

GLENCLIFF HIGH SCHOOL

Metro Nashville Public Schools

Nashville, Tennessee

"I continue to be amazed and inspired by the diversity, community engagement, and energy that this school brings to its students. I have seen, first-hand, the power that communities can have in empowering youth to make positive, healthy changes in their lives by becoming more active community members and civic leaders" - Liz Aleman, Healthy Children Program Manager, Monroe Carrell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt

Four years ago Glenclyff High School in Nashville, TN rewrote their vision statement in order to create a profound change in the culture of the school. The first sentence reads, "Our vision is to make Glenclyff High School a truly comprehensive place of learning and the central focus of the community." Glenclyff strives every day to bring that vision to reality, and has been successful in many ways. Since Glenclyff has implemented the community schools strategy, they have leveraged the services and expertise of over 70 community partners and have seen significant increases in the graduation rates, student performance, and the engagement and support of families and community partners.

"Glenclyff's commitment to serving the students and the community has made it possible for United Neighborhood Health Services to develop a comprehensive school-based health center. Demanding real commitment from all their partners, they have helped us to work out the difficult process of fitting healthcare into the school setting. It has made us a better service with greater flexibility and more responsive to the needs of teachers and the families of the students" - Mary Bufwack, PhD, CEO, United Neighborhood Health Services, Inc.

Coordinating Resources with a Focus on Results

Glenclyff uses multiple measures to guide their planning. The School Improvement Plan, which is written by a large leadership team includes staff, administration, students, parents and community leaders. It is used as the school's framework for action. Each year the school examines student academic performance data, which not only includes data, but also graduation rates, drop-out rates, attendance, truancy, discipline, and multiple survey results. This data, along with benchmarks set by NCLB, guide planning for the academic year; funding and staffing decisions are based on these results and goals are based

on student performance and non-academic data from the previous year. Glenclyff then leverages partnerships and resources to fill the gaps.

Aligning Curriculum and Instruction with the Supports Students Need

When Glenclyff began implementing the community school strategy, the school was faced with multiple challenges; low 9th grade promotion rates, attendance, discipline, and school climate problems, inadequate academic performance and lack of relevance in the curriculum for students. To combat this, Glenclyff created multiple arenas of community participation and programming that are available during the day, evening, and weekends. They formed partnerships with community-based organizations (CBO's) that provide programs for students during the school day. Many of these opportunities are based in the classroom and have an intentional focus on instruction and curriculum.

The high school instructional reform initiative focuses on Career Academies, which are aligned with the philosophy of community schools. Each academy (Engineering, Health, Business, Hospitality and Marketing, and Freshman Academy) has partners that engage the students and teachers in meaningful ways. Business partners offer opportunities to experience the world of work. Youth development partners offer clubs and organizations that specialize in leadership, service, and arts programs.

Glenclyff At-A-Glance

Grade Level: 9-12
Number of Students: 1245
Demographics: 33.3% Hispanic, 32.6% African-American, 27.3% White, 6.7% Asian- 42 nationalities represented; the most diverse school in the state of Tennessee.
ELL Students: 20%
Special Education Students: 24.4%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch: 79%
Student Mobility Rate: 42.3%

Who's Who at Glenclyff

Dr. Jesse Register, Director of Schools, Metro Nashville Public Schools
Tony Majors, Principal
Virginia Pupo-Walker, Family and Community Engagement Specialist
Alison McArthur, Academy Coach
Rayni Griffiths, ESEA Program Specialist-Student Leadership



In the afternoon there is an alternative academic setting for students who do not attend during the day, or who need remediation, enrichment, or ELL support. University partners arrive after the regular dismissal and work with these students, who are the most at-risk on their dual enrollment courses.

Glenciff's School Partners

- Avenue Bank
- Conexión Américas
- Coleman Park Community Center
- Coordinated School Health
- DCI – Dialysis Clinic Incorporated
- Earl Swensson
- Ford Motor Company Fund
- Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt
- YMCA of Middle Tennessee
- United Neighborhood Health Services

"As the Glenciff administration has made it a priority to open their doors to the YMCA Latino Achievers program, they have opened amazing opportunities for their students to broaden their perspectives of the community they live in. YMCA Latino Achievers students from Glenciff have participated in college tours, career exploration, and an art project with the Frist Center during the 2010-2011 school year. The YMCA is grateful for this strong partnership with Glenciff, one that is a blessing to everyone involved, most importantly, the Glenciff students."

- Kathleen Fuchs, YMCA Program Coordinator

Four years ago when the school was experiencing high levels of gang activity and high levels of discipline incidents, Glenciff implemented an advisory period, which is a 30 minute homeroom that meets at 7 am every day. Students stay with their advisor and advisees throughout their four years in high school, and advisory has become an important way for students to connect with an adult and for adults to become advocates for their advisees. The advisory curriculum provides whole child support and addresses issues of conflict resolution, communication skills, study skills, time management, career exploration, and more.

Creatively Using Partnerships

Glenciff has been creative in how they align community partners to support student learning and development. Partners, are recruited and supported by the Academy Coach, and provide programs and opportunities during the school day that have intentional focus on instruction and curriculum.



The Family and Community Engagement Specialist manages other partners that work with students to provide "whole child" supports. Partners provide onsite counselors, mentors, tutors, and caseworkers that come to the school each day to work with students.

Teachers as Partners

Career Academies help teachers understand the practical application of the skills they are teaching in the classrooms, as well as the most current practices in their fields. Glenciff teachers have come to see that community partners are integral to their success; they have created a culture of openness to new ideas and strategies for instruction and assessment by allowing partners to help guide instructional planning. Partners involved in the Career Academies invite teachers to "externships" at their sites, speak to classes, help develop curriculum and assessments, design job shadowing and internship opportunities for students and accompany staff to professional conferences.



Focusing on Healthy Students

In 2007, Glenciff was a school struggling with gang violence, high rates of absenteeism, and low student performance. The school had a large number of students who were absent due to illness, as well as students who were performing poorly on health indicators in wellness and PE classes. In response, the school organized the "Glenciff Community Coalition" and together reached out to the community for help. The coalition created a Community Health Framework to address the health needs of students. The school and its community partners created a comprehensive wellness program for the staff and students. They collaborated with the local YMCA to renovate their pool, which is open to the community, and with United Neighborhood

Health Services to open an on-site community clinic, which serves 1000 patients each year. Glenciff also partners with Vanderbilt Children's Hospital to run a school-based garden, now the largest in the city.

"Glenciff High School has changed in so many ways in the past three years. The teachers and Mr. Majors [Principal] have given the students something to look forward to after high school, and have shown us how to reach our goals. My life would be completely different without United Nations and the many opportunities that Glenciff has given me." - Decorye Bradford, Student, Class of 2012

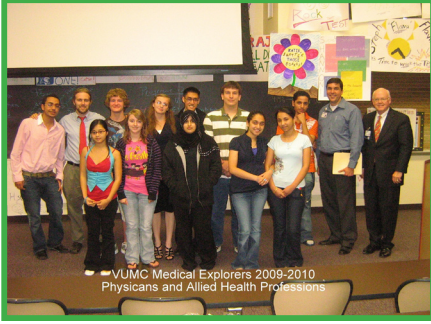
Educating and Engaging with Families

In a recent survey conducted by the school, 95% of parents surveyed in the Parents as Partners program expressed an increase in knowledge about state academic

standards, how the school system functions, and how to help their child with homework and have a productive parent-teacher

conference. Families come to Glencliff with multiple needs. A school climate and needs assessment survey offered two years ago, helped define those needs and allowed the school to target partnerships and resources in response.

Glencliff parents serve on the school's leadership team, represent the school on the district-wide Parent Advisory Council, and serve on a cluster (the elementary and middle schools that feed to Glencliff) team as well. Many Glencliff parents participate in a program called the Parent Support Group, which makes decisions on school issues, raises



funds for the school, and recognizes faculty.

“As a community partner working with Glencliff High School, we have come to deeply appreciate the effort, heart, and deep desire to provide a warm welcome in the highly multicultural environment that we see every day at Glencliff. GHS is truly a center of the community and we find ourselves there on a regular basis to participate in community events outside of our own workshops. It is absolutely the leader of the pack when it comes to expertise in developing new and effective manners to work with our changing community.” - Laura Delgado, Program Coordinator, Parents as Partners, Conexión Américas

Results

Over the course of the last three years 2007-08 to 2010-2011, Glencliff has had an:

- Increase in graduation rate - 66.4% to 81.2%
- Increase in student enrollment in Honors and/or AP courses - 20% to 33.3%
- Increase in student performance on writing assessment - 58% to 93% scored proficient or advanced
- Increase in students receiving Dual Enrollment credit with a community college +12%
- Decrease in student mobility rate - 48% to 42%
- Increase in partnerships
- Non-profits: Health (mental and physical) +21 partners, Family Outreach/Workshops +7 partners, student mentoring/tutoring +6 partners, Faith-based Institutions +4 partners
- For profits +24 partners working in classrooms with teachers and students on career exploration, 21st century skills and post-secondary preparation
- 81% of students surveyed feel that community and business partnerships have improved school climate and 70% say these partnerships helped foster better adult-student relationships (Spring 2010)

“I learned so much from Parents as Partners and it only helped me realize how much more I have to learn. In particular, I really appreciated the workshop on what to do at a parent-teacher conference, because now I feel I know what to do and what questions to ask. My other favorite part of the program was learning about college applications and how the process works.” - Ana Molina, Parent

In a survey conducted by the Small Learning Communities program at Glencliff, 80% of parents surveyed expressed satisfaction with the communication about school and academics.

Glencliff has been able to achieve this high standard from parents by hiring a full time Spanish interpreter (2007), a full-time Arabic interpreter (2010), a part time Somali interpreter (as of 2009), and a full-time Family Engagement Specialist (2008).

In spring 2011, the school established a full-time Family Resource Center with a devoted staff member in a dedicated space for classes and meetings.

Parents use the resources in the center to apply for jobs, work on resumes, and read online newspapers from their country of origin. Glencliff parents and community members come in the evenings and on weekends to attend parenting classes, workshops, and leadership meetings. Partners provide expanded workshops for parents in order to help them navigate high school with their student and prepare them for careers and/or college.



Making Glencliff the “hub” of the Community

The use of the school building has increased substantially because there are many community events, such health fairs, Parent University, Housing Informational Events, Night

Out Against Crime, gang awareness events for parents, immigration information sessions, parenting classes, teacher preparation workshops, and other neighborhood/community events and celebrations. Glencliff has



been able to create unique partnerships and supports that have created a school where students feel challenged, supported and prepared for life beyond high school and where the vision that they crafted four years ago has now become reality.

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS NATIONAL AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

To highlight the impact of community schools on student success and their efficient and effective use of school and community resources, the Coalition for Community Schools established a national awards program. This year's program sought individual community schools that have been operating for at least 3 years, are public schools, and have strong results along multiple measures.

The three *2011 Community Schools for Excellence Award* winners, Roy Clark Elementary, Ethel Taylor Academy, and Glencliff High School, are doing just that. The Coalition is proud to recognize these three schools with a \$1,000 prize. These schools are not exceptions; rather they are exemplars in their communities, where a broad school and community partnership is working to create effective community schools across the entire district.

This year's winners show that schools that work together with their communities can create optimal conditions for students...conditions that will not only help them succeed academically but also enable them to become healthy and successful citizens and contributing family members.

What is a Community School?

A community school is both a place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources. Its integrated focus on academics, youth development, family support, health and social services and community development, leads to improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities. Using public schools as hubs, community schools bring together many partners to offer a range of supports and opportunities to children, youth, families and communities - before, during and after school, and on weekends.

ABOUT THE COALITION FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

About the Coalition for Community Schools

The Coalition for Community Schools, housed at the Institute for Educational Leadership, is an alliance of 170 national, state and local organizations in education, K-16, youth development, community planning and development, family support, health and human services, higher education, government and philanthropy as well as national, state and local community school networks. It has been advocating for community schools since 1997.

www.communityschools.org

Mission

The Coalition for Community Schools advances opportunities for the success of children, families and communities by promoting the development of more, and more effective community schools. Our mission is to mobilize the resources and capacity of multiple sectors and institutions to create a united movement for community schools.

Vision

The Coalition for Community Schools believes that strong communities require strong schools, and strong schools require strong communities. We envision a future in which schools are centers of thriving communities where everyone belongs, works together and succeeds.

Core Values

- Foster Strong Partnerships
- Share Accountability for Results
- Set High Expectations for All
- Build on the Community's Strength
- Embrace Diversity

