



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

**Quality Review
Office of School Quality
Division of Academics, Performance, and Support
2013-2014**

Quality Review Report 2013-2014

Kennedy-King Elementary School

K219

**1060 Clarkson Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11212**

Principal: Winsome Smith

Dates of review: October 30 – 31, 2013

Lead Reviewer: Beverly A. Wilkins

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Kennedy King Elementary School is an elementary school with 561 students from pre-kindergarten through grade five. The school population comprises 90% Black, 8% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 6% English language learners and 12% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2012 - 2013 was 91.7%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school implements a content and performance-based curriculum aligned to City and Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), emphasizing rigorous habits and higher order skills for a diversity of learners. (1.1)
 - School leaders and faculty delve into the work of deepening rigorous learning experiences by integrating conceptual shifts and skill-based strategies embedded in the ReadyGEN literacy program across all grades. In addition, implementation of Go Math! curricula aligns grade-level concepts and skills to CCLS and Citywide Instructional Expectations. Purposeful decisions to deliver new curricula with fidelity incorporate higher order skill development into daily instruction, such as exposure to complex vocabulary, assignments that require students to respond to hierarchical questions, and formal writing conventions, which builds instructional coherence as evidenced in lessons observed that remain true to learning objectives and accompanying standards across classrooms. Teachers design curriculum maps aligning science and social studies content standards with the City's Scope and Sequence pacing calendars. Students in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade receive Spanish, computer, music, and visual arts instruction as well as engage in an age-appropriate year-long project in which they learn about educational opportunities offered at nationwide colleges and universities and study 21st century jobs and careers. The school's deliberate work to implement robust curricula promotes deeper learning of rigorous skills and habits necessary for college and career readiness.
 - Teachers meet in inquiry and grade level collaborations to surface negotiable and non-negotiable elements of literacy and math curricula based on programmatic guidelines, student work, and data outcomes. As a result, modifications made to close reads emphasizing literary devices and vocabulary, re-teaching of author's purpose to foster understanding of main idea, and deconstructing word problems that had resulted in high margins of error produce curriculum planning sessions to explore alternative options for struggling learners, particularly students with disabilities and English language learners. The turnkey of ReadyGEN training and collective analysis of Go Math! Chapter 1 tests equip teachers with strategies to address new pedagogical techniques, leading to refinement to modules. As reflected in its Progress Report, the school has experienced an increase from 59.0% in 2012 to 86.5% in 2013 in the English language arts growth percentile among the school's lowest third population, indicating how well this subgroup performed when given high-level cognitive tasks.
- Teachers utilize common assessments, including performance tasks embedded in curricula, to analyze learning outcomes and make instructional decisions that stimulate effective adjustments in classroom practices. (2.2)
 - Teachers utilize and examine many forms of assessments to understand how and why students struggle in aspects of their learning. Consequently, data culled from pre- and post-Measures of Student

Learning (MOSL) assessments, literacy and math benchmark and formative assessments, including student work folders, response journals, writing folders, and reading logs spark in-depth item analysis investigations, resulting in graphing of findings to determine next steps in closing gaps in learning across classrooms and grade levels. For example, analysis of results on the 2013 State math tests provoked "zooming into questions" to uncover stumbling blocks in concepts of measurement. Teachers found that the wording of questions might have caused students to answer incorrectly. Therefore, across grades, there is an intentional focus on measurement concepts. Accordingly, teachers make instructional decisions that engender small group instruction or re-teaching concepts during academic intervention periods. As a result, as one student said, "Teachers provide individual practice when we are stuck." Similarly, second grade teachers analyze performance tasks surfacing common errors in place value questions. Subsequently, spiral teaching increases fluent mathematical applications as evidenced in student work.

- In keeping with efforts to ratchet up the curriculum, teachers use rubrics to norm end of unit assessments, track trends and patterns, and identify strengths and weaknesses for measuring student progress toward CCLS standards. The principal routinely examines student work and uses classroom observations to inform pedagogical and instructional moves. Thus, the use of common assessments leads to adjustments in the pacing of lessons. Ongoing evaluations of student performance on embedded tasks assist teachers in identifying students who are in need of additional time and supports. Additionally, the school utilizes Schoolnet, an online instructional management program, to track growth in adjusted skills areas. Therefore, modifications to teaching objectives undergird progress toward learning goals.
- School leaders effectively use the Danielson Framework for Teaching to deliver actionable observation feedback, which results in clear expectations for increased student engagement and improved teacher practice. (4.1)
 - The school utilizes the Classroom Environment and Instruction Domains of the Danielson Framework to inform ongoing actionable feedback to and among teachers regarding the quality of pedagogy. Collaboratively, school leaders visit classrooms, sharing observation data and holding teachers accountable for practice aligned to professional expectations. This work anchors understanding of effective and highly effective elements of the Framework coupled with analyses of observations of student work during classroom visits. In addition to normed feedback, low- and mid-level inference notations result in frequent reciprocal dialogue as a primary vehicle by which teachers and administrators consult on teaching strengths and next steps for improved practice. An observation tracker used by administrators capture time-bound monitoring of delineated recommendations supported by professional development opportunities. ARIS Learn videos, the turnkey of network training sessions, and external professional learning endeavors further instructional capacity and promote professional growth. As a result of rubric-based individual professional conferences, teachers expressed they are developing "good teaching practice" leading to meaningful student-to-student engagements as observed during class visits.

- All members of the school community take an active role in creating a respectful, safe, and responsive environment that supports learning needs and students' development. (1.4)
 - The school's Safety and Respect score on the 2012 – 2013 New York City School Survey Report falls below the Citywide average for all elementary schools. However, students, teachers, and parents agree that the school is safe and fosters a learning environment conducive to positive social-emotional and intellectual growth for students and adults. As evidenced in a favorable 10% increase in responses from the 2012 - 2013 school year, the focus on a school-wide core value initiative T.I.G.E.R. (Trust, Integrity, Generosity, Enthusiasm, and Respect) engenders shared methods and measures that elevate a nurturing climate whereby services focus on preventive supports. As a result, students report they feel safe because School Safety Agents, crossing guards, and parent volunteers are visible and helpful. Students are actively involved in establishing routines and rules so they speak fluently about the correlation between one's behavior and academic success. As such, the school's union representative stated there are no safety issues and believes there is a healthy level of respect among faculty due to a change in staffing. The school's year-to-date Online Occurrence Reporting System data supports this assertion indicating a significant three-year decline from 85 incidents and suspensions in 2011 to nine in 2013. Consequently, personal connections and collegial relationships support a respectful tone and climate for learning.
 - The School Support Team, guidance counselor, cluster and academic intervention service teachers work with select groups of students empowering productive student-adult relationships. Student attendance at service assemblies reinforce students' understanding of the roles of support staff and the services they provide. Thus, there is a drop in occurrence data compared to last year's monthly statistics. The parent coordinator serves as a conduit for a responsive climate. One parent described the work of the parent coordinator as "the backbone of the community" while another commented that he knows all children and families well. According to parents interviewed, the school provides workshops and coordinates meetings central to personal behavior development keeping them abreast of services and supports that affect positive social-emotional growth and student progress. For example, workshops on CCLS, bullying, homework tips, training on the ARIS system and workshops geared toward fathers galvanize the efforts of the school community in response to maintaining positive academic and personal behaviors.

What the school needs to improve

- Deepen pedagogical strategies that result in opportunities to consistently engage students in high level thinking, productive discussions, and access to appropriate scaffolds to improve the quality of student work products. (1.2)
 - Teaching practice has not yet fully kept pace with the work done to strengthen curriculum aligned with Danielson Framework and instructional shifts, resulting in uneven practice, learning experiences, and facilitation of instruction as observed in classrooms visited. While all

teachers ensure alignment of the learning objectives to higher standards and raised expectations, classroom practice ranges from highly interactive, student-centered and collaborative, to overly teacher-centered with few opportunities for discussions that lead to deeper understanding, provoke higher-order thinking and enthusiastic student participation. Although the curricula promote the ideas of multiple entry points, not every classroom demonstrated meaningful ways in which different students could access complex ideas or concepts. As a result, pedagogical strategies, teacher techniques and student work products do not consistently produce high levels of student thinking, participation, and ownership.

- Enhance feedback systems to students and families to include next learning steps so that clearly articulated academic expectations lead to adequate supports that accelerate student progress. (3.4)
 - Varied forms of communication to families regarding expectations such as newsletters, pen pal letters written by students to their parents, parent workshops, a school-based website, and quarterly report cards align with CCLS and college and career readiness goals. Students in upper grades visit higher learning institutions and the school's youngest learners attend assemblies to learn about the career path of staff and faculty. Nevertheless, many parents report there is a lack of ongoing detailed feedback or interim progress updates to better support them in preparing children for the demands of their next learning level. In addition, inconsistencies in teacher feedback to students thwart next level preparedness leading to low-level student ownership of learning experiences. The lack of clearly delineated teacher feedback inhibits clear understanding of expectations for high quality work products. This developing teacher work was evident when students were asked to share samples of their work and discuss how to make improvements. Therefore, the absence of timely intermittent feedback that includes next steps and at-home support resources limits parents in helping bolster their child's progress toward rigorous expectations. Consequently, inconsistent detailed feedback from teachers hinder students in reaching their full academic potential.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2013-2014

| School name: Kennedy King Elementary 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 Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards? | | | X | | | | |
| 1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the instructional shifts and Danielson Framework for Teaching, aligned to the 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 supports 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 those expectations? | | 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 student 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 Observe teachers using the Danielson Framework for Teaching along with the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection? | | | 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 |