

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Banana Kelly High School

X530

**965 Longwood Avenue
Bronx
NY 10459**

Principal: Joshua Laub

Dates of review: March 10-11, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Sarah Goodman

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Banana Kelly is a high school with 457 students from 9th through 12th grade. The school population comprises 27% Black, 68% Hispanic, 1% White, and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 16% English language learners and 21% special education students. Boys account for 48% of the students enrolled and girls account for 52%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 84.3%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The administration has built strong partnerships between outside organizations and the faculty to provide students with social-emotional, academic and real-world learning opportunities.
 - The administration has integrated the support of a wide range of external community based organizations within and outside the school day. They provide diverse opportunities such as excursions from the Bronx to Nepal, college visitations, and leadership skill development. These activities expand students' world-view and provide them with life skills that can transfer to future academic and work settings.
 - The school provides professional support for teachers to help them integrate the services of an in-school intervention team to work with students that are suspended or disrupting class to increase opportunities for learning.
- The school has built a community where students are known by supportive adults, leading to an inclusive environment that supports their developmental growth.
 - During student and parent focus groups, participants stated that they feel that the school is safe and their teachers are available to help them during lunch, afterschool, and on the weekends. The administration could speak to the challenges and strengths of many of their students and describe how the work with their community partners provides unique experiences inside and outside the classroom that help their holistic development.
- The school has developed a short list of school level goals that drive action plans to unify teacher planning around common student learning targets.
 - Last year, a comprehensive needs assessment drove the administration to focus on writing this year. This led to the development of the Banana Kelly Writing Rubric as a way to boost graduation requirements reliant on writing skills. The Comprehensive Educational Plan goals of improving the graduation and credit accumulation rate, increasing the English language arts Regents pass rate and using the writing rubric are understood and supported by the majority of the community allowing more powerful school wide conversations and interdepartmental work.
- The school provides a range of professional supports to help evaluate and support teachers to develop a reflective staff of educators.
 - Several different coaches provide teachers with a range of help in pedagogy, planning and content knowledge. New teachers receive priority attention from the coaches. The use of classroom observations, performance data review, and check-ins by the coaches and the administration guide regular tenure and retention decisions and promote

a community of educators that frequently tries new instructional practices to meet the needs of their students.

- Inquiry teams are utilized throughout the school to develop professional collaborations that examine school practices and make recommendations to increase student performance.
 - All teachers are engaged in collaborative grade teams and content area teams. This structure promotes the inquiry process for looking deeper at student work to examine instructional practice. The grade team leader meetings provide a distributed leadership model that gives teachers an avenue to participate in school decisions. For example, the grade team leaders were able to examine attendance data and notice an increase in cutting after lunch. The team brainstormed a new system to require students to swipe in before and after lunch, improving the number of students that returned for afternoon classes.

What the school needs to improve

- Promote consistent instructional practice that integrates rigor and higher order thinking skills to engage a variety of learners in standards-based class work.
 - The Banana Kelly Handbook and the professional development sessions offered to the staff have worked to unify the faculty in a planning process that considers rigor and higher order thinking. While many teachers show some ability to plan for these instructional characteristics, the lessons that are executed do not always follow the lesson plans. Many classrooms relied on teacher directed instruction where the primary thinking students were asked to do involved recall of basic information. As a result, not all students are provided the opportunity to engage in the kind of work that will prepare them to fulfill their graduation requirements.
- Develop teacher pedagogy to align differentiated learning strategies across classrooms to improve student engagement and academic progress.
 - While the administration embraces the workshop model, group work, and project based learning, the teacher practice inconsistently utilizes these methods. The teachers that are most successfully implementing strategies like accountable talk and differentiated learning are not observed by other teachers limiting the ability to improve and unify professional practices that support student achievement.
 - While the school integrates a variety of teaching methods into their practice including field work, very few teachers use data to drive differentiated instruction for particular groups of students within a class. As a result, flexible groupings and differentiated product choices for projects are not regularly used, limiting the ability to support progress among all students.

- Improve systems for evaluating the rigor of curriculum and instruction to improve student achievement.
 - While the administration collects data from staff to gather feedback on their distributed leadership structure within grade level inquiry teams and content area teams, they do not monitor the assessment and pedagogical choices these teams are making. For example, grade teams are collecting student writing examples and following a protocol to examine this writing, but the writing prompts are not consistently rigorous. Therefore, the data that is analyzed in these groups often not aligned to the Regents assessments students need to graduate and does not effectively adjust instructional choices to better support student progress.

- Bolster the analysis of assessments across all content areas to provide information on student learning that can drive instructional adjustments at the team and classroom level.
 - Work with the Banana Kelly Writing Rubric is beginning to unify the staff around a way to look at information provided from a common assessment and reflect on the integration of writing into their coursework. But, data is not often used to look at the efficacy of teaching practices for those particular skills or to promote flexible groupings limited differentiated supports during the school day and slowing achievement.

- Realign the use of resources to to ensure that the school can meet student learning needs.
 - Students and parents stated that they would like to have more resources and opportunities to support their learning while they are in school and when they complete their homework. Most students do not have textbooks that they can take home. While students are often engaged in a variety of projects, they rarely access resources beyond classroom based texts and handouts. There was limited evidence of effective use of the internet to develop research. This lack of allocation to classroom technology time, additional texts, and field trip time to libraries limits the development of college readiness skills.
 - The school has implemented a professional development calendar that includes sessions on assessment, differentiation, and response to intervention. However, an emphasis on effective co-teaching models has not been an emphasis on the calendar or during coaching sessions leading to a primarily one-teach, one-assist model that limits the small group support within core classes for sub groups including English language learners and students with disabilities. This lack of a consistent differentiated response within classes with more than one teacher hinders the effective engagement and learning of students.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: Banana Kelly High 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