

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

**The Glen Oaks School
Elementary School Q115
80-51 261 Street
Queens
NY 11004**

Principal: James Ambrose

**Dates of review: May 16 – 17, 2011
Lead Reviewer: Anita E. Saunders**

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Glen Oaks School is an elementary school with 586 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 7% Black, 12% Hispanic, 16% White, and 65% Asian students. The student body includes 8% English language learners and 12% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 95.0%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- A very coherent understanding of students' learning results in pedagogy that challenges individual students and improves student progress.
 - The leadership and staff believe that all children learn differently and it is the school's responsibility to differentiate instruction in content, process and products, including learning styles, in all subjects and grades. For example, students in a gifted 2nd grade chose individual research projects based on their interests. They research and give interesting presentations, such as DNA on a tri-fold board, coral reefs on a CD, and Williamsburg on a power point. In addition, students have the opportunity to learn geocaching and robotics engineering. Hence, differentiated learning opportunities enable students to be challenged and enthusiastic and increase achievement in literacy and science.
- Purposeful organizational decisions strongly support school, teacher teams and classroom goals to constantly improve student outcomes.
 - Organizational changes include hiring a 3rd grade teacher for the newly formed district gifted class; two integrated co-teaching (ICT) staff; one self contained special education teacher moved to an ICT class; a 5th grade teacher due to retirement; and a 2nd grade teacher for a newly formed smaller class. These staff changes are the result of teacher expertise and student needs, and increase student achievement.
 - Careful budgeting enabled the principal to use funds to release teachers for professional development and inquiry team meetings, resulting in new strategies, appropriate lesson planning, and implementation to meet diverse student needs. A computer program was also purchased to extend student learning in school and at home, increasing level 4 reading achievement in grade 3 through grade 5 students.
- The school consistently communicates high expectations to students and families that promote active involvement in the school.
 - The school motto, Going beyond Expectations, clearly reflects the high level of academic and social emotional expectations for all students, including post-secondary. The enrichment program, winter and spring concerts, basketball teams, international night, and presentations to the local senior center are examples of the latter. Each student also has a marbled notebook that contains a weekly sheet with subject goals, homework and a parent response space to consistently communicate expectations. In addition, a 3rd grade parent was able to obtain an actual astronaut's space suit for students to relate to the recent U.S. space flight. The on-going open communication fosters parent input and support in strengthening the learning experiences of students.
 - Parents are extremely involved in the school and participate in many leadership opportunities where they plan, coordinate and implement

important school-wide activities, such as a multicultural festival, field day, and a Mother's Day plant sale. Childcare is provided for evening meetings fostering additional family involvement.

- Professional development opportunities are aligned to school goals and build teachers' capacity in instructional expertise so that students' learning outcomes improve.
 - All staff attends a full day of training on units of differentiated activities and higher level thinking games. In addition, some teachers attend training on using SMART boards and the common core standards. As a result, teachers are implementing lessons with newly gained expertise and student thinking and writing is improving as evidenced in extensive writing exhibits and rubrics.
 - A protocol is used to look at student work, differentiation, and strategies to improve reading proficiency, critical analysis, and problem solving. Teachers visit classes within their school and the network which fosters conversations around best practices. Hence, teachers are reflecting and evaluating their practice with peers and becoming more knowledgeable in their classroom teaching, ultimately impacting student achievement.
- School leaders and faculty analyze a wide range of data to track students' progress, identify learning needs to pinpoint trends and adjust practices to improve student achievement.
 - Summative and formative data are analyzed, including writing samples and reading levels which are collected five times a year to track student progress and identify trends. A lack of inference and drawing conclusions in reading comprehension and problem solving in math were noted in all students. As a result, comprehension skills have been infused across all content areas and a problem of the day with a focus on explaining the process in writing increases student understanding as evidenced in reading logs and portfolios, and exhibits.
 - Inquiry teams collect and analyze data to identify target students for additional support and acceleration. As a result, the extended day program includes all target students and curriculum was adjusted to meet their specific needs.
- The school maintains an exceptionally warm culture of mutual trust and a positive attitude towards learning that support the academic and social emotional growth of students.
 - The leadership and parent coordinator know every child by name and students are greeted each day with a welcoming smile. Students readily speak to the adults regarding matters of concern. Consequently, any social emotional issues are promptly addressed, e.g. counseling for several children with a tragedy in the household or fear of the fire alarm, by the guidance counselor, leadership and outside agencies so that students are enabled to continue focusing on their learning.
 - The Student Council actively voices opinions in planning and implementing special projects, such as an anti-graffiti poster designing

campaign, a Going Green Walk-a-thon for the student garden, and Beautification Booths teaching ecology and agriculture. Students are engaged in their learning, eager to do well and speak highly of the robotics program, learning games and the guitar program. These programs build students' academic and social emotional growth.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue to regularly evaluate and adjust assessment and grading practices to improve coherence and communication in the school community.
 - Although the school is making adjustments in the curriculum to include the common core standards, a structure to regularly evaluate assessment practices has not yet been fully developed to ensure clarity.
 - The school shares performance data and goals in multiple ways with parents and students. However, a system to evaluate the effectiveness of the communication process is only evolving.
- Continue to develop the ability to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of teacher teams and leadership development.
 - Monthly minutes and meetings between the leadership and team facilitators provide a review of teacher team work that leads to clarification of focus and next steps. However, without a more transparent system to regularly evaluate the leadership ability and success of team members, the growth of teacher leadership is hindered.
- Extend the coherent curriculum to challenge the diversity of learners to meet their individual academic needs and increase achievement.
 - Although the school has aligned curricula to existing State standards and emphasized writing throughout the grades, curriculum is not completely aligned across all content areas and grades. Without detailed curriculum maps aligned to the new Common Core standards in all content areas clarity and alignment are absent.
 - The school has planned curricula and introduced challenging high level thinking games for enrichment and acceleration. However, expectations and rigor are not high enough in many tasks to challenge all learners.
- Continue the focused, shared instructional vision across the school that embraces learning and elevates students' academic achievements.
 - The leadership has developed a new classroom observation form for untenured teachers to specify instructional priorities, initiatives and goals. Furthermore, the assistant principal and a retired teacher mentor staff new to the school. In addition, the school has recently begun instructional rounds providing feedback to teachers visited. Without regularly scheduled individual teacher meetings for all staff with the leadership, clarity and commitment to the instructional vision, and collaboration for targeted, differentiated professional development is lacking.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: The Glen Oaks School - PS115	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?				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 and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom level?			X	
2.3 Use or develop tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize, aggregate, and analyze student performance trends?			X	
2.4 Engage in an open exchange of information with students and families regarding students' learning needs and outcomes?			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 students and families, engage them in decision-making, and promote active involvement in the school community?				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, 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?			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