

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

School for Global Leaders

Junior High-Intermediate-Middle 01M378

**145 Stanton Street
Manhattan
NY 10002**

Principal: Carry Chan

**Dates of review: Jan 29 - 30, 2013
Lead Reviewer: Daniella Phillips**

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

School for Global Leaders is a Junior High-Intermediate-Middle school with 271 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 18% Black, 69% Hispanic, 4% White, and 8% Asian students. The student body includes 11% English language learners and 26% 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 93.3%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is well developed.

What the school does well

- Teachers ensure that curricula across grades and subjects align to Common Core Learning Standards which raises expectations for rigor and results in accelerated progress for all students. (1.1)
 - In 2012 the school was selected as one of only thirty-five New York City schools to join the Common Core Labs team which has provided intensive training, support, and feedback to teachers on their unit plans and assessments. All teachers invest deeply in writing and rewriting high quality content curricula and assessments that align with Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and coach each other to use student-friendly language in rubrics which results in rigorous performance tasks and clear expectations for students. There is exceptional vertical alignment in what students do, learn, and practice across grades and subjects and all teachers incorporate instructional shifts so that literacy tasks, for example, are planned using social studies, science, and arts content. Students describe their learning with superlatives, such as "most interesting project I've ever done" and "really tough, but awesome," and there are abundant scaffolds and attention to language supports such that English language learners and students with disabilities engage fully in learning.
- School leaders make highly informed and strategic organizational decisions that advance coherence of practices. (1.3)
 - This school excels at keeping student achievement data central to informing and then driving organizational and policy decisions. The principal models well her systems approach by generating clear flow charts with key instructional initiatives and rationales at the top and then short and long-range action planning and interim evidence of progress below. Similarly, consistent protocols for analyzing student work and setting agendas at weekly department and inquiry meetings makes these collaborative actions highly efficient and effective. Together, these strategic planning charts and meeting protocols help make transparent the goals and work of the school, which then produces greater buy-in by parents, teachers, and students about important next steps. Furthermore, key external partnerships, such as a five-year grant of \$500,000 from Matisse Foundation for arts enrichment, and pilot initiatives like Teacher Effectiveness and Common Core Lab provide teachers with targeted support and expert consultation that optimizes the learning opportunities for all students. These initiatives result in students engaging eagerly across classrooms in challenging tasks, such as "hot topics" that they research, discuss and debate and math problems where they prove and disprove solutions in oral and visual presentations.
- Teachers excel at utilizing a sensible range of assessment data in order to capture student mastery and thereby inform next instructional steps. (2.2)
 - There is a high level of consistency in how teachers collect, analyze and share feedback with students and other teachers, as they adjust lesson and unit planning based on their analysis of students' data. For example, teachers excel at making on-going assessment integral to daily teaching practices through exit slips, stop and jot prompts, student notebooks, conferences, running records, unit trackers and portfolios.

Teachers' lesson plans reveal multiple assessments at different points of the lesson in order to capture accurately student understanding and trends. Moreover, when asked to reflect on their lessons, teachers point to evidence they documented during the lesson about individual student mastery which affirms their sophisticated tracking in real time of student learning. This common approach to reviewing assessments provides teachers with a clear portrait of student progress towards mastery of CCLS standards, which then leads to strategic adjustments in instructional planning and targeted interventions. Additionally, students reflect regularly on their work and they access their interim grades through Jupiter's web-based grading system, which further motivates students to take charge of their learning. Similarly, students speak knowledgeably about their achievement and next step goals with references to common rubrics across subject areas, which serve as practical guideposts for understanding how to maximize academic achievement.

- School leaders have a robust teacher and classroom observation system in place of clear feedback and support which then elevates consistency of effective instruction. (4.1)
 - This school was selected to be part of the Teacher Effectiveness Pilot, which has reinforced the import that teacher development already has as a school priority. School leaders set an ambitious agenda of at least 6 - 8 rounds of classroom visits with candid, written feedback that notes positive observations and high lever follow-up suggestions. This observational approach is rooted in the research-based rubric of Charlotte Danielson which teachers embrace from their individual goal setting meetings and continued professional development, which is both personalized and intended to promote school-wide best practices. As a result, teachers share common instructional expectations and there is a high degree of consistency of effective teaching practices across the school, as evidenced in classroom visits. Most teachers can articulate how their professional goals link to school goals, and written observation reports show coherent, supervisory feedback that loops back to those goals. New teachers receive strategic mentoring, including filming of their lessons for self-reflection and co-teaching with expert colleagues, and nearly all teachers cite their professional development as exceptionally pragmatic and constructive.
- The school has outstanding mechanisms in place to monitor and adjust organizational and instructional decisions which then increase the coherence of practices. (5.1)
 - In the respectful, inclusive culture of this school, students have meaningful opportunities to work collaboratively with students in different grades and as partners with faculty on service learning during Integrated Projects Week and at monthly Town Hall meetings. As a result, students express in person that this school "cares about us" academically and in personal development, much "like a family." However, last year saw eroding trust between teachers and school leaders with many teachers reporting in the School Survey a lack of open communication about important school issues. Administrators reflected wisely on these sentiments as part of school improvement efforts, then empowering half of all current teachers as teacher-leaders with real responsibilities and nominating several teachers for aspiring leader programs. These overt acts of distributed leadership have reinforced partnership between teachers and school leaders and, together, they have focused on

initiatives that enhance school climate, such as the launch of an advisory program and thoughtful implementation of PBIS, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support.

- The school has eleven teacher teams that study student work, surveys, and teacher feedback at the grade or school-level and engage in action research. This year, to further school improvement, teams agreed to expand their responsibilities by communicating their progress and recommendations to the school community. Therefore, all meetings are now part of a public calendar with agendas, minutes, and supporting documents posted and shared via intranet. Moreover, school improvement teams publish bimonthly newsletters and present their work at faculty and parent meetings. A new part of the inquiry team cycle now includes parents of target population students in the meetings which allows for even greater communication about needs and next steps. Together, these actions result in a dynamic school community where issues are discussed thoroughly and with inclusive processes, thereby generating increased personal investments.

What the school needs to improve

- Sharpen teachers' capacity to support student-to-student questioning and discussion in order to deepen student thinking and ownership of learning. (1.2)
 - Teachers routinely align curricula and instructional expectations with Common Core standards, and they share and instill the belief that students learn best by collaboration and active engagement. Therefore, small group and project-based learning are evident across classrooms with strong examples of differentiated supports for all learners. Teachers consistently vary media which then helps students with multiple learning styles engage productively in discussions. For instance, students in an 8th grade English Language Arts class practice annotating a non-fiction text collaboratively, with the teacher supporting struggling learners with sentence starters and a graphic organizer for the Gallery Walk share. While this and many other lessons have very good structures to challenge all students in small group work and discussions, there is an over-reliance on the teacher in some classes to mediate the discussion and push students' thinking. Teacher questions are planned, although too often at literal levels, and there are times when teachers essentially answer their own questions. In most classes, teacher questions are thoughtfully open-ended, which then facilitates responses, yet there is little expectation for students to deepen their thinking by questioning each other or building on comments made by others. Recent professional development on Socratic seminars and debates have elevated student engagement, yet some discussions remain teacher-directed which then hampers students from demonstrating higher order thinking. The school has set an instructional goal that "100% of students will be able to sustain 8 - 10 minutes of accountable talk" by June in partnerships, groups, and whole class discussions, and mid-year assessment shows students mostly on their way to meeting this academic benchmark.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: School for Global Leaders	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	