

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

The Globe School for Environmental Research

**Middle School 272
3710 Barnes Avenue
Bronx
NY 10467**

Principal: Matthew Angell

Dates of review: March 14 - 15, 2013

Lead Reviewer: Elizabeth A. White

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Globe School for Environmental Research is a middle school with 430 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 63% Black, 34% Hispanic, 2% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 12% English language learners and 13% 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 89.4%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school's strategic organizational decisions have resulted in increased supports that foster improved student achievement. (1.3)
 - School climate has improved over the past year. Through advisory classes offered to student cohorts three times per week, students report being taught to be emotionally "proactive" rather than "reactive". As student declared, *"If you bump into someone you should apologize before it becomes an issue. If you get bumped and don't receive an apology you can assume it was probably an (unknown) accident and not get upset about it."* In alignment with the school-wide goal to decrease suspensions, the refocusing on youth development has resulted in decreased OORs incidents as compared to the same time period the previous year. This has led to an improved environment that is better conducive to teaching and learning.
 - The school has taken steps to obtain resources to align with weekly collaborative team work regarding curricular supports for evidenced-based reading and writing as well as rigorous coursework in both math and English Language Arts (ELA). It has expanded its library by acquiring additional lexile leveled books in nonfiction and has embedded sustained reading periods to support student outcomes in ELA. Additionally, extended-day programming was expanded to include Regents-level courses that provide more challenging, advanced coursework particularly for higher achievers. The bolstered academic resources and offerings have led to increased alignment of resources with developing CCLS curriculum and school-wide literacy goals. Thus, improvements are evident in instructional supports and the engagement of students in academic tasks that require higher thinking demand.
- School faculty engages in collaborative teacher teams resulting in increased strategic planning to improve student outcomes. (4.2)
 - Collaborative teacher team time is embedded in the school's programming and occurs on a weekly basis. Teacher team work focuses on curriculum and instructional planning with an eye on improving student progress. Teams use data analysis of students' spring benchmark task assessment results representing a diversity of learners, that is, high, medium and low achievers, to identify instructional next steps. For instance, utilizing a formative assessment tool created by teachers, the math team identifies the curriculum standard that was assessed, the barriers that prohibited conceptual understanding and strategies they need to teach to support skill mastery. In ELA, the team identifies strategies to align to Common Core expectations in literacy and strengthen student work. For example, for lower performing students, particularly students with individual education plans, a strategy called Answer/Quote/Explain (AQE) was explored to enable students to support a claim by using evidence to explain their position promoting proficiency in close reading of text. Furthermore, student work analysis results in effective teacher team identification of student performance trends

resulting in on-going meaningful feedback used to improve teacher practice. This leads to the identification of strategies that promote deeper conceptual understanding that is evident in student work products.

- The school effectively promotes positive attitudes resulting in a culture of support and accountability. (1.4)
 - The parent coordinator is well valued as “the hub of information” and support for parents regarding student discipline, academic concerns, school meetings and general information. Students know that if there is a concern they can go to the coordinator to get support with a resolution. To promote academic and social behaviors that lead to student success a rubric for learning entitled, *School Readiness Rubric* was established and shared with families, with an emphasis on eighth grade. Expectations include students being *timely, prepared, engaged, organized and respectful*. To support the tenets of the rubric professional development for staff in the *Go-Set-Go* youth development curriculum by Premier was conducted. In addition, student-interest morning clubs such as, the book club, have been established to ensure that students are known by a supportive adult while encouraging punctuality and increased attendance rates. The effectiveness of these efforts is reflected in the drop in suspension rates, an improvement in students’ active participation in learning, as well as improved social behaviors that lead to student growth and success.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop rigorous and coherent curricular strategies across disciplines to provide assorted entry points ensuring access for a spectrum of learners. (1.1)
 - School leaders and faculty have made efforts to integrate prioritized Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) such as evidenced-based responses and vocabulary development across subjects. However, explicit strategies and modifications to support English language learners, students with disabilities and higher achievers are not identified in curricula. For example, in an ELA unit entitled, *A Sense of Worth*, the curriculum embeds CCLS standards in reading content and higher order thinking skills. However, corresponding lesson plans lack varied modifications to engage struggling or high achieving students in rigorous tasks or extensions. This result in curricula that does not yet foster conceptual understanding of subject matter that is accessible to a diversity of learners thus hindering improved student outcomes for all.
- Develop effective teaching practices that consistently provide multiple points of access and scaffolds that reflect a common set of beliefs about how students learn best and support the learning of all students. (1.2)
 - The school has focused teacher development on planning, questioning and discussion driven by a framework used for a common understanding of effective practice. However, current instructional practice does not fully connect to the school’s chosen framework resulting in a limited alignment between practice and expectations for pedagogy. For example, in

several classrooms lessons were teacher dominated and lacked sufficient supports. During a reading lesson in a special education classroom, the teacher read multiple texts to students aloud. Afterward, students were given the same texts, which were read aloud, to use to complete a written response task on *Bronx bridges*. Students struggled because the reading passages were too challenging. Students were also without appropriate support to deal with challenging text which resulted in frustration for many students rendering them unable to successfully complete the task.

- Strengthen school assessment practices that effectively capture a composite of students' academic achievements and struggles in order to make informed curricula and instructional adjustments. (2.2)

School leadership cannot yet articulate school wide performance growth based on administered assessments to date. Current systems for looking at grades for the last reporting period in comparison to the previous one yield unclear information to assess growth. Bar graph charts display assessments that measure different content objectives rendering them incomparable. Grading policy differs by grade and department resulting in limited coherence across the school thus producing an inconsistent gauge to measure progress. This impedes the opportunity to make timely adjustments and/or provide accurate feedback to students and teachers based on student outcome data to improve school-wide processes.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: The Globe School for Environmental Research	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