

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

Kingsbridge International High School

**High School 10X268
2780 Reservoir Avenue
Bronx
NY 10458**

Principal: Ronald E. Newlon

Dates of review: February 27 – 28, 2013

Lead Reviewer: Elaine Lindsey

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Kingsbridge International is a high school with 497 students from 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 5% Black, 85% Hispanic, 3% White, and 7% Asian students. The student body includes 89% English language learners and 0% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 85%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal makes purposeful decisions to use resources and hiring practices aligned to the school's instructional goals, to maximize student outcomes. (1.3)
 - One of the school's instructional goals is to increase literacy through the use of technology. As such, the principal strategically used funds to purchase SMARTboards to increase the use of technology in the classroom and to allow students to have hands on interactions with text. The school has a large Hispanic population; therefore, audio books were purchased to aid the auditory learner and language acquisition for English as second language (ESL) students. I-pads to replace textbooks and laptops for every student provide opportunities to learn through technology. Students use laptops to work independently using Rosetta Stone to improve literacy skills and I-pads provide additional resources for students to use when finding information to support evidence for class assignments. As a result, students are beginning to show improvement in literacy skills across grades and disciplines.
 - The school's collaborative approach to hiring promotes accountability among faculty that supports the school's instructional goals. A team of teachers serve as the hiring committee and hiring decisions are decided by the team in collaboration with the principal. The team has developed specific criteria aligned to the school's instructional goals for new hires. For example, all new hires must present a demonstration lesson to the team which is evaluated using seven competencies of Danielson's framework for Teaching. New hires are selected based on the team's final evaluation. In addition to screening new staff to support instructional goals, decisions are made to support student performance by reducing class size. As such, the principal has hired an F-status administrator in lieu of a full-time assistant principal. The extra funds were used to hire an additional teacher to keep class size at a minimum. Consequently, class size averages 25 students per class providing more opportunities for smaller grouping and individualized instruction to challenge all learners.
- Students and staff appreciate the school's efforts in developing a safe, nurturing and inclusive environment that supports student learning. (1.4)
 - The school provides a safe, nurturing and cohesive community where there is mutual respect amongst staff and students. Students appreciate the positive reinforcement and celebration of student success. Honor roll and perfect attendance students receive certificates during an awards ceremony that's open to all community members. Students stated that the school is like a family, everyone is respectful of each other. When a new student comes, they are welcomed with open arms, and everyone pitches in to make them feel comfortable. No one is made to feel like an outsider.
 - The school supports effective academic and personal behaviors through the school wide philosophy "Students learn from what we do, not what we

say.” All staff are apprised of the school’s philosophy and are provided professional development on modeling all aspects of positive behavior, including appearance and treatment of others. Books such as “How do You Speak to People and How do You Look at People?” are provided to staff for reference and professional development. Administrators look for lessons and units that incorporate the school’s philosophy and rates effectiveness using Danielson’s Framework to identify weaknesses for targeted professional development. As a result, classroom and student incidents have declined.

- Teacher teams collaborate in the inquiry process to analyze key elements of teacher and student work and have a voice in shared decisions for improved student outcomes. (4.2)
 - Vertical and horizontal teams meet regularly and all teachers of the same discipline have common planning periods. Teachers’ professional periods have also been designated for teacher team meetings. During an 11th grade team meeting teachers gathered to discuss two students who were struggling in their classes. Protocols are in place for the team to analyze a sample of each student’s work from each discipline to develop strategies to support the teacher in developing meaningful tasks to provide multiple access points for all learners. Consequently, strategies are shared with the community through departmental meetings to improve instruction and increase students’ academic performance.
 - Teachers work collaboratively with the principal and have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning. For example, teacher teams collaborate with the administration and make decisions around teacher and student scheduling, professional development, course offerings and curriculum. This year, teachers decided that students would travel in blocks when taking core subjects. Thus, enabling teachers to track groups of students and develop strategies to engage all learners in the learning process to accelerate academic achievement.

What the school needs to improve

- Further refine curricula across all subject areas that consistently integrate and emphasize rigorous academic tasks that foster higher order thinking to engage all learners. (1.1)
 - Although the school is integrating the Common Core Learning Standards into the curriculum, tasks inconsistently emphasized rigorous habits and higher order thinking skills. In a science class, students were learning about how weatherization occurs in rocks. All students were asked to draw a cube to show how weatherization takes place and write down all the sides of the cube. One student completed drawing the cube before the teacher finished explaining the task. In a math class, students were working in groups on problems 1-11 in the textbook. Most students didn’t get past problem #2 as all of the problems were the same type preventing struggling students from advancing to the next question. Assignments across grades and disciplines did not cognitively challenge all students, as evidenced by workbook tasks, thus hindering opportunities for all

students to develop critical thinking skills in preparation for real world activities.

- Curricula and maps provide some direction for teachers to plan activities to include meaningful tasks for all learners. However, the school lacks evidence of using students' work and data to refine tasks across all grades and subject areas in order to engage all learners in problem solving and higher order thinking, thus limiting student achievement.
- Continue to strengthen pedagogy to ensure that rigorous curriculum, tasks and teaching strategies, offer multiple entry points and high levels of thinking to engage all learners in increased outcomes. (1.2)
 - Across classrooms students respond to teacher questions, however, questioning is typically lower level and does not push students' critical thinking. For example, in a science class students are asked, "Who can give some similarities of a map and information on the geologic history chart? Who knows what Pangaea is? In a math class students are asked "What is intersect? What is equal distance? Students do not form their own higher order questions and lessons do not typically generate student query. Although students work in groups, activities are not differentiated to support multiple entry points. In most classes students are given identical tasks to complete, thus hindering the school's ability to challenge all learners in meaningful tasks at their instructional levels, in order to produce higher order products in preparation for post secondary work.
 - Although teacher questioning generates some student participation, lessons tend to be teacher centered with most dialogue being teacher to student and student to teacher limiting student to student discussions, students composing questions and accountable talk. Students do not author their own higher order questions and lessons are not directed by student query resulting in limited challenge for all learners to think and write at high levels. Evidence of higher order thinking skills in student work was uneven across classrooms. Writing assignments inconsistently require students to conduct research or analyze information and many instructional tasks fail to challenge all learners, thus limiting school's ability to prepare students for college.
- Improve use of ongoing checks for understanding, student self-assessment practices and common assessment, so teachers can make effective adjustments to meet the needs of all learners. (2.2)
 - Across classrooms and disciplines baseline assessments are teacher driven. However, the principal stated that the school is in the process of creating common rubrics that will provide teachers with guidance to provide actionable feedback to students that will inform next steps. Consequently, the current system limits opportunities for teachers to analyze common data to monitor student progress, and provide them with feedback toward their next steps in order to improve college and career readiness skills.
 - Currently teacher assessments and rubrics vary across grades and disciplines. Exit slips are a part of the school's culture; however they are inconsistently collected at the end of the period and are often assigned for

homework. In addition, teachers inconsistently conduct ongoing checks of student understanding during lessons that allow for on the spot adjustments, thus limiting the teacher's ability to effectively check for understanding in order to make adjustments in the lesson to meet the needs of all learners.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: Kings Bridge International High 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