

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS SCHOOLS TO WATCH

MODEL SCHOOL—VISITOR'S GUIDE

Glens Falls Middle School



Designated in 2009;

Glens Falls Middle School • Glens Falls City School District • Warren County • New York State • Principal: Christopher Reed • School Address: 20 Quade St., Glens Falls, NY 12801 • Phone: (518) 793-3418, E-mail: creed@gfsd.org

School Statistics

(Source: NYSTART, School Report Card, BEDS – 2007-2008)

Community: Pop—14,500. Small City School
Enrollment: 598
Grade Levels: 6-8
School Schedule: Flexible Block

Student Demographics (2007/2008)

53% Male
47% Female
2% Hispanic/Latino
92% White
0% American Indian/Alaskan Native
5% African American
0% Filipino
1% Asian/Pacific Islander
18% Students with Disabilities
40% Free/Red. Lunch/Econ. Disadvantaged
0% English Learners

2006 AYP: ELA 156 Math 165
2007 AYP: ELA 167 Math 170
2008 AYP: ELA 170 Math 180

School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

Academic Excellence

- All grades, K – 12, are curriculum mapped which is formally revised on at least an annual basis
- Extensive district-wide professional development with three full days required after end of school year (brain-based instruction, differentiated instruction etc.)
- Strong interdisciplinary team structure provides all students access to all core teachers during an alternate day study lab
- Steadily improving NYS assessment scores reflect teacher's ongoing commitment to utilizing data from a variety of formative and summative assessments to inform instruction
- Benchmark and quarterly assessments track student performance and provide data for analysis of instruction
- ELA and Math Academic Intervention Services (AIS) are incorporated into the school day
- Students take advantage of opportunities to accelerate in math, science and foreign language
- One half hour extension of school day on Tuesday and Thursday for extra help
- All faculty maintain blackboard sites for greater student/parent/teacher communication
- Frequent and relevant field trips, as well as an after-school program and 21st Century Grant enrichment program, augment instruction

(Continued)

Developmental Responsiveness

- Strong teaming program in place which provides endless opportunities for interdisciplinary instruction, common planning time for teachers and alternate day study lab
- Morning Advocacy program conducted daily
- Three grade level counselors loop with their students
- Intervention Review Board (IRB) is a committee of professional staff who convene weekly to discuss and develop plans of action for students in crisis
- High quality clubs in place for extracurricular needs e.g. Strategic Games, Writing Club, Chess Club, Builder's Club, SADD, Yearbook etc.
- Well articulated plan for transitioning 5 elementary schools into one middle school (from grade 5 – 6) and middle school to high school (8-9).
- Daily team meetings conducted for all teams including core, foreign language, special education and grade level counselor
- Very active and involved PTSA
- Active student governments at both the team and school-wide levels
- Individual and group counseling provided by counselors, social worker and psychologist

Social Equity

- All students select a go-to adult in the building who will advocate, intervene, counsel, befriend
- Student achievement and mastery of skills is technologically centered and teachers embrace the use of technology in instruction
- Numerous acceleration/honors options are available to students who are able to benefit from same
- Embrace a “Zero tolerance toward bullying” culture and strive to ensure a safe school environment
- All students take a full array of Unified Arts courses (Art, Music, C/C Skills, Health, Technology)
- Inclusive instruction in all areas featuring the co-teaching model
- Prevalent use of ELMOs, Smartboards, LCD projectors, computers and mobile laptop carts
- All teams are heterogeneously grouped
- Very small class sizes in ELA facilitate instruction
- Integrated units of instruction feature frequent interdisciplinary instructional opportunities
- Student Recognition Dinner three times per year recognizes outstanding citizenship, attitude and effort

Organizational Support

- Strong district commitment to professional development includes three days of summer training
- Numerous connections with community partners e.g. Hyde Art Collection Museum, Adirondack Theatre Festival, Sister City School in Saga City, Japan, Kamehameha Middle School, Honolulu, HI partnership, Glens Falls Police Department (DARE), YMCA (after school program) etc.
- Recognized by NYSED as a High Performing/Gap Closing School
- All staff are conversant about the Essential Elements of Middle Level Education. EE posters are displayed prominently in all middle school rooms
- Effective and well-run new teacher mentor program
- Outstanding APPR system offering eleven evaluation options
- Frequent communication with various community stakeholders, including families via, PTSA newsletter, 5 week progress reports, quarterly report cards, quarterly district newsletter, e-mail, blackboard, phone and numerous parent/team conferences