

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

P.S. 007 Kingsbridge
Elementary School X007

3201 KINGSBRIDGE AVENUE
BRONX
NY 10463

Principal: Frank Patterson

Dates of review: December 14-15, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Veronica Yurcik

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

P.S. 007 Kingsbridge is an Elementary school with 523 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 10% Black, 77% Hispanic, 6% Asian students and 0% other students. The student body includes 22% English language learners and 18% special education students. Boys account for 49% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 94.7%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

What the school does well

- The principal strategically initiates key organizational modifications that support student learning, resulting in significant student performance gains. (1.3)
 - o Recognizing that academic instructional time was not sufficient, the principal changed class schedules to reflect a balance between the arts and academic core subjects. Core subjects of English language arts and math are rotated within the week's programming so that no subject is relegated daily to an end of day slot. Thus, all students benefit from a full instructional core curriculum programmed to maximize their attention and engagement. In addition, the principal changed coach schedules that were determined solely by teacher requests. He now assigns coach time strategically based on data review and classroom observations. This has enabled coaches to provide direct teacher assistance where it is needed most to support developing pedagogy to affect production of meaningful student work, increase teacher capacity building, and adherence to school-wide instructional goals.
 - o The principal has devised his own data systems to judge the effectiveness of teachers and uses that information astutely to make determinations for teacher class assignments, special instructional periods, and teacher teaming, supporting long-term goals for improving pedagogy and student performance outcomes. The newly created daily instructional time known as Differentiated Learning Period (DLP) is an innovative strategy forging unity of purpose across the school. During DLP, all classroom and out of classroom teachers use assessment data to provide differentiated instruction to small groups of 6-8 students for two periods daily. This work has increased shared accountability for student outcomes and investment of out-of-classroom teachers in students' academic achievement. School administration and teachers cite DLP as a strong contributing factor to double-digit performance rises in English language arts and math raising scores last year from 31.1 to 40.8% and from 43.8 to 56.55% respectively.
- The school conveys high performance expectations that are understood by all constituencies and translate into excellent attendance and work ethic of students and staff. (3.4)
 - o Within his 18-month tenure, the new principal has very effectively set a high standard for professionalism. The United Federation of Teachers representative acknowledges, "The culture of the school has changed from the lunchrooms to the classrooms." "We know we better be here and be prepared." "If we take a day, we're taking from our kids." Pairing teachers into curriculum writing teams; instituting principal-teacher data meetings; sharing school, grade and peer-school data, and including all teachers in differentiated learning period instruction, has raised both personal and shared accountability within and across grades. Teachers express that these newly introduced practices help them "to look at their teaching practices and change".
 - o Students uniformly appreciate and understand teachers' high expectations and supports, exclaiming the schools' motto that "everyone is a star". They speak knowledgeably about goal setting, flexible grouping, investigation of student work errors, and tools such as rubrics and exit problems that help them and their teachers evaluate their work. One teacher stated, "No kid is written off." Because of this shared commitment, students on all levels are motivated to

- improve. They produce neat classroom products, fill the school with beautiful art projects aligned with core subject learning, and maintain a 95% attendance rate. Progress category scores almost doubled on last year's Progress Report and high need subgroups of English language learners, special education, and the schools lowest third all earned 'closing the achievement gap' extra credit for 75th percentile or higher growth in English and math.
- Comprehensive data analysis clearly illuminates school strengths and needs, informing targeted actions that improve school practices. (2.1)
 - o The school conducts a comprehensive analysis of State tests disaggregating performance by teacher, grade, and skill, and by comparing its performance grade-by-grade to peer schools in their own assessment management system called SAM. As a result, teachers have detailed information on student strengths and weaknesses and a clear picture of student performance that is used to set high expectations for their teaching and for their students' performance.
 - o The school uses simulated English language arts and math tests four to five times yearly as formative assessments to gather detailed information regarding individual students, subgroups, and class performance. During one-to-one teacher-principal post-assessment item analysis, teachers develop action plans drilling down to essential skills such as isolating the need for good fact and detail identification in order to understand the main idea. Teachers use this information astutely to support identified goals and inform small group instruction, resulting in an increase in an overall Progress Report score for elementary schools from the 30th percentile rank in 2010 to the 88th percentile rank in 2011.
 - Purposeful use of data tools enables detailed data analysis that shapes instruction and improves students' academic performance outcomes. (2.3)
 - o To better assess need and inform strategic action, the principal devised a new data management system that facilitates meticulous school and grade-wide data analysis. Thus, teachers and teams use tools that clearly illuminate performance trends for the school, with a keen eye on the identified subgroups of English language learners and special education students, to make targeted instructional adjustments. Consequently, both subgroups made positive gains in the English and math state assessments.
 - o A new grading policy established last year requires teachers to use formative assessment results to inform report card grading, resulting in closer alignment of scholastic results to State assessment outcomes. This has helped teachers gain a more realistic view of their students' performance status to make on-going strategic instructional adjustments.
 - The school has a coherent vision exemplified in a set of measurable databased goals that focus all constituencies on initiatives that accelerate student growth. (3.1)
 - o The Comprehensive Educational Plan and the Principal Performance Review share identical interim- and long-term goals strategically created to reflect the school's written theory of action that students learn best when data is used to understand their interests, teachers differentiate their instruction, and measure students' progress against standards. Thus, the school designs data-driven goals with detailed measurable criteria that help to focus instruction and monitor yearlong progress, promoting acceleration of student learning.

- o The school conducts exhaustive analyses using summative whole school and subgroup results, item analysis, and student work, to assess its practices and set goals. This extensive and thoughtful effort fostered pedagogical changes in using formative assessment data to create teaching action plans resulting in the school's moving from zero extra credits for closing the achievement gap in 2010 to earning 5 points in 2011, thereby narrowing the achievement gap.
- Students and teachers thrive in an environment of mutual respect enabling them to grow within a safe, caring, and supportive work oriented environment. (1.4)
 - o An unrelenting commitment to students drives a positive culture in which teachers talk only in positive terms about all students, enabling focused efforts that support academic and social development. Attendance is high and incident rates are low due to continual analysis of attendance and behavior data and timely interventions. The school enjoys well above average scores in every category of the New York City Learning Environment Survey testifying, to a safe and productive environment that supports both students' learning and teachers' professional development.
 - o The school's daily small group intervention period insures that each student is well known by at least one adult resulting in teachers taking responsibility for reporting potential risks so that guidance and academic referrals can be initiated to insure that students have the support they need to achieve academically and socially. Students readily name adults in the building that they trust, stating that teachers and supervisors understand them, know when someone needs special help, and provide a safe environment for them to learn.

What the school needs to improve

- Emphasize alignment of task and standard in on-going curriculum work to insure that all students are challenged by meaningful differentiated work tasks that foster high levels of critical thinking and engagement. (1.1 & 1.2)
 - o Although all grades have implemented a Common Core unit and teacher-planning pairs are working diligently to develop reading and writing curriculum aligned to the new standards, the process of unit planning and curriculum mapping is new to the school. Thus, full alignment is still developing affecting the consistency and instructional rigor needed to prepare college ready students. Teachers' daily instruction across grades does not uniformly challenge all students, especially those on a more advanced level, thereby limiting students' meeting their academic potential.
 - o While teachers believe students learn best from active practice and engagement, and plan lessons in assigned pairs to support such learning, opportunities for substantive oral engagement in classroom tasks are not yet sufficient, limiting prospects for students to be highly engaged in critical thinking in lessons and in peer partnerships with peers. Although the school has successfully improved outcomes for its students and targeted subgroups by improving differentiation opportunities, strategies across classrooms in posing questions that tap higher order thinking skills and designing multiple entry points consistently are still developing. Thus, skill acquisition and critical thinking needed to raise average passing performance level scores to upper levels of performance for all students are inhibited.

- Evaluate and strengthen current communication systems and opportunities to increase parental engagement in school decision-making and understanding of next learning steps. (2.4)
 - o While parents talk very highly of the new administration's receptivity and the improvement they see in their children based on the schools' renewed academic focus, they note a lack of frequently scheduled workshops by the parent coordinator and a limited functioning parents association. This reduces regular opportunities for the school to involve parents in decision-making.
 - o The school provides training in ARIS parent link and has revised interim reports between marking periods to help parents understand their children's academic progress better, however, the number of parents who participate and respond to interim reports is low. Currently the school does not yet have suitable outreach efforts so that a majority of families is familiar with tools and can understand and act upon student performance information.
- Further fine-tune assessments and their analysis to improve clarity of actionable feedback needed to meet the learning needs of all students. (2.2)
 - o Teacher teams study rubrics and assessments for their alignment to common core standards to evaluate current curriculum and classroom instructional decisions. The development of rigorous rubrics, however, is still a work in progress and thus not all rubrics are detailed enough to provide the actionable feedback needed to clearly guide all students to mastery.
 - o Across classrooms, teachers consistently use conference notes and rubrics, running records, tracking spreadsheets, unit tests and student work, to make instructional adjustments to meet learning needs. However, student use of rubrics to self-evaluate is not sufficiently embedded thus minimizing student opportunities to fully self-reflect, understand, and articulate next steps clearly. In addition, teachers' assessment through analyzing student work is a relatively new process in which teachers working with assistant principals are still developing skills and protocols to more accurately assess student work products.
- Enhance teacher observation and professional learning so that all teachers' exhibit effective pedagogy required maintaining continuous improvement of student academic performance outcomes (4.1)
 - o Although frequent, accurate teacher feedback is filtered through the school's chosen research-based rubric by Kim Marshall, and is linked to teacher's professional goals, the school has not yet identified a specific domain from the rubric's ten indicators as a focus for measuring its effect on the delivery of instruction. This diffuses the potential impact of the school's teacher effectiveness tool on its coherent effort to further improve classroom instruction.
 - o The principal's self-designed monitoring systems help to identify professional development needs and assess teacher effectiveness to steer targeted professional learning and inform teacher assignments. However, transparent databased systems for evaluation of early childhood teaching are not as evident as well established as upper grade systems, thus missing opportunities to ensure accurate gathering of information relative to measurement of lower-grade teacher performance.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: P.S. 007 Kingsbridge	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 as evidenced by meaningful student work products?				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, use on-going assessment practices and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom level?			X	
2.3 Use grading policies and tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize, aggregate, and analyze student performance trends to inform instruction and curriculum?				X
2.4 Engage families in school decision-making, activities and an open exchange of information regarding students' progress toward school and class expectations?			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 staff, students and families, and support students and families to achieve them?				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, guidance/advisement 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, with particular attention to the CCLS?			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