



Office of Innovative School Models
 Persistently Lowest Achieving (PLA) Schools
 School Improvement Grant (SIG)

Progress Review Report — 2011-2012

School:	Jamaica Gateway to the Sciences High School	School District:	Community School District (CSD) 28
Date of Site Visit:	February 9, 2012	Team Member(s)	Major Capers

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School Principal: Caren Birchwood-Taylor

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Grade Configuration: 9-12

Total Enrollments: Approximately 229

Area(s) of PLA identification: N/A

Identified subgroups: N/A

Intervention model: Turnaround (Phase in)

School's community-based organization (CBO) partner(s)

1.	Gateway Institute for Pre-College Education (consultants from CUNY Research Foundation)	4.	
2.		5.	
3.		6.	

STAFFING	
Organization and Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The two positions funded by the School Improvement Grant (SIG) are filled. The grant positions are for a computer teacher and community associate/parent coordinator. The academic program is based on two tiers. The first tier uses a traditional model with veteran teachers and the second tier uses a student engagement model. The school's curriculum is designed for students interested in science, mathematics, medicine and health related careers. The school has twenty three staff. The principal, assistant principal, fourteen teachers, guidance counselor, three school aides, two community staff, and a secretary. The school is in the process of hiring a chemistry teacher.
Teacher Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on NYCDoE requirements, all fourteen teachers have received both formal and informal evaluations using a combination of professional teaching standards and the Charlotte Danielson model. The NYCDoE and union representatives are still negotiating the approval of a city-wide teacher evaluation system.

PLANNING	
Student Enrollment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are approximately 200 students enrolled at the school. • School leaders stated student daily attendance is 95.5 percent. An aide tracks student attendance and initiates automated phone calls to homes as needed. • There is a district attendance officer who provides outreach to students with attendance issues.
Student Performance/ Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leaders and teachers are conducting meetings at every grade level to review student performance. • School leaders and teachers meet regularly during school leadership meetings and common planning time to discuss student academic and social/emotional needs. • Students who are identified as having potential problems with attendance are provided extra counseling and tutoring support.
Teacher Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher attendance was quoted as being excellent in the school and is not cited as an issue in any reports reviewed.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PD)	
Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leaders are being provided leadership training and teachers are receiving professional development (PD) on the Charlotte Danielson model, differentiated instruction and strategies to engage students. • The NYSED site visit representative was provided with a calendar listing PD sessions. The PD calendar ended in February 2012 and will be updated. • Gateway consultants conducted PD on Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and peer advisement. • School leaders and teachers received PD on the Automated Tracking System (ATS). • School leaders and teachers received PD in the following areas: Respect for All Behavior program, Curriculum Mapping, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Common Core Math, E-Chalk website, Apex Learning and DataCation. • School leaders and teachers have received technology PD and are using computers and laptops to support instruction. • The Computer Teacher is working with teachers to conduct PD on compiling attendance and scholarship data.
Instructional Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Achieve 3000, online literacy program, is being used to differentiate instruction for English as a second language (ESL) instruction for English language learners (ELLs), students with disabilities (SWD) and other students that need additional support. • Acuity is a diagnostic assessment tool used to support instruction. • Gateway consultants are working with teachers to provide instructional support.
Monitoring and Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development is monitored and analyzed through the use of informal and formal observations to ensure staff is using PD strategies in the classroom. • School leaders work with teachers to ensure goals are aligned with the PD plan and are being implemented in the classroom.

DATA ANALYSIS	
Data that Informs Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leaders and teachers meet to review academic, incident, attendance and other data to determine student progress. • School leaders and teachers are using Achievement Reporting and Innovation System (ARIS), Automated Tracking System (ATS), Online

	<p>Assessment Reporting System (OORS) and other databases used by New York City schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leaders and teachers are receiving PD on how data can be used to inform and modify instruction. • The school is also using the DataCation system to analyze school data to inform and support instruction.
Data & Student Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers collect and analyze student data information to help them better inform instruction. The teachers hold data inquiry meetings on Wednesdays. • The NYSED site visit representative observed teachers using questioning techniques during their lessons to assess student understanding. • Teachers collect and analyze student assessment data to help them modify instruction to improve student achievement. • School leaders and teachers discuss student performance during inquiry and leadership meetings.

CURRICULUM AND TEACHING	
Learning Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leaders reported the school day has been extended 8:15 a.m. to 2:57p.m. and now includes a nine period day. • Schedules are set for 42-minutes of instruction.
Mapped & Paced Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leaders and teachers have participated in PD and are beginning work on the Common Core Learning Standards. • School leaders and staff have attended PD, provided by the Children’s First Network (CFN 112), on Curriculum Mapping and have started to develop curriculum for English and social studies and intend to begin work for math and science next year. • Gateway consultants will provide curriculum resource materials and monitor and mentor teachers’ implementation of the curriculum.
Instructional Programming Linked to Student Needs Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common planning is on Mondays and teachers discuss both instructional practice and student performance. • The CFN 112 provided PD for staff on Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which is a set of principles used to develop instructional goals, methods and materials. • The school only offers one AP course and is expecting to expand advanced course offerings as the school expands.
Effective Teaching Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leaders assign mentors to new teachers to support their instruction and growth. • The UDL principles and co-teaching were observed being used in several classrooms. • Teachers were observed using the collaborative team teaching model. • Students are using graphic organizers to support their reading and writing. • Students are using technology to access information and complete assignments. • School leaders reported using Achieve 3000, an online literacy curriculum, to support all students.
ELL/SWD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve 3000 online is a program being used to support SWD and ELL students. • Collaborative co-teaching is also used to support SWD and ELL students. • The Aventa Learning program, an online standards-based curriculum program, will be used to provide additional support via individualized instruction for students.

STUDENT SUPPORT	
Additional Social/Emotional Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer tutoring is being implemented for ninth graders, and there are plans to expand it for grades ten through twelve. • Students indicated tutoring is available during school on Tuesdays, Thursdays, after school and on Saturdays. • Students are receiving additional support from guidance counselors, social workers and school psychologists. • Teachers meet to discuss student academic and social/emotional needs. • Students have an academic and individualized guidance plan for each grade level.
Counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance services provide extra social/emotional support to students in the areas of education and career counseling, social work, psychology, attendance and behavior. • Students reported counseling has improved this year and they like the advisory program. • Students mentioned they have developed career plans.
Enrichment Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students have a student government that meets regularly to discuss student issues. They also meet with the principal to discuss their needs. • Students are aware of only one AP course. • Students would like to have an honor society. • Students participate in student government, robotics club, dance club, mock trial, medical and glee clubs. • The Queensborough Community College offers an AP English class after school. • Students are beginning to participate in internships and would like to have additional hospital and community health care internship opportunities. • Students have attended career and college fairs. • Students would like to have more advanced placement and college course options. • The Gateway consultants are providing PSAT and SAT Prep to Junior and Senior students.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP	
Effective Leadership and Principal Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leaders receive support from the Leadership Academy Coach. • The school principal is evaluated by the superintendent. • Students, parents and teachers stated leadership is open and responsive to their needs. • The CFN Network 112 provides support to the school leadership team.
Leadership Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The leadership structure is in place and the school leadership team meets regularly to discuss the school improvement plan and school progress.
School Improvement Manager/External Providers	N/A
Building Level Leadership Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leaders reported they have a building leadership team who meets to discuss the school improvement plan and school progress.

SCHOOL CLIMATE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	
Environment is Conducive to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the time of the NYSED site visit, the building appeared to be safe and conducive to learning. Students were observed to be engaged in their

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Learning	<p>work, and classroom behavior was appropriate and respectful.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leaders, teachers, students and parents expressed concerns regarding behavior of students from other schools located in the building. • School leaders meet with other school leaders to discuss strategies to prevent and resolve issues impacting behavior across schools. • Students would like to have a separate scanner for each school and have access to their cell phones at the end of the school day.
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers and school leaders reported using common planning time for teachers, administrators and coaches to collaborate. • School leaders and teachers are working collaboratively with Gateway and Network staff to receive necessary training and support.
Parent Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents have an active PTA and believe school leaders are very supportive and responsive to their needs. • A parent, who is President of PTA, is considering starting a mentoring program. • The school has a Community Associate/Parent Coordinator who is working with parents to develop and expand community partnerships. • The Parent Coordinator plans for a community oriented event each year, for example, health fair, international food festival, special assemblies and career day.
External/Community-Based Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gateway provides support to the leadership and instructional team. • The school is working to develop additional community partnerships so students can participate in internships. • Gateway has a list of internships and/or voluntary placements for students to work to support their community (e.g., Daughters of Sarah).

BUDGET AND OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

Budget Modifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school leaders did not believe there was a need to make any budget modifications at the time of the visit.
Use of 1003(g) or 1003(a) grant funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This school is a turnaround model and is therefore receiving approximately \$300,000 toward implementation.
Use of Other Funding	N/A

DISTRICT SUPPORT AND PLANNING FOR DEVELOPMENT

District Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gateway consultant, and the Network, CFN 112 are visiting the school regularly to provide support to the school.
JIT/SIG Alignment	N/A

SUMMARY

A NYSED site visit representative conducted a full-day site visit at Jamaica Gateway to the Sciences on February 9, 2012. The site visit member was able to collect information regarding the school's efforts to begin the implementation of their reform model for improving student learning.

The NYSED representative met with various district, school staff, parents and partners to review initiatives the school is implementing to make progress toward improving student achievement. The school leadership team is focused on establishing a climate that promotes high expectations for all students and school faculty. Teachers reported meeting regularly to analyze student data, plan instructional strategies, and common assessments. Some teachers reported common planning has started in the common core areas of ELA and social studies, and work will continue next year for math and science.

The school was safe, exceptionally clean, and conducive to learning. Transitions between classes appeared to be seamless, and the positive behavior expectations throughout the building were clear and consistent. Teachers, students and parents voiced several concerns related to sharing space with other schools.

Staff, students, parents, and partners all spoke positively of the school's efforts to improve student achievement. The school representatives were candid with their comments and highly cooperative throughout the PLA monitoring process. Parents have an active PTA and a parent Community Associate/Parent Coordinator assigned to the school who is working to coordinate student internships and to improve parent involvement.

The school and the district appear to be working together collaboratively to coordinate their efforts and implement as much of their Turnaround Model as possible; however there are several components of the plan that need to be completed. For example, as the school program expands there will be a need to hire science teachers, increase advanced courses and internship opportunities for students.