Quality Review Report

2017-2018

Kappa V (Knowledge And Power Preparatory Academy)

Junior High-Intermediate-Middle 23K518

985 Rockaway Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11212

Principal: Ronda Phillips

Dates of Review:
April 24, 2018 - April 25, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Kevin Bradley
The Quality Review Report

The Quality Review is a two-day school visit by an experienced educator. During the review, the reviewer visits classrooms, talks with parents, students, teachers, and school leaders and uses a rubric to evaluate how well the school is organized to support student achievement.

The Quality Review Report provides a rating for all ten indicators of the Quality Review Rubric in three categories: Instructional Core, School Culture, and Systems for Improvement. One indicator is identified as the **Area of Celebration** to highlight an area in which the school does well to support student learning and achievement. One indicator is identified as the **Area of Focus** to highlight an area the school should work on to support student learning and achievement. The remaining indicators are identified as **Additional Finding**. This report presents written findings, impact, and site-specific supporting evidence for six indicators.

Information about the School

Kappa V (Knowledge And Power Preparatory Academy) serves students in grade 6 through grade 8. You will find information about this school, including enrollment, attendance, student demographics, and data regarding academic performance, at http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/report/default.htm.

School Quality Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Developing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Developing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## School Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations</td>
<td>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Systems for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quality Indicator: 3.4 High Expectations

Rating: Proficient

Findings

School leaders consistently convey high expectations to staff through ongoing feedback and professional learning aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. The school provides ongoing information to families regarding student progress towards college and career readiness.

Impact

Ongoing communication and support by school leaders around classroom visits support teachers’ understanding and awareness of expectations around teaching and learning. Communication from school leaders and teachers provides opportunities for families to understand student progress towards meeting standards.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders conduct frequent classroom observations and provide feedback utilizing the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* as the standard for professionalism and high quality instruction. Teachers discussed the principal’s classroom visits, in addition to those visits within the formal observation process, and explained that these were additional ways of holding them accountable to instructional and professional expectations. One example of feedback from school leadership reads, “As you move through your discussion, I wanted to see you ask questions to extend your students’ thinking and discussion. Most of the heavy lifting was done by you and not the students. Please revisit our Professional Development (PD) document on, “Discussion” to see how to create a “student centered classroom” where students voice is heard more.” One teacher reported the impact of an observation feedback by explaining, “I’ve received feedback about questioning and classroom management, with most of my observations. I like the criticism, it helps me to try to improve.”

- The principal sends out memos and newsletters throughout the year covering details about safety protocols, instructional expectations, team meetings, and upcoming professional learning. In addition, teachers receive a staff handbook that covers a wide variety of expectations ranging from the school's grading and homework policy, classroom organization, to lesson planning. A professional development plan makes clear that school leaders support teachers in their understanding of expectations in addressing topics such as assessment, schoolwide goals supporting student engagement and the school’s instructional focus on cycles of actionable feedback. A teacher reported, “When a new strategy is rolled out, we have PD, and the principal and Assistant Principal (AP) make sure that it’s happening in the class.”

- Newsletters to parents from the school include hints for homework along with specifics of how parents can support this learning at home, reinforcing the importance of daily attendance, encouraging nonfiction reading and preparing for standardized tests. The school also communicates with families during parent teacher conferences, weekly parent engagement Tuesdays, and through the online grading program, Engrade. A parent reported, “We receive progress reports. We use Engrade, parents have a password, we’re seeing assignments are handed in. We’re able to make appointments with the teachers, we see it daily. If we have an issue, every Tuesday is 2:20-3:30 set for meetings with the parents and teachers.”
Area of Focus

Quality Indicator: 1.2 Pedagogy
Rating: Developing

Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are beginning to reflect a set of beliefs about how students learn best when they work in groups, and when they observe modeled teaching that is informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching and the instructional shifts.

Impact

Across classrooms, student work products and discussions reflect uneven levels of student thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- During a sixth-grade English Language Arts (ELA) class, students worked on elements of a personal narrative and were asked to define one small moment. Turn-n-talk opportunities were brief and not everyone in groups spoke. Students did not have opportunities to share out with the entire class their learning from their discussions with their peers. During a sixth-grade history class, students sat in pairs during a lesson on ancient Egypt and how geography influenced development. Students were asked to annotate the text and were given opportunity to turn-n-talk. However, not all students had an available partner next to them and the teacher did not provide clarity around who should move to be involved in the turn-n-talk opportunity.

- During an eighth-grade science class, students reviewed claim, evidence, and reasoning, in preparation for their science projects. At one point, the teacher asked students who needs more time and one hand went up. When asked to raise their hands if they were done, maybe six hands went up. The teacher proceeded to give more time to complete the task. Students were asked to talk in their groups on part three. One student was sitting by himself and the principal had to ask him to be moved to a group. Some student groups were involved in discussion about the task and some groups struggled without additional supports. One group asked the teacher if they could move on to the next task because they were finished. During a sixth and seventh grade, Special Class (SC), students were in small groups on author’s purpose. Some worked with the teacher, others received supports from paras, with the lesson geared to multiple needs and abilities.

- During a seventh-grade math class, students were in three large groups with an adult. Each group was working on a different task, one group was figuring out the tax in a word problem, one group was figuring out area and circumference of circles, and a third group was working on equations with variables. Students in one group could go up to the board and work out a problem and another student went up to figure out the proof. The other group had two of six students involved in the discussion of questions with the teacher, however equity of voice was missing.

- During a seventh-grade ELA class, students were asked to write during the “Do Now”, what they think of when they see the words “craft and structure”? The teacher moved single students to groups. The teacher also assigned numbers to students sitting in groups to get all students to speak during timed intervals as students shared out with partners their thoughts on craft and structure. Most students shared out, not all. The two fourth-grade students in groups were asked to share out what their group had discussed with the whole class. During a sixth-grade math class, student groups worked on different tasks. Some groups worked together well, some disagreed on answers and called the teacher over to assist. She wanted them to talk through with her how they got the answer they did. Ten minutes later, they were still in disagreement about the answer and the teacher had returned to continue the discussion about how to check for the correct answer.
### Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and the instructional shifts. Across grades and subjects, rigorous habits and higher-order skills are emphasized for all students, including ELLs and students with disabilities.

#### Impact

Curricula promotes college and career readiness for all students. A diversity of learners has access to the curricula and tasks and are cognitively engaged.

#### Supporting Evidence

- Curricula calendars across grades and subjects are constructed using the Common Core aligned with the Code X in ELA. In math, *GO Math!* and EngageNY resources are aligned to Common Core. The school also ensures curricula coherence with the New York City (NYC) Social Studies Scope and Sequence and the science New York State (NYS) Standards. The pacing of each curriculum is monitored on grade level and revised as needed.

- The instructional shift requiring that students apply math concepts in real world situations is evident in curricular documents. In an eighth-grade curriculum map, students are learning to classify and explain what the concepts of rational and irrational number is and classify a number based on its decimal expansion. In another lesson, students are using the addition and subtraction of integers and rational numbers to solve real-world problems. The instructional shift requiring that students develop their skill in writing from sources emphasizing the use of evidence is apparent in curricular documents. In a sixth-grade ELA lesson plan, students are learning about the use of narrative strategies of dialogue, and figurative language and foreshadowing and must cite examples of those strategies when they explain how authors use them to develop the plot of the story. In a seventh-grade ELA curriculum map, students are learning how to use details from the text to determine the theme of message of the story and use examples to support their inferences about the text.

- A diversity of learners benefit from access to academic tasks as evidenced in a sixth-grade ELA lesson plan where students work in small groups and are provided key terms and definitions and work one-on-one with the teacher in determining which examples to use from the text. In a seventh-grade ELA lesson plan, English Language Learners (ELLs) are supported when provided with a reference sheet of key vocabulary terms in Spanish and modified graphic organizers.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Developing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use or create assessments, rubrics, and grading policies that are loosely aligned with the curricula. Teachers’ assessment practices inconsistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact

Feedback to students regarding student achievement is inconsistent and limited. Teachers inconsistently utilize checks for understanding to modify instruction in the moment.

Supporting Evidence

- There was some evidence of teacher feedback on work provided by students during the student interview that contained specific comments related to grammatical errors and punctuation. One example of actionable feedback was: “You earned a rubric score of 3.5 because your analysis of the evidence shows an understanding of the topic. You stated that the individuals were successful and provided evidence to support this. To earn a 4, you will need to vary the use of transitions and include more sophisticated vocabulary.” and provide, “Correct equation and explanation of the variable. Additionally, solving for the value of the variable and your proof supports value in your sentence.” However, much of the student work contained little feedback or feedback lacking enough clarity to effectively guide the student toward improvement.

- During the student meeting, students reported on the inconsistency of feedback on the work they turned in and how often they received feedback. Then, as a student shared how often their work had feedback, “Not really, on all the assignments, only some.”

- Checks for understanding were inconsistently utilized during the classes observed. In some classes teachers circulated throughout the room to check-in with students, at times, during the lesson, although this practice, did not occur across many classes. In some classes, questions were asked to the whole class and sometimes a few students would respond without any clear indication if the entire class understood the correct answer. For example, during a sixth and seventh grade SC class, students were in small groups on author’s purpose, teacher during checking for understanding asked groups if they were good, without more specific feedback about the task so students could articulate their learning and inform teacher. During a sixth-grade math class, student groups worked on different tasks. A group was unsure of what to do and one student said, “I’m so confused,” as they raised their hands waiting for the teacher to return to help them.
## Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Findings

School leaders support the development of teachers with effective feedback to teachers that accurately captures strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*.

### Impact

Both formal and informal feedback articulates clear expectations for teacher practice and supports teacher development to elevate instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection.

### Supporting Evidence

- School leaders conduct frequent classroom observations and provide feedback utilizing the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Each rated item is supported with specific detailed evidence from the observed class to support the rating. Next steps for teaching improvements are included throughout the class-specific evidence directed to specific categories of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and at the close of each observation report. In addition, school leaders’ have four observation cycles, at the end of each cycle administration and lead teachers work together to review the data collected through coaching, formal and informal observations, Online Occurrence Reporting System (OORS), and student work. New teachers are supported with mentors. Because of observation data, PDs are planned to support teachers, including intervisitations to other classrooms and district schools, co-teaching, one-on-one coaching with administration and lead teachers and coaches from the Middle School Quality Initiative (MSQI).

- Observation reports contain feedback that captures teachers’ strengths and weaknesses and is accompanied by next steps teachers should take to improve their practice and impact on student success. For example, “Area of strength: You had the students identify key vocabulary or phrase that was a synonym for another word in the question. This strategy allows students to comprehend the question or stem by using prior knowledge of a word or phrase to gain the understanding of the new knowledge of word or phrase. Area of growth: Creating a student-centered learning environment. Next steps: Ask students to formally assess their own work, and provide feedback about their accuracy.” In another report, feedback included, “It was clear that you used a lot of the strategies from our Questioning Professional Development series throughout your lesson. When students make mistakes, you build their confidence and trust by asking follow-up questions to help them self-correct and achieve success. Next steps: Encourage students to build on each other’s responses by responding with a comment or a new question about the work.”

- A teacher reported how she has grown in her practice based on feedback she has received in her observations. She stated during the meeting with teachers, “After an observation I get my feedback, not negative, whether there is room for improvement, there is always room for improvement, the next lesson, add a rubric, or more turn and talk.” Another teacher shared her impressions of the feedback she has received, “Certain things that I need to look at so I can be the best possible teacher for my students. I would be assessing, it’s important that I get this type of feedback.”
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations that promote achievement of school goals and implementation of the Common Core. Teacher teams consistently analyze data and student work for students they share.

Impact

Teachers’ collaborations have strengthened their capacity in instructional design and delivery. Teacher team work has resulted in progress toward goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- During an observed math team meeting, teachers followed the Atlas protocol as they looked at student work examples brought to the meeting by one of the teachers. Roles during the meeting, such as, facilitator, note taker, and timekeeper were assigned. The presenting teacher informed the team of background information regarding the task. The team reviewed three different student work samples involving determining volume of a cylinder object according to a 3-point holistic rubric. The team discussed that one of the students could find the area of the cylinder. A question was asked about steps for students with disabilities and IEPs. The presenting teacher stated she uses anchor charts with formulas, examples, and steps. Another teacher commented that he gives formulas in notebooks for support and as guided notes. Classroom implications and next steps were reviewed as modifying the lesson for students with disabilities, scaffolding to guide students, use of anchor charts and reference sheets with formulas for students to use, and making sure students are focusing on word problems with correct formulas.

- Teachers have strengthened their instructional capacity through team collaborations. For example, a teacher reported that because of conversations about successful instructional strategies held during teacher team sessions, “I’m a new teacher it helps me identify things I can use with my students, I look forward to these meetings.” Another teacher reported regarding reviewing data during teacher team meetings, “We went over our data, and I used it with students with disabilities to group my students, by identifying the skills that they are lacking.”

- Progress towards goals for groups of students is evidenced by STARS (Sustainability, Tracking, Assessment and Rating System) data gathered from Renaissance Place, showing three classes increasing, six classes remaining the same, and three other classes dropping reading levels when comparing benchmarks from October 2017 and February 2018. In math, six classes increased, five classes remained the same, and one class dropped levels when comparing benchmarks from October 2017 and February 2018. This increase in student performance for some groups of students corresponds with the work of teacher teams to build student capacity.