report 2010-2011

**KAPPA V**

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

**Principal: Dellie Edwards**

**Dates of review: February 9 - 10, 2011**

**Lead Reviewer: Ainslie Cumberbatch**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

KAPPA V is a middle school with 265 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 90% Black, 8% Hispanic, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 2% English language learners and 23% 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 93.4%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is proficient.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal and staff work well as a unified team to create a warm and supportive environment for teaching and learning to take place.
  - In response to safety concerns noted in the school's last Learning Environment Survey, school leaders introduced rituals and routines that include behavior and hallway rubrics related to proper decorum. A character education program, a positive behavior intervention, and support initiative (PBIS), complement these strategies. Staff share with students similar high expectations with regard to school attendance and work ethics. As a result, students, parents, and teachers describe the school as, "Excellent", "awesome" and "academically focused".
  - Students share that all their teachers know them well and serve double duty as counselors and tutors. They report that staff focus on ensuring their success and genuinely care about their well-being. Consequently, students express an obligation to work hard and enjoy the nurturing relationship afforded to them.
- The school's highly developed communication systems keeps parents and students fully informed of students' academic and behavioral progress.
  - The school distributes progress reports four times a year to enable students to monitor their own progress and loops parents in to discuss next learning steps between report cards. Students' conference with teachers regularly and parents discuss their children's overall progress at grade meetings three times a year in addition to parent-teacher conferences. This feedback facilitates parental support at home and school data shows improved student outcomes.
  - Administrators and staff provide students and parents with access to online resources to monitor data relative to individual student progress. The school provides workshops for parents to review student attendance, class work, homework, and assessment results to help them ensure their children are on track to meet learning goals. Parents also receive curriculum outlines to assist them in navigating expected student growth and to inform their dialogue with teachers. Consequently, parents report a strong feeling of support in a family-like setting and that their children are well prepared to meet school goals.
- Students benefit from a standards-based curriculum that provides the opportunity for them to participate as active learners.
  - All teachers use monthly curriculum maps to guide daily instruction. For example in grade 7 math, the plans shape the nature of teaching and learning and facilitate the delivery of rigorous student-centered instruction. As a result, students express confidence in their teachers and feel empowered by the quality of work expected of them.
  - Staff carefully review student work and assessment data to develop rigorous standards-based curricula that address identified student needs. This funnels the implementation of focused reading and writing strategies and tailored assessments geared toward individuals and groups of students. As a result, the school routinely adjusts its instructional plans based on student performance.

- Teachers use curriculum maps and units of study aligned to State standards to support coherence and rigor in teaching and learning.
  - Teachers deliver an engaging, student-centered curriculum around the school theme, “Be committed to excellence. Lead! Light the way for others.” Monthly planning guides include essential questions tailored to probe student thinking toward analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. In a grade 6 humanities class, the teacher’s focus on character development included an examination of conflict, group work, and independent reflection, leading students to develop their own solution to the dilemma as a final assessment. This structure creates a common framework for planning that supports teaching and learning.
  - Lesson protocols and challenging coursework, such as using customary units of length to measure with precision, solving and graphing algebraic inequalities, character response, or change as the plot moves toward a solution, are effective strategies that engage students as active participants. As a result, students develop competency and stamina in their work, as noted by student assessments and classroom observations.
- School leaders make informed and effective organizational decisions that support the acceleration of student learning.
  - The school prioritizes teacher collaboration by implementing a school-based option allowing staff to use one of their 37½ -minute daily extensions for teacher team meetings. Consequently, teachers have additional time during which they engage in data analysis and inquiry skills that address individual student needs. As a result, targeted groups of students are making incremental progress.
  - School staff participate in initiatives that include grade 7 math night, curriculum development, tutorials and committee work, to support school-wide goals and individual student learning needs. Teachers voluntarily tutor students before school, after school, and on their lunch hours, to ensure consistency of student support and success. This commitment enables the school to provide an in-depth support system and successfully move struggling students.
- Teachers use a variety of assessment tools to provide a complete picture of students’ progress across all aspects of the school.
  - Staff use, and discuss with the data specialist, a range of student performance data that include Acuity periodic assessments as well as school-wide benchmark assessments administered three times a year to inform lesson planning. As a result, teachers provide accurate and individualized support to students in the classroom and during extended day tutorials.
  - Math teachers regularly use benchmark assessments and Acuity predictive assessment results to gauge student preparedness to take the math Regents. In addition, they create classroom assessments to supplement this data, resulting in a differentiated instructional program and great results by students on this exam.

### **What the school needs to improve**

- Use the observation tool to enhance professional goals and plans with teachers that support attainment of school-wide goals and improved student achievement.

- School leaders monitor the quality of instruction and provide specific feedback to teachers. However, observation reports do not always address each teacher's professional goals with delineated feedback linked to student data, or reference strategies to improve student work products. As a result, this limits efforts to improve teacher practice and assess teacher growth over time.
- School leaders provide instructional guidance to probationary and veteran staff and offer a menu of supports available through the school's network. However, teachers report that this assistance does not always target their specific needs, thus limiting the growth of individual staff members.
- Enhance professional opportunities for staff so that there is a connection between discussion of practice and impact on classroom instruction and student achievement.
  - While the school schedule does provide time for teacher collaboration, teacher team meetings are not yet fully embedded across grades or subject-areas, thus minimizing opportunities to develop content and grade specific best practices to further student learning.
  - School leaders allow staff to organize events and lead various school teams. However, administrators do not encourage staff to step up as teacher leaders or facilitators within the school. Consequently, the school does not have a clear succession plan in place for key leaders.
- Revise school plans to include targeted long-term goals that focus on school improvement as you move to implement the Common Core Standards.
  - Administrators identify school priorities in their Comprehensive Educational Plan and other planning documents that address annual goals. However, long-range plans that reflect the principal's vision, such as connecting students' long-term goals with real life experiences, are yet to surface publicly and become part of a formal structure to inform the work of staff relative to students' needs.
  - School plans for student success include a review of student work through the lens of the Common Core Standards and the alignment of assessments to unit plans. At present, a formal process for assessing the impact of school-wide plans that goes beyond scholarship results and identifies effective organizational and instructional practices is emerging. As a result, the lack of this structure limits the school's ability to monitor progress towards targeted goals.
- Expand the use of data analysis to evaluate and revise, as needed, processes and programs within the school that lead to effective professional collaborations.
  - School leaders review the minutes of the two school teams and work with facilitators to develop future agendas. Administrators also connect with individual team members in-between meeting dates to request updates on key issues. However, this is not an embedded practice and does not take place regularly.
  - School leaders do not regularly review student performance data with teachers as part of the observation process, nor do they include reference of movement towards meeting professional goals within the formal evaluation. As a result, recommendations do not go deep enough identifying necessary supports to enable teachers to achieve set targets related to student performance.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

<b>School name: KAPPA V</b>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
<b>Overall QR Score</b>			<b>X</b>	
<b>Quality Statement 1 – Instructional and Organizational Coherence: The school has a coherent strategy to support student learning that aligns curriculum, instruction and organizational decisions.</b>				
<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
1.1 Design engaging, rigorous and coherent curricula, including the Arts, for a variety of learners and aligned to key State standards?			<b>X</b>	
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?			<b>X</b>	
1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet student learning needs?			<b>X</b>	
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?				<b>X</b>
<b>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.</b>				
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
2.1 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the school level?			<b>X</b>	
2.2 Align assessments to curriculum and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom level?			<b>X</b>	
2.3 Use or develop tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize, aggregate, and analyze student performance trends?			<b>X</b>	
2.4 Engage in an open exchange of information with students and families regarding students' learning needs and outcomes?				<b>X</b>

<b>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.</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>			
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				
<b>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.</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>			
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				
<b>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.</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>			
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					
<b>Quality Review Scoring Key</b>							
<b>UD</b>	<b>Underdeveloped</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>WD</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>