



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

**Quality Review
Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning
2013-2014**

Quality Review Report 2013-2014

Glen Oaks School

26Q115

**80-51 261st Street
Queens
NY 11004**

Principal: Kathleen Sciortino

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Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Glen Oaks School is an elementary school with 646 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 5% Black, 13% Hispanic, 11% White, 69% Asian, and 3% other students. The student body includes 6% English language learners and 9% 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 95.2%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is well developed.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal and staff have developed engaging, rigorous curricula aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and the instructional shifts offering meaningful learning experiences to improve student achievement for all students. (1.1)
 - The Glen Oaks School has purchased Ready Gen for the English language arts curriculum, supplemented by Fountas and Pinnell Reading Levels and Engage New York writing tasks. Go Math was also purchased and supplemented with Exemplars. All programs are Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) aligned. The social studies curriculum, often integrated in the Ready Gen units of study, and the science curriculum which is supported by Full Option Science System (FOSS) kits, are also aligned with the New York State Content Standards and the CCLS. The usage of these curricula has resulted in instructional coherence across all subjects and grades including the arts, music and computer education. Curriculum maps and pacing calendars have been adjusted to ensure that content and instruction meet the students' identified needs and increase literacy and mathematics. The New York City Department of Education instructional shifts are integrated in all content areas and noted in displays of Opinion/Argumentative and Informational Writing, and Mathematical Problem Solving and Reasoning with constructed responses, explanations and diagrams beginning in Kindergarten. All tasks are CCLS aligned and include a rubric to provide clear direction, assessment and feedback with next steps. An Opinion/Argumentative spreadsheet showed a 14% increase K-5, and a 13% increase K-5 in mathematical problem solving from September to May, scoring level three and above. Additionally, 80% of the K-5 students moved at least two levels in reading on Fountas and Pinnell. English language learners showed a 19% improvement in grade 3 and 13% improvement in grade 4 and students with special needs showed an increase of 20% in grade 3 and 26% in grade 4 on the Spatial Temporal Math conceptual program. These results support the school's goals of providing curriculum that promotes college and career readiness.
 - Teacher teams use a variety of data, summative and formative, to continuously analyze student work to plan and challenge thinking for English language learners, special needs students, and high and low achieving students. Academic tasks, with multiple entry points are provided to allow students to work in small groups and display various ways to solve a problem. Students use a variety of thinking maps and graphic organizers to plan their writing and select research for their project, and engage in activities that promote higher level thinking. The 4th grade had a choice of different tasks to challenge them on an American Revolution project where they had to pretend to be a patriot and write their own Declaration of Independence, resulting in high level student work products, such as a letter to King George III, a skit, essays, poetry, and posters. Classroom visits revealed evidence that students were actively engaged in tasks and group discussions aimed

at challenging their cognition and enhancing achievement. For example, a Kindergarten class was writing list poems associated with their favorite color, using different size paper based on their leveled groups, helping one another using a word list for spelling in their folders, sharing their poem with a partner, and finally a few students shared with the entire class. In a 2nd grade, students were asked to debate, add on to another's opinion using text based evidence about life somewhere else in the solar system and then work in groups with a student facilitator using two different activity sheets based on achievement levels. These appropriately planned activities enable students to have access to curricula and tasks, be cognitively engaged and ensure thinking and reasoning skills necessary for future success.

- School leaders and faculty systematically collect and analyze a wide range of data that successfully identifies the needs of students and adjust instruction in order to improve student progress and performance. (2.2)
 - The school's assessments are CCLS aligned and collected by classroom teachers and school leaders on a regular basis. Assessments administered, analyzed and collected by the principal include pre and post-tests for Ready Gen, Go Math, Exemplars, Accelerated Reader, unit assessments, writing assessments, Waterford, Spatial Temporal (ST) Math, Fountas and Pinnell reading level tests, School Net, and science and social studies formative and summative grade level assessments. Conference notes are checked periodically and lessons are planned and differentiated according to student needs. Rubrics are CCLS aligned, posted and attached to work products on display boards with next steps clearly noted. The schools' assessment system provides the school community with a clear picture of student mastery and progress used to make decisions.
 - Student self-reflection, self-assessment checklists and exit slips for reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies are embedded in instructional practices in all classrooms K-5, enabling English language learners and special education students to indicate their understanding at the end of a lesson or work product. For example, a 5th grade opinion writing assignment, "Rain Forest: Stay or Go?" included a self-assessment and reflection sheet as well as a rubric. Students had to describe to their audience, what they liked about their piece and what they will improve upon in the future. Another opinion essay assignment had a revision checklist completed by a peer, an opinion checklist, a self-assessment and reflection, and a rubric that included next steps as part of "glow and grow." As a result, students and teachers are engaging in feedback that provides information for appropriate planning, scaffolding and individualizing instruction to accelerate learning for all students. The data resulting from student work is recorded by teachers, noting trends and patterns and determining strategies that work for various groups of students. Tracking students' progress enables the school leaders to observe curriculum adaptations and the use of recommended strategies by teacher teams. Color coded spreadsheets are kept indicating student growth. Data revealed that general education English language learners improved with 20.5% testing out, 100% of gifted and talented testing out and 12.5% of students with special needs testing out.

25.5% of English language learners moved up one level in the New York State English as a Second Language Assessment Test (NYSESLAT). Improvement for English language learners showed an increase of 35% in grade 3 English language arts and 15% increase in grade 4, and students with special needs increased 25% in grade 3 and 19% in grade 4. As a result of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment teachers make effective adjustments to meet all students' needs and provide next steps for their learning.

- The principal makes informed and data based organizational decisions across all aspects of the school and allocates resources to support student growth. (1.3)
 - The principal uses fiscal resources to promote student achievement, evidenced in student work products. She has used her budget to provide academic improvement for grades 3, 4 and 5 in reading and mathematics by scheduling three teachers per grade with per session funds. Additionally, she has used per session funds for vertical team meetings held twice monthly after school. Title III funds enable her to schedule small groups of English language learners for two month cycles every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon. Each vertical team member and grade leader received an iPad purchased this year. Furthermore, the school has several partnerships to increase student achievement through challenging experiences that require reading, writing, mathematics, critical thinking, questioning and speaking. These include the New York Community Bank Financial Literacy program, the architect Joseph Gabriel, St. Francis Prep Music Department, the opera singer Cristina Fontanelli, the Iron Will Kids, the Harlem Wizards and the New York State Archives Partnership Trust. The collaborative work of these partnerships has encompassed many of the school's initiatives. For example, students in a fifth grade designed and produced an architectural rendering of a bedroom to scale, and presented a power point of their product to an assembly for grade 3, 4, and 5 students. Student work products reflect high level thinking and decision making, as well as public speaking skills that promote continuous student achievement and social emotional growth in middle school and beyond that promote college and career readiness.
 - The principal hired an assistant principal, an art teacher and a long term substitute in grade 3. She has moved a special education teacher from a grade 2 integrated collaborative teacher (ICT) class to a Kindergarten ICT class; a Kindergarten ICT teacher to a Kindergarten gifted class. These changes were made to utilize teacher strengths, close the achievement gap, and to maximize student growth and progress. Student groupings are carefully selected to match students with a teacher's personality and style. The English as a Second Language, reading and the Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) teachers pull out students for small group instruction that is aligned to classroom lesson plans but focuses on the individual student needs with a variety of strategies to increase student growth. The principal has also scheduled these teachers to meet with the classroom teachers. As a result collaboration and shared responsibility for student growth is ensured.

- Teachers benefit from an observation process that is grounded in the Danielson framework and allows for the implementation of effective instructional techniques/strategies. (4.1)
 - The principal believes that adults learn in different ways, with different modalities that require professional development to be reflective of these differences. Hence, professional development includes a written copy, a visual presentation, technology, and graphing. The staff must feel supportive and trusting to be able to take risks and try new strategies and programs. The staff and leadership have studied and participated in professional development on the Danielson Framework for Teaching rubric, including watching videos to norm ratings and understand the differences between effective and highly effective teaching and received support from the talent coach. Teachers have also been engaged in peer to peer mentoring by intra visitations to observe questioning and discussions. A third grade teacher observed a master teacher for group discussion techniques and higher level thinking questions. Another teacher visited a peer to observe highly effective management strategies for use in discussions. Grounded in frequent observations conducted by the principal and assistant principal, teachers are making improvements in questioning and each has been supplied with Bloom's Taxonomy and Depth of Knowledge questions as a guide. Effective feedback to teachers has encouraged student discussions and every class now has groups with a discussion protocol. For example, a grade 2 class had three student groups with two differentiated activities. Each group had a facilitator who asked specific questions based on the worksheet for students to discuss using I agree with ... because..., or I disagree with ... because... Additionally, students now participate in using Accountable Talk Rubrics to self-assess whether they listen to others, speak loudly and clearly, give examples, explain their thoughts, add to what classmates said and draw conclusions about what might happen. This activity illustrates teacher's growth in effectively planning multiple entry points and teaching students how to engage in discussions.
 - Teachers set individual goals early in September such as questioning and student engagement and have received feedback on establishing discussion groups using protocols to increase student engagement. Feedback included professional learning sessions specifically focused on student to student led discussions where children build off one another's experiences and knowledge. A three part consecutive professional development program included examining the CCLS for listening and speaking, a power point on a discussion protocol, grade teams developing an appropriate protocol to their grade, and finally modeling that protocol to peers. As a result, clear expectations and supports are provided for teacher development, including inter and intra visits. In addition, the assistant principal modeled Depth of Knowledge (DOK) questioning with one teacher who was reluctant to use questioning as part of student engagement. Another teacher received professional development in lesson planning to improve classroom management. The leadership team visits classrooms every day to observe and monitor changes in practice and use student work products to inform evaluative feedback to increase teacher practice. For example, from September to January, 14% of teachers were developing, 72% were effective and 14% were highly effective in

Danielson domain 3b. After numerous professional development sessions and continuous feedback, 8% of the teachers are developing, 66% are effective and 26% are highly effective as of May 2014. As a result, there has been a 12% increase in the number of teachers who are highly effective and ultimately improving student achievement.

- The principal and staff work as a unified team to create a calm, respectful, orderly, and caring environment that promotes learning and increases student achievement. (1.4)
 - The Glen Oaks School is a warm and caring school and has a safe environment. The school has only one suspension this year. The principal believes that modeling good behavior, including caring, kindness and respect for one another, gives clear expectations to the students. The principal is personal and caring and has daily conversations with teachers, parents and students about their lives and gives lots of compliments. She has an open door policy and models and treats everyone with respect. The assistant principal has a voluntary Lunch and Learn Book Club for staff that is well attended. The principal loves history and teaches students about an important historical event several times a month in the auditorium and after the morning announcements on the loud speaker. Students are smiling when walking through the halls and can't wait to enter the building in the morning. The Student Council meets once a month with a teacher advisor and discusses ways to help the school. They made anti-bullying posters, collected food for City Harvest and requested and received additional gym equipment. Moreover, the principal invites them for a pizza lunch periodically. There is also a Service Squad that takes out lunch time equipment to the yard. The guidance counselor and social worker have educated students about bullying on the bus, lunch time and in the school yard. They spoke to classes as a whole, in small groups and with individual students. Additionally, the Harlem Wizards had a basketball assembly about bullying for grades 2-5. The St. Francis Preparatory music teacher teaches violin and cello once a week after school. There is also a Student of the Month where two students per class receive certificates and a family bumper sticker for academics or citizenship at the Parent Teacher Association meeting. In addition, the cluster teachers present awards for computer, art, music, science and media. As a result, a caring culture with mutual respect and support exists to increase student academic and social growth.
 - Kindergarten teachers have attended professional development with visitations to P169 and P173 to observe classroom structure and strategies for teaching reading and writing. All teachers have also attended several sessions with the network staff developer on teacher team meetings and protocols for questioning and student discussions, in addition to the faculty and grade conferences led by the principal and assistant principal on the CCLS, instructional shifts and new programs. Family outreach has included a three part workshop on gifted and talented for new parents, as well as individual tours of the building prior to parental decision making. There have been several parental workshops on the new Ready Gen and Go Math programs, the instructional shifts, and the CCLS which are discussed at every Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meeting. A Multicultural Day and Evening event with music, dances, a fashion show, and dinner was attended by

five hundred 500 people, including staff, is an example of the collaboration between parents, community and school. The parent coordinator sends constant emails to keep parents informed and answers and returns phone calls within the same day. The school website is updated constantly. Additionally, the English as a Second Language teacher has regular morning meetings with parents. As a result, teachers and parents understand student learning expectations and programs which lead to effective academic and personal behaviors and growth.

What the school needs to improve

- Strengthen opportunities for meaningful student engagement in lessons that motivate students to reach their highest potential through high level thinking evidenced in discussions. (1.2)
 - The staff believes children learn by doing with hands on experiences, by experimenting with trial and error, and questioning in a risk free environment. They believe in small group work and differentiated activities where students interact with one another, have peer to peer discussions and question one another using a discussion protocol. Teachers meet regularly to discuss students' progress, plan and share strategies to increase growth and achievement. Teachers group students according to specific needs identified by data and provide multiple entry points and differentiated instruction. Student groups are flexible and teachers develop and use spreadsheets listing groups in reading and mathematics for each unit. For example in a second grade class, each student had his/her own entry point and the teacher's questioning was differentiated based on the ability of the group. In a third grade the teacher had three mathematical groups with differentiated assignments on shapes with one group sorting and naming the shape , while another group had to draw a polygon and write a number story , and the highest level had to draw shapes and angles, explain a game and write a number story. Similarly, a kindergarten class was working in groups with partners to write a list poem using different size lined paper to encourage the higher level students to write more. Many teachers are using higher level Depth of Knowledge and Bloom's Taxonomy questions and are including these in their lesson plans. Students are engaging in group discussions and are beginning to use the conversation prompts listed on charts in the classroom. For instance, in a first grade classroom students were engaged in a discussion where they questioned one another with "Why did you write..." and "How did you know that was so?" Some teachers were assuming the role of facilitator and beginning to encourage student to student responses. However, these strategies were not consistent to the same extent in the vast majority of classrooms, thus preventing student engagement in tasks that result in higher level thinking and reaching their potential.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2013-2014

School name: Glen Oaks School P.S 115	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