

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

Kings College School

X094

**3530 Kings College Place
Bronx, 10467**

Principal: Diane DaProcida

Dates of review: February 12 – 13, 2013

Lead Reviewer: Melodie Mashel

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

P.S. 94 an elementary school with 1,161 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 20% Black, 65% Hispanic, 2% White, and 12% Asian 1% other students. The student body includes 30% English language learners and 9% special education students. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 50%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 92.0%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school's well aligned CCLS curriculum embeds key standards and engages all students with cognitively demanding tasks that promote student high level thinking. (1.1)
 - Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and the Citywide Instructional Expectations (CIE) are effectively embedded in the school's units of study. Instructional tasks require students to read complex texts, cite evidence to argue and support positions in their writing using information from the texts, a key focus for this school year. Reading text closely and citing specific details in writing to support conclusions is a key standard addressed in all tasks. For example, fourth grade students research ecosystems and write persuasive arguments about whether mankind should care about the environment. Teacher's purposeful decisions to customize and tailor non-fiction text complexity and vocabulary and the school's effective design of academic intervention programs support English language learners and special education students. The school's well designed curriculum fosters student high level thinking for all students resulting in a 25% increase in the levels of post assessment tasks since the beginning of the school year.
 - Teachers meet weekly to look closely at student work, examine baseline assessment results, identify student individual strengths and needs and refine tasks accordingly to meet the needs of students. Revision of rubrics, use of visuals, immersion in read alouds and total physical response strategies that provide students with bodily kinesthetic and tactile learning experiences support student work. For example, in a class with a majority of English language learners, teacher's intentional decision to spend more time on a unit of study and the revision of a graphic organizer guided students through the successful completion of their task. As a result of curricular refinements, all students including English language learners and special education students are engaged in rigorous tasks that elevate their thinking as evidenced by an increase of one level for this group of students on these tasks.
- The principal effectively aligns resources to support instructional goals resulting in improved student achievement. (1.3)
 - School leaders' purchase of laptops, computer desktops and SMART boards for all classrooms supports the school's focus on the integration of technology into the instructional plan of the school. The school's commitment to promote technology ensures students employ technology to complete research aligned to the school's units of study. In addition, computer software that enhances student reading and mathematical problem solving are remedial tools used by the school's intervention programs. As a result, all students have access to a variety of media that supports student achievement and results in increased performance on interim reading assessments.

- Structured planning time and the division of the school into small cohorts facilitates creative scheduling that ensures vertical and horizontal teacher planning time and teacher classroom inter-visitations. Computer programs and the implementation of a guided reading model support the acquisition of stronger communication skills for the English language learner (ELL) and special education students. As an additional layer of support to ELL students, the school's English as a second language (ESL) program currently functions as both a push-in and pull-out service contingent on the specific needs of the students. Reassignment of teachers with areas of expertise, as determined by school leaders, as lead teachers provides ongoing support to new teachers in key areas of classroom management and instructional planning. Teacher mentor and buddy systems ensure teachers learn from each other. As a result of the key decisions made by school leaders all students are engaged in meaningful work resulting in an average of 7% increase and 5% increase in Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) respectively for English language learners and special education students, demonstrating progress towards meeting the school's goals for these groups of students.
- School leaders' use data from the observation of classroom teaching to provide teachers with effective feedback that supports teacher development and informs the school's professional development plan. (4.1)
 - The principal culled information from their school survey and recognized the need for the school to focus on creating a culture for learning. Since the school had been deeply immersed in implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention Systems (PBIS), school leaders aligned this initiative to Danielson's Framework. The practice of frequent visits to classrooms enabled school leaders to gather low inference observation data about teacher practice around managing student behaviors. Hence, improving the classroom and the school environment as well as managing student behaviors is a major focus for the school. School leaders conduct frequent observations around this component of Danielson's framework as well as other teacher specific areas for growth and provide them with verbal and written feedback and actionable next steps. This cycle of ongoing visits to classrooms guides teachers in developing strategies in managing student behaviors. As a result there is improved teacher practice around the management of student behaviors resulting in a 20% decrease in school-wide incidents as compared to the same period during the last year.
 - Feedback from classroom observation of teacher practice as well as teacher reflection about their own needs informs the school's professional development menu and supports teachers in the improvement of their practice. Professional development in the areas of the teaching of foundational skills, creating PBIS structures, classroom strategies for English language learners and the continued implementation of performance tasks supports the continued growth of teacher effective practice. As a result, there are coherent and consistent classroom practices that support teacher reflection and elevate teacher practice as evidenced by a significant increase in the number of teachers moving from the developing level to effective level in the area of classroom environment on Danielson's rubric.

What the school needs to improve

- Strengthen teacher practice so that teachers consistently develop high level questions to engage students in discussions that promote high levels of thinking. (1.2)
 - Teachers provide generic graphic organizers; create sentence starters and frontload vocabulary for the majority of lessons for the diverse needs of learners. Classroom libraries are well stocked with books that support student reading ability levels. Technology is often used as a venue to engage students in lesson activities and tasks. However, across classrooms teacher questions are mostly at low levels and do not always provide students with multiple entry points into the lessons or address the specific learning needs of students. As a result, there are limited opportunities for all students to fully participate in class lessons that engage them in high level thinking in order to advance student learning.
 - Classroom lessons support partner talk and some teachers thoughtfully pair and group students based on specific strengths and needs where students complete tasks and projects in partnerships. In an art class around the study of art from India, students worked in small groups on the completion of an art project. However, they worked independently and there were few opportunities provided for students to discuss their work. As a result, student exposure to content and academic vocabulary and deep discussions about their work were limited, thus hindering opportunities for all students to participate in discussions that build vocabulary and extend their thinking.

- Enhance teacher assessment practices to including checks for understanding to provide students with next steps and greater ability to improve their learning. (2.2)
 - Teachers use common assessments such as Developmental Reading Assessments, Acuity results, student performance assessment task data and end of unit test information to make curricula adjustments. However, analysis of student work does not yet result in adjustments to instructional strategies designed to improve student learning outcomes. In addition, teacher actionable written feedback to provide students with specific next steps to improve work is not consistent across all classrooms. As a result, there are missed opportunities for specific adjustments to be made in order to guide students to improve their work and maximize learning.
 - The school monitors student progress through the analysis of assessment data, and rubrics are used by teachers to assess student work. The practice of student use of rubrics and checklists to self-assess and clearly identify their own next learning steps is not yet an embedded practice. In addition, teacher ongoing checks for understanding that immediately inform them of student understanding of lessons are inconsistent across classrooms, thus limiting the opportunity to make midcourse corrections to instruction to clarify student misunderstandings to support higher levels of student progress.

- Continue to design systems and structures that communicate the school's high expectations to all constituents in order to ensure all members of the school community are accountable for student achievement. (3.4)
 - School workshops about the Common Core Learning Standards and the state assessments provided relevant information to parents. The school's web site informs the community about curricula information and resources. Monthly calendars provide parents with information about school celebrations and events. Parents praise the school for their improved attempts at family outreach and for providing venues for open dialog. However, school wide systems that provide parents with ongoing student specific information about student performance and progress and how parents may support them at home are not yet fully developed, thus hindering the opportunity for parents to provide additional support to improve their children's achievement.
 - The school's focus on Positive Behavior Intervention Systems and their decision to center on classroom environments to support student personal behaviors ensures students respect one another and are aware of "star behavior." However, systems that communicate high expectations to promote student academic behaviors and supports them in creating plans to cultivate these behaviors is not yet a fully developed part of the school's culture. As a result, there are missed opportunities for students or students to practice behaviors that prepares them for the next level.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: Kings College School	UD	D	P	WD			
Overall QR Score		X					
Instructional Core							
<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</i>	UD	D	P	WD			
1.1 Design engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula, including the arts, physical and health education, 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 that is informed by a research-based, common teaching framework and is aligned to curricula, engaging and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products?		X					
2.2 Align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessment and grading practices, and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels?		X					
School Culture							
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	UD	D	P	WD			
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?			X				
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve them?		X					
Systems for Improvement							
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	UD	D	P	WD			
1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet students' learning needs as evidenced by meaningful student work products?			X				
3.1 Establish a coherent vision of school improvement that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are tracked for progress and are understood and supported by the entire school community?			X				
4.1 Use the observation of classroom teaching with a research-based, common teaching framework 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				
5.1 Evaluate the quality of school- level decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school, with particular attention to the CCLS?			X				
Quality Review Scoring Key							
UD	Underdeveloped	D	Developing	P	Proficient	WD	Well Developed