



The University of the State of New York
The State Education Department

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code/DBN	660900010022
School	A.B. Davis Middle School
School Address	350 Gramatan Avenue, Mount Vernon, NY 10552
District	Mount Vernon School District
School Leader	Murdisia Orr
Dates of Review	May 21-22, 2013
School Accountability	Priority
Type of Review	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet												
Grade Configuration	7/8	Total Enrollment	794	% Title 1 Population	619	% Attendance Rate	93%					
% Free Lunch	68.3%	% Reduced Lunch	8.7%	% Student Sustainability	N/A	% Limited English Proficient	7.8%	% Students with Disabilities	22.0%			
Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes												
# Transitional Bilingual	0	# Dual Language	0	# Self-Contained English as a Second Language		10						
Types and Number of Special Education Classes												
# Special Classes	12	# Consultant Teaching	5	# Integrated Collaborative Teaching		0						
# Resource Room	0											
Types and Number Special Classes												
# Visual Arts	8	# Music	8	# Drama	0	# Foreign Language	5	# Dance	0	# CTE	0	
Racial/Ethnic Origin												
% American Indian or Alaska Native	0.4%	% Black or African American	74.2%	% Hispanic or Latino	18.7%	% Asian or Native Hawaiian /Other Pacific Islander	1.4%	% White	5.3%	% Multi-racial	0%	
Personnel												
Years Principal Assigned to School	9	# of Assistant Principals	3	# of Deans	0	# of Counselors / Social Workers		3/1				
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	1%	% Teaching Out of Certification	1%	% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp.		1%	Average Teacher Absences	N/A				
Overall State Accountability Status (Mark applicable box with an X)												
School in Good Standing		Priority School	X	Focus District		Focus School Identified by a Focus District		SIG Recipient (a)	(g)			
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	7 th -27% 8 th -27%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	7 th -25% 8 th -26%	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	8 th -17%	4 Year Graduation Rate (HS Only)	N/A					
Credit Accumulation (High School Only)												
% of 1 st yr. students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	% of 2 nd yr. students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	% of 3 rd yr. students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	6 Year Graduation Rate	N/A					

Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA (Mark an "X" in the field(s) where school is identified for not meeting AYP.)			
	American Indian or Alaska Native	X	Black or African American
	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
	White		Multi-racial
X	Students with Disabilities	X	Limited English Proficient
X	Economically Disadvantaged		
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics			
	American Indian or Alaska Native	X	Black or African American
X	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
X	White		Multi-racial
X	Students with Disabilities	X	Limited English Proficient
X	Economically Disadvantaged		
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science			
	American Indian or Alaska Native		Black or African American
	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
	White		Multi-racial
	Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient
	Economically Disadvantaged		
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for Effective Annual Measurable Achievement Objective			
	Limited English Proficiency		

Describe the school's top priorities (no more than 5) based on the school's comprehensive plans (SCEP, SIG, DCIP, etc.):

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS DESCRIBED BY THE SCHOOL:
SCEP – QIP – SQR AUDIT

1. Improvement of teachers' instructional delivery of content material:
 - a. Increase differentiated instruction for students to improve literacy skills in all content areas such as in flexible grouping, direct and explicit instruction, and active student engagement.
 - b. Increase the use of data to inform instructional practices and goals; evaluate student, program, and teacher performance; identify success and analyze weak areas.
 - c. Increase professional development opportunities to improve teacher and teaching assistance practices.
2. Increase use and analysis of student data to understand the crucial/urgent need for instructional change and to monitor the implementation of change for school improvement.
3. Improve school climate and culture to meet the expectations of the school's mission and vision for school improvement and student achievement.
4. As relevant stakeholders in decision making, increase parent involvement to sustain good communication and strategize together to create solutions for school improvement goals.

Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions: Visionary leaders create a school community and culture that lead to success, well-being and high academic outcomes for all students via systems of continuous and sustainable school improvement.

Mark an "X" in the box below the appropriate designation for each tenet, and mark in the 'OVERALL RATING' row the final designation for the overall tenet.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
2.2	Leaders ensure an articulated vision, understood and shared across the community, with a shared sense of urgency about achieving school-wide goals aligned with the vision as outlined in the School Comprehensive Educational Plan (SCEP).			X	
2.3	Leaders effectively use evidence-based systems to examine and improve individual and school-wide practices in the critical areas (student achievement, curriculum & teacher practices; leadership development; community/family engagement; and student social and emotional developmental health) that make progress toward mission-critical goals.			X	
2.4	Leaders make strategic decisions to organize resources concerning human, programmatic and fiscal capital so that school improvement and student goals are achieved.			X	
2.5	The school leader has a fully functional system in place to conduct targeted and frequent observations; track progress of teacher practices based on student data, feedback and professional development opportunities; and hold administrators and staff accountable for continuous improvement.			X	
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 2:				X	

Tenet 3 - Curriculum Development and Support: The school has rigorous and coherent curricula and assessments that are appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) for all students and are modified for identified subgroups in order to maximize teacher instructional practices and student learning outcomes.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
3.2	The school leader and staff support and facilitate the quality implementation of rigorous and coherent curricula appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) in Pre K-12.			X	
3.3	Teachers ensure that unit and lesson plans that are appropriately aligned to the CCLS coherent curriculum introduce complex materials that stimulate higher-order thinking and build deep conceptual understanding and knowledge around specific content.			X	
3.4	The school leader and teachers ensure that teacher collaboration within and across grades and subjects exists to enable students to have access to a robust curriculum that incorporates the arts, technology and other enrichment opportunities.			X	
3.5	The school leader and teachers develop a data-driven culture based on student needs, assessments and analysis, which leads to strategic action-planning that informs instruction and results in greater student			X	

	achievement outcomes.				
	OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 3:			X	
Tenet 4 - Teacher Practices and Decisions: Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students and pertinent subgroups experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.					
#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
4.2	Teachers use instructional practices and strategies organized around annual, unit and daily lesson plans to meet established student goals and promote high levels of student engagement and inquiry.				X
4.3	Teachers provide coherent, appropriately aligned Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)-based instruction that leads to multiple points of access for all students to achieve targeted goals.			X	
4.4	Teachers create a safe environment that is responsive to students' varied experiences, tailored to the strengths and needs of all students, and leads to high levels of student engagement and inquiry.			X	
4.5	Teachers use a variety of data sources including screening, interim measures and progress monitoring to inform lesson planning, develop explicit teacher plans and foster student participation in their own learning process.				X
	OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 4:				X
Tenet 5 - Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health: The school community identifies, promotes, and supports social and emotional development by designing systems and experiences that lead to healthy relationships and a safe, respectful environment that is conducive to learning for all constituents.					
#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
5.2	The school cultivates the development of overarching systems and partnerships that support and sustain social and emotional developmental health.			X	
5.3	The school articulates and systematically promotes a vision for social and emotional developmental health that is connected to learning experiences and results in building a safer and healthier environment for families, teachers and students.			X	
5.4	All school constituents are able to articulate how the school community is safe, conducive to learning and fosters a sense of ownership that leads to greater student outcomes.			X	
5.5	The school leader and student support staff work together to develop teachers' ability to use data to respond to students' social and emotional developmental health needs, so students can become academically and socially successful.			X	
	OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 5:			X	

Tenet 6 - Family and Community Engagement: The school creates a culture of partnership where families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
6.2	The school atmosphere is welcoming and fosters a feeling of belonging and trust, which encourages families to freely and frequently engage with the school, leading to increased student success.			X	
6.3	The school engages in effective planning and reciprocal communication with family and community stakeholders so that students' strength and needs are identified and used to augment learning.			X	
6.4	The entire school community partners with families and community agencies to promote and provide professional development across all areas (academic and social and emotional developmental health) to support student success.			X	
6.5	The entire school shares data in a way that empowers and encourages families to use and understand data to promote dialogue between parents, students and school constituents centered on student learning and success.				X
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 6:				X	

School Review Narrative:

Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions: Visionary leaders create a school community and culture that lead to success, well-being and high academic outcomes for all students via systems of continuous and sustainable school improvement.	Tenet Rating	D
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Debriefing Statement: The school has developed a vision and school culture intended to drive and increase student achievement. However, continuous and sustainable academic improvement has not yet been realized. As a result, the lack of systems to support progress efforts limits the overall school improvement.

Strengths:

All ratings for this Tenet are **Developing** and therefore, comments are listed under **Areas for Improvement**.

Areas for Improvement:

2.2 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** Leaders ensure an articulated vision, understood and shared across the community, with a shared sense of urgency about achieving school-wide goals aligned with the vision as outlined in the School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP).

- The school leader has developed a vision and a set of goals, which are outlined in the School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP). However, these goals are known throughout the school community. Parents reported that they were not involved in developing the school vision but participated in work sessions with school staff to develop the SCEP goals. A review of the SCEP goals found that not all goals are specific, measurable, ambitious, results oriented, and timely (SMART). Further, many of the school goals stated what the district would do, rather than what the school would do. The Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) observed several postings of the school vision throughout in the school, as well as on the school website. The school staff, however, was unable to articulate the vision, when asked during interviews. Parents stated that they were aware that the school had a vision statement, which they have an opportunity to review annually, but they could not verbalize it. The lack of SMART goals that align to the school vision impedes the school's ability to foster a shared sense of urgency about achieving the goals and limits school improvement efforts.

2.3 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** Leaders effectively use evidence-based systems to examine and improve individual and school-wide practices in the critical areas (student achievement; curriculum and teacher practices; leadership development; community/family engagement; and student social and emotional developmental health) that make progress toward mission-critical goals.

- The school leader has implemented a number of systems intended to support school goals, but did not analyze outcomes to identify best practices. A review of the SCEP goals showed that they were not timely. The school leader stated that staff attends regularly scheduled meetings and professional development (PD) sessions to discuss student goals, assessments, data, and progress

toward the school goals; however, the school does not analyze outcomes and identify best practices. At the time of the visit, teachers reported that they had not met during the school year to review student data and set grade-level goals. As a result, the absence of evidenced-based systems related to data analysis to improve instructional practices hinders progress toward mission-critical goals.

2.4 The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice: Leaders make strategic decisions to organize resources concerning human, programmatic and fiscal capital so that school improvement and student goals are achieved.

- The school leader stated that the district makes all hiring decisions for the school and assigns staff according to district policy; the school leader does not have the authority to re-assign staff to meet the needs of students. The school leader also reported that budget allocations are determined by the district, including ordering curriculum materials for school use. Although the school leader reported meeting with district staff to discuss school and student needs, it was reported that not all requests are honored. As a result, the minimal school level input to make strategic decisions with regard to hiring and ordering instructional resources limits strategic decisions by the school leader to achieve school improvement goals.

2.5 The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice: The school leader has a fully functional system in place to conduct targeted and frequent observations; track progress of teacher practices based on student data, feedback and professional development opportunities; and hold administrators and staff accountable for continuous improvement.

- The school’s system for teacher observation does not consistently incorporate student data, provide relevant feedback, and recommend ways to improve practice, or suggest targeted PD. School leaders reported using an adapted version of Danielson’s Framework for Teaching to evaluate teacher instructional strategies and practices. A review of teacher observation reports found that the rating system is unclear. For example, although teachers stated that school leaders and coaches provide feedback, the teacher observation reports reviewed by the IIT did not include references to the use of student data, follow-up to previous feedback provided, or recommendations for improvement to support growth in instructional strategies and practices. The absence of an observation system that prioritizes the quality of teaching and the use of student data limits the school’s ability to improve the teaching and learning experiences for all stakeholders.

Tenet 3 - Curriculum Development and Support: The school has rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments that are appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) for all students and are modified for identified subgroups in order to maximize teacher instructional practices and student-learning outcomes.

Tenet Rating	D
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Debriefing Statement: The school leaders and staff are developing curricula and assessments that support the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and meet the needs of all students, including students with disabilities and English language learners (ELLs), to improve instructional practices and increase student achievement. However, the lack of curricular and material supports to address multiple entry-points impedes

high levels of learning and access for all students.

Strengths:

All ratings for this Tenet are **Developing** and therefore, comments are listed under **Areas for Improvement**.

Areas for Improvement:

3.2 The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice: The school leader and staff support and facilitate the quality implementation of rigorous and coherent curricula appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) in Pre K-12.

- At the time of the visit, the school was developing strategies and practices to support teachers in implementing CCLS curricula. In addition, the school provided limited PD on CCLS curriculum development in English language arts (ELA). For example, the school leader reported that English teachers had begun using pacing calendars. A review of the mathematics and science curricula showed that most curriculum maps were focusing on scope and sequence, rather than on the alignment of content, skills, and assessment. A review of the school PD calendar showed several sessions about data, review of the school's New York State (NYS) Report Card for 2012, working in data-inquiry teams, and the data warehouse. Teacher leaders who attend PD sessions are expected to provide turnkey training; however, at the time of the visit, teachers reported that turnkey training had not occurred. Because of insufficient support, the school is unable to implement rigorous and coherent curricula supporting the CCLS in all subjects.

3.3 The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice: Teachers ensure that unit and lesson plans that are appropriately aligned to the CCLS coherent curriculum introduce complex materials that stimulate higher-order thinking and build deep conceptual understanding and knowledge around specific content.

- Teachers prepared lesson plans; however, not all lesson plans reviewed were aligned to the CCLS. For example, lesson plans did not consistently provide evidence of the thinking skills or questioning strategies to promote high levels of engagement. Teachers reported participation in various meetings supporting CCLS alignment; however, in several classrooms visited, the IIT observed lessons that did not reflect the CCLS shifts. At the time of the visit, teachers reported that the school day schedule does not provide regular meetings across grades or teams to plan lessons and discuss strategies. The absence of opportunities to collaborate and create unit plans supporting the CCLS limits staff ability to consistently develop lesson plans that stimulate higher-order thinking and expose students to a sequence of complex materials.

3.4 The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice: The school leader and teachers ensure that teacher collaboration within and across grades and subjects exists to enable students to have access to a robust curriculum that incorporates the arts, technology, and other enrichment opportunities.

- School leaders reported that the school has insufficient computers and SMARTBoards to meet instructional needs. Teachers reported that the does not have an integrated curriculum that

requires art, music, or technology. School leaders reported three opportunities for teachers to meet: once weekly as a department, twice monthly as professional learning communities, and one hour monthly to discuss curricula; however, teachers reported they have limited ability to meet across grades and subjects to discuss instructional content concerns such as the limited availability of technology. In addition, teachers reported that special education and general-education staff meet informally to monitor student progress; however, these informal meetings are inconsistent. The lack of opportunities for teachers to meet across all grades and subjects to develop curricular materials that incorporate the arts, technology and other enrichment opportunities limits student exposure to robust curricula aligned to the CCLS.

3.5 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader and teachers develop a data-driven culture based on student needs, assessments and analysis, which leads to strategic action-planning that informs instruction and results in greater student achievement outcomes.

- School leaders and staff had just begun the process of developing a data-driven culture. At the time of the visit, data was not used routinely to inform instruction. The school leaders and teachers reported that the school uses Achieve3000, NYS School Report Card data, roll book data, consultant reports, student report cards, and assessment data to inform the various decisions within the school. School staff reported that the data reports are used to group students, determine student placement, identify student-learning patterns, and adjust instruction. However, based on document reviews and classroom visits, the IIT determined that the data was not used for the purposes of adjusting instruction or grouping students. The IIT concluded that teachers do not consistently use assessment tools to identify learning patterns, assess student learning, or check for understanding at regular intervals. Despite efforts to collect, analyze, and use data, the school continues to struggle with the use of assessment data to inform decisions about instructional practices. As a result, the inconsistent use of data to inform decisions that support student learning needs, impedes the academic achievement for all students.

Tenet 4 - Teacher Practices and Decisions: Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students and pertinent sub-groups experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.

Tenet Rating

I

Debriefing Statement: Teachers have access to data to assist them in choosing strategic practices and making instructional decisions; however, teachers are not consistently using the data to inform instruction. As a result, instructional practices do not consistently include rigor and higher-order thinking skills, or accommodations that meet the specific needs of all students.

Strengths:

All ratings for this Tenet are either **Developing** or **Ineffective** and therefore, comments are listed under **Areas for Improvement**.

Areas for Improvement:

4.2 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* for this Statement of Practice:** Teachers use instructional practices and strategies organized around annual, unit and daily lesson plans to meet established student goals and promote high levels of student engagement and inquiry.

- Most lesson plans reviewed by the IIT were not informed by data and did not differentiate instruction for different subgroups of students. Based on documents reviewed, the IIT found that the school had not set grade-level goals or long- and short-term goals for students. Document reviews showed that teachers use lesson plans; however, in classrooms visited the IIT did not observe instructional interventions for all students. The IIT observed a lack of consistent student grouping, and teachers made limited use of strategic instructional practices. The lesson plans reviewed did not indicate references to student-specific data that guided decisions about student groups and differentiated activities. Some teachers reported that they had not met to review student data and set grade-level goals; and the IIT observed minimal student involvement in their own learning. The absence of data-specific goals and differentiated instructional strategies to meet those goals slows the rate of student engagement, ownership, and accountability in their own learning.

4.3 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** Teachers provide coherent, appropriately aligned Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)-based instruction that leads to multiple points of access for all students to achieve targeted goals.

- Instructional delivery did not consistently align to the curricula or provide multiple points of entry for targeted groups of students. During classroom visits, the IIT observed that most instruction was teacher-directed and did not support the CCLS. Teachers reported that textbooks are outdated and not reflective of the CCLS. Lesson plans reviewed did not always reflect differentiation or multiple entry points, especially for English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities. In classrooms visited, the IIT observed that instruction lacked multiple points of access for students to achieve targeted goals. In addition, student groups were not differentiated and instruction was not adjusted to meet the varying student needs presented in the classrooms. The lack of differentiated instruction with multiple points of access, limits students ability to achieve their targeted goals.

4.4 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** Teachers create a safe environment that is responsive to students' varied experiences, tailored to the strengths and needs of all students, and leads to high levels of student engagement and inquiry.

- The IIT observed of the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) expectations posted in some classrooms visited. The IIT did not observe instruction targeted to the PBIS strategies for behaviors presented in classrooms visited. In many classrooms visited, teachers asked low-level questions that related to generic content. The IIT found that questions asked in the classrooms visited did not consistently stimulate student thinking or inquiry, and the content did not relate to complex, rigorous instructional materials. The absence of continuous, explicit instruction that affirms behavioral expectations and academically rigorous instruction limits student engagement

and inquiry.

4.5 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* for this Statement of Practice:** Teachers use a variety of data sources including screening, interim measures and progress monitoring to inform lesson planning, develop explicit teacher plans and foster student participation in their own learning process.

- At the time of the visit, many teachers did not use data and progress monitoring to inform instructional decision-making. Teachers reported that they no longer use data from student report cards, roll books, and classroom assessment data to target necessary interventions. Further, teachers described a Data Warehouse as “not user friendly,” and stated that they did not use it for instructional planning. A review of student work showed that feedback was not relevant and did not include next steps for improvement. Students interviewed were unable to articulate how they use rubrics or other measurement tools, which school staff reported they used to evaluate academic progress. As a result, the school lack of using data to inform instructional decision-making and feedback to students that includes next steps for improvement impedes student participation in their own learning process.

Tenet 5 - Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health: The school community identifies, promotes and supports social and emotional development by designing systems and experiences that lead to healthy relationships and a safe, respectful environment that is conducive to learning for all constituents.

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: The school has a number of supports and partnerships to support student self-esteem and promote a safe school environment. However, the school is in the process of developing a school-wide understanding of how to link student self-esteem skills and behaviors to academic success.

Strengths:

All ratings for this Tenet are **Developing** and therefore, comments are listed under **Areas for Improvement**.

Areas for Improvement:

5.2 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school cultivates the development of overarching systems and partnerships that support and sustain social and emotional developmental health.

- The school leaders and staff have developed some structures and interventions to identify and address student social and emotional needs. However, the IIT found that they do not use student data to identify student needs. The school leaders reported that teachers meet twice monthly in professional learning communities to identify student needs, develop strategies, and recommend interventions; the school psychologists and social workers address the social and emotional developmental needs of students; the school has three school counselors, a crisis team, and after-school programs that address social and emotional health. Teachers reported, however, that the supports provided by the school are not meeting the needs of over-age students. The school leaders reported that many of the intervention strategies take the form of parent meetings and

workshops, tutoring, or referrals to community-based organizations (CBOs) such as, Rockland County Psychiatric Center, Saint Vincent's Mobile Crisis Unit, Family Services of Westchester, Family Ties, and Westchester Jewish Community Services. Document reviews found that the school has developed many community-based partnerships to provide various services to students and their families. Documents also showed the presence of functional behavioral assessment (FBA) tools to identify student needs; however, reviewers found no evidence that student data was used to select appropriate intervention strategies. The absence of a comprehensive data-driven system to support and sustain student social and emotional developmental health needs, hinders student ability to sustain positive relationships and manage emotions in an effort to succeed in school.

5.3 The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice: The school articulates and systematically promotes a vision for social and emotional developmental health that is connected to learning experiences and results in building a safer and healthier environment for families, teachers and students.

- While the school has initiated a PBIS program, students and staff interviewed were not able to articulate the behavioral expectations of the program. In addition, although the school has established some services to support the needs of students, at the time of the visit, it did not have a developed curriculum that teaches social and emotional developmental health. During interviews, the IIT found that some staff could not state the PBIS school-wide expectations. Staff reported that the school provides mental and physical health services, such as the food backpack program for students and families and CBO-sponsored services. Teachers reported that the school offers a few PD sessions on topics connected to student social and emotional developmental health needs; and school leaders reported that they do not collect and analyze data on these supports, so they were unable to articulate how behaviors, supports, and academic success are linked. The absence of a program to teach, support, and measure social and emotional developmental health, impedes the school's efforts to build a safer and healthier environment for families, teachers, and students.

5.4 The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice: All school constituents are able to articulate how the school community is safe, conducive to learning and fosters a sense of ownership that leads to greater student outcomes.

- Teachers and parents are not able to connect the school vision to the work the school does with student social and emotional health. Interviews with students and parents found that not all students and parents feel safe inside the school. School leaders, teachers, parents, and students reported that despite the school having eight security guards, surveillance cameras, adults present throughout the building, there are physical fights every day. Teachers are able to communicate the school's academic vision, but could not express how that vision connected to students' social and emotional developmental health and well-being. The lack of a vision for student social and emotional health needs that prepares an environment in which students feel safe, diminishes efforts to create an atmosphere conducive to learning, it does not foster a sense of ownership that leads to greater student outcomes.

5.5 The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice: The school leader and student support staff work together to develop teachers' ability to use data to respond to students' social and

emotional developmental health needs, so students can become academically and socially successful.

- The school community does not consistently use data to address student social and emotional developmental health needs. Teachers reported that they need additional support in using data to address the social, emotional, and developmental needs of all students. School leaders stated that professional learning communities meet twice monthly to review student data, identify student needs, discuss strategies, and recommend interventions and supports; however, according to staff, the discussion of interventions and supports includes only a few references to data analysis. Although, school leaders reported that they use some data to connect students with interventions and supports, they have yet to link the results of using the services to academic success for students referred. The lack of data in recording and responding to student social, emotional and developmental needs, limits the appropriate referrals for support services students, thereby diminishing academic and social success

Tenet 6 - Family and Community Engagement: The school creates a culture of partnership where families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well being.

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: The school had just begun to develop a culture that values partnerships, in which families, community-based organizations, and school staff work together to share responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being. However, the school has yet to design a comprehensive system to build and sustain healthy partnerships with all families that support social and emotional developmental health and academic achievement for all students.

Strengths:

All ratings for this Tenet are either **Developing** or **Ineffective** and therefore, comments are listed under **Areas for Improvement**.

Areas for Improvement:

6.2 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school atmosphere is welcoming and fosters a feeling of belonging and trust, which encourages families to freely and frequently engage with the school, leading to increased student success.

- School leaders reported that the school was successful in engaging parents in the programs of the school. However, during the visit, the school leader maintained that this initiative remains an unending priority. According to the school leader, the school has trained the administrative staff to meet some needs of families; the trained administrative staff was the main office secretaries. The school's administrative staff conducted volunteer training sessions for families in areas such as how to answer the school's main phone line; how to greet families visiting the school; and understanding the dress code at the school. Parents reported that one percent of the families in the community attend Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) meetings, and some stated that they are vocal

about their needs in the school. Other parents indicated that they did not know about opportunities to volunteer in the school. Parents also stated that some teachers are slow to respond to telephone calls. The lack of successful strategies to engage all families hinders the school's ability to encourage the school community to assist in promoting student academic success.

6.3 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school engages in effective planning and reciprocal communication with family and community stakeholders so that students' strength and needs are identified and used to augment learning.

- The school provides some activities to recognize and support its diverse community. The school engages families using various types of communication; however, it does not translate all communications for families who are not proficient in English. Document reviews found that the school has diverse student backgrounds: Caribbean, Portuguese, Cuban, Peruvian, Asian, Italian, and East Indian. The school leaders and staff spoke about various activities that they host to celebrate diversity in the school: the Hat and Tea Party for girls, the Boys II Men program for boys, the Cultural Club, and the Hispanic Heritage and Black History month celebrations. School leaders stated that the school provides translation services upon request. However, based on interviews and documents reviewed, the IIT determined that the school information was sent to parents, in English, without translation in the different languages. School staff reported that they use a Google application on the school's website to translate information for families who speak languages other than English. The school leaders reported that they communicate with families through emails, texts, telephone calls, a telephone broadcast system, and written communications sent home with students. Parents, however, shared that they do not always receive a prompt response to telephone calls from teachers. Further, parents reported that scheduled meetings with teachers often start as much as 30 minutes late. The lack of communication with families in languages they understand that is consistent and prompt, limits the school's ability to develop the necessary reciprocal communication that allows the full engagement of families in their children's learning.

6.4 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for the Statement of Practice:** The entire school community partners with families and community agencies to promote and provide professional development across all areas (academic and social and emotional developmental health) to support student success.

- The school has developed partnerships with some community-based organizations (CBOs) but does not have a fully developed plan to connect families with the CBOs. School leaders and teachers reported that once a year the school offers PD on how to work with parents; however, at the time of the visit, the school's PD calendar did not show a scheduled session on how to work with families or CBOs. According to the school leader, the school has developed partnerships with several CBOs to support students and families, and stated that the school operates a parent center with a part-time staff member. However, at the time of the visit, parents reported that they either were not aware of or did not understand the role of the partnerships in the school. The absence of strategic planning for professional development to connect families with CBOs hinders the school's ability to provide access to extended learning opportunities to support student academic success.

6.5 The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* for this Statement of Practice: The entire school shares data in a way that empowers and encourages families to use and understand data to promote dialogue between parents, students and school constituents centered on learning and success.

- School leaders and teachers reported that the school shares academic data at parent conferences, and through student reports cards and interim progress reports. However, parents reported that they did not understand all aspects of the data or its implications for student achievement and progress. Parents also indicated that they did not fully understand all the academic programs and services available to their children, such as the resource room, the honors program, academic intervention services (AIS), and access to the data management system from their homes. Although the school had provided parents with student data during parent-teacher conferences and in written reports, the school did not provide these reports in various languages. The absence of programs centered on to increasing family engagement and understanding of data outcomes and support services, limits the opportunities for dialogue between school and families to improve student learning and academic success.

Recommendations:

Tenet 2: School Leader Practices and Decisions

In order for the school's strategy and practices to fully align with the concepts in the Effective column of Tenet 2 the school should:

- 2.2: Ensure that select staff and families develop a vision statement that is known and supported by all members of the school community. Develop SMART goals aligned to the vision statement. Make clear through multiple means of communication that the daily work of individuals at the school is to implement that vision.
- 2.3: Develop dynamic, adaptive, interconnected systems to collect and analyze program outcomes. Ensure, through ongoing PD and monitoring, that staff uses these systems to identify best practices. Regularly share school goals and best practices with the school community and state them in the SCEP.
- 2.4: Advocate for meaningful involvement in the recruitment and hiring of staff with the skills necessary to meet the academic and social needs of students. Proactively advocate for meaningful involvement in budget allocation to ensure that funding decisions align to school goals. Examine school resources and the school schedule to identify ways to better meet student needs. Regularly review goals and funding decisions.
- 2.5: Extend the supervision plan to include frequent formal and informal observations by the school leaders. Review student data to evaluate teacher progress in improving their practices. Ensure that school leaders offer staff specific, detailed feedback for improving both the delivery of instruction and integration of the CCLS. Monitor teacher progress and provide targeted PD connected to improvement expectations.

Tenet 3: Curriculum Development and Support

In order for the school's strategy and practices to fully align with the concepts in the Effective column of Tenet 3 the school should:

- 3.2: Ensure that all teachers have the necessary PD and support to implement rigorous and coherent curricula supporting the CCLS in all subjects. Continuously monitor the implementation of these curricula.
- 3.3: Ensure that teachers meet regularly across grades and subjects to collaboratively create and examine unit and lesson plans supporting the CCLS. Ensure that teachers use CCLS pacing calendars and unit plans that increase student exposure to sequenced, complex materials and lesson plans that promote higher-order thinking skills and help students analyze information.
- 3.4: Ensure that grade-level teachers meet jointly with special area teachers to build an integrated curriculum that exposes students to the arts, technology, and other enrichment subjects.
- 3.5: Develop a comprehensive system to collect, analyze, and use timely data. Ensure, through PD and monitoring, that instructional staff uses the system to assess school effectiveness, identify student needs, identify patterns of student learning, and adapt instruction.

Tenet 4: Teacher Practices and Decisions

In order for the school's strategy and practices to fully align with the concepts in the Effective column of Tenet 4 the school should:

- 4.2: Ensure, through PD and monitoring, that teachers develop and use plans that are informed by data and provide accommodations for all students, especially students with disabilities and ELLs. Ensure that teachers set grade-level goals for all groups of students and create short- and long-term goals based on the grade-level goals. Ensure that teachers implement instructional interventions that activate student participation in their own learning experience.
- 4.3: Ensure, through PD and monitoring, that teachers provide CCLS-based instruction with multiple points of access for all students to achieve targeted goals.
- 4.4: Explicitly teach and reinforce behavioral expectations throughout the school. Ensure, through PD and monitoring, that teachers use strategies that are sensitive to the needs of diverse student groups. Ensure, through PD and monitoring, that teachers use instructional materials that contain high levels of text and content complexity and ask questions related to that content.
- 4.5: Ensure, through PD and monitoring, that all staff use data effectively to analyze information and inform instructional decision-making, student grouping, and lesson planning. Use formative assessments, progress monitoring, and frequent feedback to students to empower and encourage them to actively participate in, and take ownership of, their own learning process.

Tenet 5: Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health

In order for the school's strategy and practices to fully align with the concepts in the Effective column of Tenet 5 the school should:

- 5.2: Create a comprehensive system of student referral and support that identifies and addresses barriers impeding students' social and emotional developmental health, as well as academic progress. Ensure that the system uses data to identify student needs. Develop additional partnerships and positive behavioral strategies that support and sustain student social and emotional developmental health.
- 5.3: Inform and educate all stakeholders about the school's vision for student social and emotional developmental health and how it connects to academic success. Implement a rigorous curriculum to teach and measure the student skills and behaviors that build social and emotional health. Provide PD and training for all stakeholders to build adult capacity to support students' social and emotional health.
- 5.4: Ensure that families and community stakeholders can articulate the school vision and understand how it fosters a safe learning environment. Clearly state and share the role all stakeholders play in achieving this vision and how it links to positive student outcomes.
- 5.5: Provide school leaders and staff with PD on collecting and analyzing data to respond to students' academic, social, and emotional needs. Ensure that school leaders and student support staff maintain an expectation that teachers use data effectively to address student needs.

Tenet 6: Family and Community Engagement

In order for the school's strategy and practices to fully align with the concepts in the Effective column of Tenet 6 the school should:

- 6.2: Involve all community stakeholders in developing a family and community engagement plan that defines the roles and responsibilities of school staff, families, and community stakeholders, as it relates to volunteerism, participation on the PTSA, and other opportunities to participate in school improvement initiatives.
- 6.3: Ensure that school staff communicates information about student achievement, school concerns, and school activities promptly and in languages understood by all families. Develop a cohesive system where all families can communicate with teachers and other staff members in a language they understand about their child's academic, social, and emotional developmental health progress.
- 6.4: Continue to develop connections between families and community organizations. Provide PD for all staff members on how to seek and sustain healthy partnerships with families and community organizations.
- 6.5: Provide PD to staff on understanding and communicating school and individual student data. Develop strategies to share school and individual data with families in a way that enables them to understand student learning needs and successes. Create a family engagement plan that promotes positive educational experiences through more school staff contact and frequent progress reporting to families on their child's academic and social emotional health needs.