



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



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| BEDS Code | 10-01-00-01-0043 |
| School | Philip J. Schuyler Achievement Academy |
| School Address | 676 Clinton Avenue, Albany, NY |
| District | Albany City School District |
| School Leader | Jalinda R. Soto |
| Dates of Review | January 28-30, 2013 |
| School Accountability | Priority |

| School Information Sheet | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|--|---------------|--|-------|--|--------|------------------------------|-----|----------------|----|
| Grade Configuration | Pre-K-5 | Total Enrollment | 330 | % Title 1 Population | 100 % | % Attendance Rate | 92.32% | | | | |
| % Free Lunch | 80% | % Reduced Lunch | 3% | % Student Sustainability | | % Limited English Proficient | 10% | % Students with Disabilities | 22% | | |
| Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes | | | | | | | | | | | |
| # Transitional Bilingual | 0 | # Dual Language | 0 | # Self-Contained English as a Second Language | | 0 | | | | | |
| Types and Number of Special Education Classes | | | | | | | | | | | |
| # Special Classes | 2 | # Consultant Teaching | 3 | # Integrated Collaborative Teaching | | 3 | | | | | |
| # Resource Room | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Types and Number Special Classes | | | | | | | | | | | |
| # Visual Arts | 0 | # Music | 1 | # Drama | 0 | # Foreign Language | 0 | # Dance | 0 | # CTE | 0 |
| Racial/Ethnic Origin | | | | | | | | | | | |
| % American Indian or Alaska Native | 5% | % Black or African American | 68% | % Hispanic or Latino | 15% | % Asian or Native Hawaiian /Other Pacific Islander | 1% | % White | 11% | % Multi-racial | 0% |
| Personnel | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Years Principal Assigned to School | 1 | # of Assistant Principals | 0 | # of Deans | 0 | # of Counselors / Social Workers | | 1 | | | |
| % of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate | 0 | % Teaching Out of Certification | 0 | % Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp. | | 2 | | Average Teacher Absences | 3 | | |
| Overall State Accountability Status (Mark applicable box with an X) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| School in Good Standing | N/A | Priority School | X | Focus District | | Focus School Identified by a Focus District | N/A | SIG Recipient (a) (g) | | | |
| ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4 | 3- 20% 4- 0% | Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4 | 3-25% 4-6% | Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 | 83% | 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.) | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|---|---|
| X | American Indian or Alaska Native | X | 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) in Mathematics | | | |
| | American Indian or Alaska Native | X | Black or African American |
| | Hispanic or Latino | | Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander |
| | White | | Multi-racial |
| | Students with Disabilities | | 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:

1. Improve and differentiate instruction through regular analysis of student data, such as AimsWeb, Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA), Exit Tickets, Fountas and Pinnell, and other summative and formative assessment data.
2. Create an environment that is conducive to learning, safe, and culturally responsive and, therefore, increase the level of student engagement and inquiry through implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).
3. Demonstrate transformational leadership through monitoring teacher implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCLS) in mathematics and English language arts (ELA), as well as Data-Driven Instruction through walkthroughs, formal and informal observations, collaborative planning, and grade level meetings.
4. Move teachers from "awareness and understanding" of the CCLS to the use of instructional strategies that motivate and engage students and are responsive to the "shifts" in both ELA and mathematics.

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: | | | | D | |

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 achievement outcomes. | | | X | |

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|---|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 3: | | | D | |
| 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: | | | D | |
| 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: | | | D | |

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: | | | | D | |

School Review Narrative:

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|--|---------------------|----------|
| 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 leader has a clearly articulated vision for school improvement that is beginning to create a school culture that leads to student success. However, the systems and structures that drive staff practices are not fully established, which limits how the school community understands and works together to create the vision.

Strengths:

2.3 The school has received a rating of Effective 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 encourages staff to use dynamic, adaptive, interconnected systems to collect and analyze outcomes and create a plan for action that includes feedback loops and examples of best practices. The school leader designed and regularly attends mandatory grade level meetings held during common planning time. The school leader stated in interviews that she actively engages staff in discussions that rely upon formative assessments of student work aligned to the School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP) and the prior year’s School Quality Review (SQR). She reported that she has her staff complete a written monthly formative assessment (exit ticket) using a standard Plan/Do/Study/Act (PDSA) protocol that examines student academic progress, whether goals are being met, and whether staff challenges learners and provides enrichment activities in instruction. Staff obtains a variety of data from AIMSWeb, Response to Intervention (RtI), NWEA MAPS and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and uses the data as benchmarks to inform changes in instructional practice and student grouping. Through discussions with staff and document review, the review team found that monitoring and reporting systems are interlinked; members of key school committees are represented on the Building Leadership Team (BLT); and committee and grade level meetings link directly to the prioritized goals established in the SCEP. Sharing occurs at principal-led professional development (PD), teacher-led PD, and at grade level meetings. These school leader practices support progress towards mission critical goals.

2.4 The school has received a rating of Effective 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.

- Resource decisions consider SCEP goals that are to be achieved and the essential supports needed to achieve them. The school leader reported in an interview that she ensures funds devoted to school improvement are used to support the school priorities and SCEP goals. Expenditures have been made for PD aligned to the SCEP. Expenditures were also made to increase non-fiction texts in the Book Room to support alignment with the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). The review team observed the school leader actively participating in the grade level meeting. Reviewers observed that teachers discussed student data from exit tickets and in collaboration with the school leader and the

other grade-level teachers created action plans for instructional strategies to facilitate student understanding of concepts being taught. Staff at the meeting reported that the school leader designed and implemented the process for how the grade level meetings are run, and staff believes they are able to be much more effective in adjusting instructional strategies because of the new process. The school leader's strategic decisions provide the structures necessary for school improvement and achievement of student goals as prioritized in the SCEP.

2.5 The school has received a rating of Effective 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 leader uses a variety of monitoring, observation and feedback mechanisms that enable all staff to align their actions with the SCEP. The school leader reported that she has one staff member on a Teacher Improvement Plan (TIP) to whom she provides intensive and focused support. The school leader reported that 25 unannounced observations and seven formal evaluations were conducted by January, and she has a plan in place to complete all required formal observations by the end of the school year. The school leader reported that she spends at least one hour every day conducting informal walkthroughs in classrooms during which practices identified in the P/D/S/A are monitored for implementation. Following the walk-throughs, the school leader provides feedback to teachers through a checklist and brief comments. These are e-mailed to staff, and as the school leader expressed, “create the opportunity for dialogue” about the implementation and use of strategies for improved student achievement. The school leader communicates with District staff (supervisors of English language arts (ELA), mathematics, English as a second language (ESL), and special education) as well as the school’s previous principals to gain insight and suggestions to improve teacher performance. Staff understands the school leader’s expectations, and they are held accountable for continuous improvement, which supports higher student achievement.

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 SCEP.

- The school leader has a vision that is supported by specific, measurable, ambitious, results-oriented and timely goals, which are routinely monitored, adjusted, and aligned to that vision. The vision was created by the Building Leadership Team (BLT), who used the School Quality Review (SQR) to guide development of the vision. The vision was shared with the faculty and is widely known and supported by staff. Teachers could articulate the school’s vision and expressed their desire to help achieve the vision to improve student achievement using data to drive instruction. They also reported that the vision includes a focus on teacher collaboration and community partnerships. The review team found that although families, students, and members of the community have been informed of the goals, shared knowledge and ownership of the goals that support the vision across these groups has not been achieved. In interviews, students and parents alike expressed the school vision in terms of behavior expectations, i.e., “Be safe, be respectful, be responsible.” In interviews, parents were mostly unaware of the school’s academic goals or strategies to support their child’s academic growth and improve their child’s understanding of the curriculum. Because the goals are not universally known, key stakeholders are not able to contribute fully to the realization and revisions of this vision. Consequently, a shared

sense of urgency about achieving these goals is limited.

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

Debriefing Statement: The school is in the initial stages of aligning curricula and assessments to the CCLS. The curriculum does not provide rigor or high levels of student engagement and is not modified for identified subgroups.

Strengths:

All ratings for this Tenet are either **Developing** or **Ineffective** 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.

- Although staff have received initial PD on the ELA and mathematics CCLS, their daily lesson plans are not in conformance with the Standards. The District designed units of instruction aligned to the CCLS for ELA and mathematics during the summer, and initial PD has been offered at the District level. These PD offerings are voluntary and not well attended, as expressed by staff during interviews. The school leader reported that the mathematics and ELA supervisors for the district provide direction on curriculum and PD in their content areas. The school leader has also encouraged them to provide on-site PD as staff is more likely to attend offerings in the building than at other locations. Staff expressed that while binders and resource materials (ELA) and online resources (mathematics) are available, school-level PD on how to adapt the District curricular units to classroom instruction is not adequately meeting the needs of teachers. Staff reported, however, that the school leader provides guidance to staff on best practices and shares strategies with teachers at grade level and faculty meetings. Staff also reported that the ELA coaches provide monthly, embedded PD for teachers. This level of support does not address accommodations, however, to meet the needs of students with disabilities. Although a few teachers require students to make inferences about challenging vocabulary, analyze the texts they are reading, and justify answers from the text, the review team found during classroom visitations that most questioning strategies involved direct student recall. Teachers are making attempts to include more nonfiction in guided and independent reading, and encourage more student discussion and conversation. Staff reported in interviews that they are using the mathematics textbook as the mathematics curriculum, and unit development in mathematics is incomplete. Gaps in alignment in mathematics have not been addressed. Teaching reflected a limited use of technology as observed during classroom visitations. The CCLS curriculum is not yet uniformly known or practiced and, therefore, students are not provided with the concepts or strategies necessary for their academic success.

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.

- Grade level staff (including special education teachers) meets weekly to collaborate on lesson plan development and instructional strategies. At these meetings, teachers review student work and assessment data and plan next steps to improve student achievement. While the review team observed teachers planning differentiated strategies to address individual student supports to aid in student understanding of concepts not mastered, use of differentiated strategies were not consistently observed in classrooms. The review team found that grade level meetings were not being used to address the CCLS and the underlying shifts in instruction required to implement it. Additionally, teachers do not have a means for reviewing their lessons and units to ensure alignment with the CCLS. Staff reported that scheduling constraints limit the involvement of art, music, and RtI reading teachers in grade level meetings. Staff also expressed that vertical meetings between grades do not yet occur, although they are planned for next year, limiting student exposure to a progression of sequenced, complex materials. Pacing calendars are not uniformly known or used, and teachers are left on their own to discover supports and extensions necessary for all students to achieve. Staff has not integrated the CCLS into their classroom practice, limiting student access to rigorous coherent curricula that can prepare them for academic success.

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.

- Teachers at the same grade level have opportunities to work in partnership with one another; however, vertical meetings between grades do not occur, limiting discussion among teachers of different grades about what is taught and why. The school leader reported that staff works in teams at principal-led PD. She also stated that since there are only two teachers at each grade level and all specials are offered only two days a week, it was difficult to provide vertical meetings on a regular basis. Little integration of the arts, music, or technology was evident in classroom instruction during classroom visitations by the review team. As a result, students are not fully benefiting from the arts, technology and other enrichment areas and are missing additional learning opportunities to support their success.

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.

- Although the use of data to differentiate instructional strategies for individual students was taking place at the grade level meeting observed by the review team, there was inconsistent evidence of differentiated instruction in the classroom. While teachers reported using data to place students into instructional groups, there was little evidence that they used data to determine specific instructional supports and scaffolds for each student. The review teams observed students moving between learning stations or changing groups for small group instruction. While students were grouped by skill level, teachers generally used the same instructional strategies for every student. Classroom teachers are only in the beginning stages of regularly assessing formative data to adapt instructional strategies and set goals and a clear path for individual student progress and growth, which is limiting student achievement.

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| 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 | D |
|--|---------------------|----------|

Debriefing Statement: Teachers provide generic instruction, which limits the ways in which students access learning and achieve goals. While behavioral expectations are explicitly taught throughout the building, frequent reminders regarding acceptable student behavior oftentimes interrupts and impedes coherent instructional delivery. Lack of instructional strategies that focus on multiple access points for varied learners and pertinent subgroups is leading to low levels of engagement and achievement.

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 Developing 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.

- Staff uses data to group and progress monitor students. Staff reported in interviews that they use AIMSWEB, RtI data, and NWEA MAPS data to regroup students, set targets, and provide for progress monitoring. There was little evidence that teachers use differentiated instructional strategies aligned to annual, unit, and daily lesson plans that include accommodations for varied learners. In interviews, students were not able to articulate their academic goals. Lack of data use to differentiate instruction and involve students in meaningful goal setting is limiting student access to and involvement 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.

- New teaching strategies, such as The Daily Five, provide uniform structure; however, the content of instruction is not explicitly linked to the CCLS. Staff reported the Daily Five is a series of literacy tasks: reading to self, reading with someone, writing, word work, and listening to reading, which students complete daily while the teacher meets with small groups or confers with individuals. Staff is also using whole language and phonics instruction as part of a balanced literacy approach. Staff expressed the understanding that the Daily Five and a balanced literacy approach provide a structure, but are not the CCLS themselves. Staff reported using CCLS strategies, such as questioning techniques, to reach the Standards. However, during classroom visits the review team did not observe widely the effective use of such techniques to promote students' higher-order thinking. Fact-based questioning was used in most classrooms. While teachers often would check for understanding, lessons did not move beyond the "what" students got wrong to determine "why" students may have answered incorrectly. Students are not consistently provided with a wide array of instructional strategies to engage in learning, such as the use of multi-sensory teaching tools. Lack of consistent CCLS-aligned teaching practices and the limited use of strategies that allow multiple points of access for all students limits

student engagement and learning opportunities.

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.

- School-wide expectations for behavior are explicitly taught throughout the school. Rubrics for behavior are posted in hallways and classrooms. Teachers provide positive reinforcement to students who display appropriate behavior. However, during classroom visitations, reviewers observed that behavioral rubric reminders sometimes interfered with and interrupted instruction. Instruction had to be stopped for these reminders, as the reminders were not uniformly heeded by students. Staff reported that students in self-contained classrooms are included in all school-wide activities. The review team observed that teachers were inconsistently using instructional materials with high levels of text and content complexity. While students were grouped by ability for Response to Intervention (RtI) and re-teaching, the review team found that some higher-achieving students were not provided with challenging work. While teachers are providing a safe and respectful learning environment, they are not consistently challenging students in ways that are tailored to the strengths and needs of all students and, therefore, high levels of student engagement and inquiry are not the norm.

4.5 The school has received a rating of Developing 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.

- Teachers use data from Fountas and Pinnell and AIMSWeb to create instructional groups. Data are used in grade-level meetings to analyze identified students, conduct progress monitoring and follow-up for future regrouping. Staff reported that reading staff make some decisions for student grouping based on their analysis of RtI and reading assessment data. While data inform student grouping, there was a lack of evidence that data are used to inform lesson planning, as plans and instruction were not reflective of the consistent use of data for this purpose. Staff reported that students receive weekly progress reports based on tests and behavior that a parent must sign. Most teachers use daily exit tickets to provide students with feedback regarding their mastery of skills and/or concepts; however, students were unable to explain their learning goals in interviews. The lack of widespread use of data to inform lesson planning impedes teachers' ability to foster 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 community fosters students' feelings of safety and social-emotional health and growth, providing a foundation for future academic success.

Strengths:

5.2 The school has received a rating of Effective 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 is a full-service school with multiple community partners, which include Parsons Child and Family Center and Whitney Young Medical Center. Staff reported in interviews that mental health, physical health, and dental health are all addressed within the school by community providers. Staff reported the system of referral is timely. In interviews, staff expressed their awareness of the referral system for all students. Staff reported that students with social emotional needs are referred to the Instructional Support Team (IST), which meets bi-weekly. Staff uses data to identify and progress monitor student social emotional developmental health needs. Staff indicated that the school uses the following data sources: The Motivational Scale; Behavior Assessment System for Children (BASC); Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scale; PBIS; Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA); office discipline referrals (ODRs) and attendance records. Staff reported in interviews that the school social worker meets with the Parsons social worker to review the needs of students for referral services. If the family needs support, Parsons provides that support. Staff reported in interviews that the Parsons social worker has a case load of 20 students and their families, which is at capacity. Staff also reported in interviews that hall monitors and teaching assistants are informal resources to students. Students stated in interviews that they can go to a counselor, hall monitor, or a teacher if they are having a problem. They mentioned specific hall monitors by name. While teachers reported that only those students they referred to as “hot spots,” or identified as high need, have been assigned a designated adult who coordinates social and emotional developmental health needs, there have been discussions around assigning a designated adult to each student. Overarching systems and partnerships ensure that student social and emotional needs are being monitored and supported.

5.3 The school has received a rating of Effective 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.

- As a result of the school-wide PBIS program, students, parents, and staff are able to articulate the skills and behaviors that lead to academic success. The building PBIS team meets regularly to look for ways to support teachers across the building. In review team interviews with students, they were able to explain behavioral expectations and school rules. Students also reported feeling safe. Parents reported that students use the language of the school-wide expectations outside of school, and parents could also state the school-wide expectations. Parents were able to state PBIS rules and understood the reward system in place for students who earn points for behavioral successes. During the daily “Morning Meeting,” reviewers observed that the “Celebration of Golden Tickets” (reward system) is well-received by students, fostering a school community that is conducive to learning. Staff is receiving PD in PBIS to build their capacity to create a positive learning environment. The school community's vision and commitment to a safe and positive learning environment ensures that student success and well-being are being addressed.

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

- Students feel safe and supported in school. Staff takes responsibility for its role in providing a safe and supportive environment. During the small group interview, students reported that the teachers care about them and said, “You could ask them anything.” Staff reported that they all use the same language when speaking about the “Three B’s - Be Safe, Be Responsible, Be Respectful” and that this has made everyone, staff and students alike, more accountable. Parents reported that they have faith in the school staff to do what is best for their children. Parsons assisted the school with a bullying

problem in grade four by bringing in a six to eight week anti-bullying program. Because the school community shares an understanding of behavior expectations and students feel safe and supported, the school environment is conducive to learning and fosters a sense of ownership that leads to improved student outcomes.

Areas for Improvement:

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.

- Staff uses data to identify and respond to students' social and emotional needs. Staff reported that they used the DECA in pre-kindergarten to assess social and emotional initiative, attachment, and behavior. During the student support staff meeting, staff reported to the review team that the school leader supports their work and provides for substitutes so that teachers can meet weekly to review behavioral data and participate in the BLT as needed. Student support staff reported that teachers refer students based on a variety of data sources. They reported that the school leader supports them when they tell teachers they require 10 days' worth of data before they will do a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) to address chronic issues. Staff reported that acute issues are addressed immediately. Staff noted that the data sources used to identify student social and emotional development health needs in grades kindergarten through grade five are the motivational scale of the FBA and the Behavior Assessment System for Children (BASC), which is completed by both teachers and parents. Data, including referrals and Violent and Disruptive Incident Reports (VADIR), are reviewed by the PBIS Team, which includes members of the student support staff. At PBIS team meetings, the group discusses all tiers of students and how the students are responding to interventions. The school leader and selected staff collect and review data from a number of sources; however, the systems are not yet in place for all collected data to be analyzed, interpreted, and shared with staff, along with the necessary training in how to use the information gleaned, to help staff effectively address student needs. As a result, many students are struggling and unable to work to their full potential.

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: Families are not fully aware of the array of services available through school partnerships with community-based organizations and are not able to fully participate as partners in their children's learning because the school does not have a comprehensive family engagement plan.

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.

- The school has an "open door" policy, and parents expressed to the review team that they feel welcome in the building. While parents regularly volunteer in pre-kindergarten classrooms, staff reported that parental participation in the school is fairly low, especially for older students. Staff noted volunteer participation in the pre-kindergarten occurs twice weekly, and there are some parent volunteers in the self-contained special education classroom as well. Parents reported in interviews that teachers give parents their cell phone numbers and that teachers call parents if the teachers have a concern. The school has a Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), but membership is low (ten or fewer parents at the time of the visit) according to parents interviewed. Staff reported in interviews that translators are provided for parent conferences; however, not all correspondence is sent home in the home languages of students. Some parents indicated that they obtained newsletters and announcements from student backpacks; others said that they accessed the website to get information, or called the school for information. Other than the Open House, parents stated that the school does not regularly host parent information nights about teaching and learning. The school offers limited ways to involve parents in their children's learning and development. Consequently, there are low levels of parental involvement, which is limiting parental support for their children's education.

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' strengths and needs are identified and used to augment learning.

- The school has made some attempts to acknowledge diverse cultures and communicate with non-native English speakers. The school hosts an annual multicultural dinner. Parents expressed in interviews that they do not consistently receive information about school programs. They reported that when information is sent home in their child's backpack they oftentimes do not receive it. Staff reported that written communication to parents is not consistently translated into all languages. Staff did report, however, that the school attempts to provide translators when needed for parent conferences. The ESL teacher acts as a translator in some instances. Parents who were interviewed did not know about the summer school program, or about the CCLS. One parent said the school website was not kept up-to-date. While student progress reports are sent home weekly, the review team did not find evidence that the school seeks input from family and community stakeholders. The lack of reciprocal communication with family and community stakeholders limits the school's ability to identify student strengths and needs that could be used to augment 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's partnerships with Whitney Young and Parsons provide families with physical and psychological health supports; however, parents were not aware of some of the services available at the school. Parents reported in interviews they want more afterschool opportunities for their children. They reported the current YMCA sponsored afterschool program has a waiting list. Staff reported that there are limited out of school learning opportunities for students and few professional development (PD) opportunities for staff to seek and sustain partnerships with families. As a result, many students are not receiving remedial and enrichment experiences that such partnerships could provide to promote student 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 student learning and success.

- Although parents reported that they understand student report cards, other school data is not currently presented in a way that parents can understand. Parents indicated that they received a letter about school data that had charts and graphs, but they could not understand it. The school planned to offer an information session for parents about data; however, it was canceled due to inclement weather. The school leader reported that the district decided not to send parent reports on the NWEA mathematics and ELA assessments until teachers were trained on how to better articulate student progress for greater parental understanding. Therefore, no parent reports on this assessment instrument have been generated for the 2012-13 school year. Because parents are not empowered with pertinent information, they are restricted in their ability to advocate on behalf of their children's learning and 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: Increase the specificity, intensity, and frequency of communication about the school's vision to ensure the entire school community (staff, student, family and community members) are full partners in the realization of this vision, thereby allowing them to contribute to student success. Involve students in academic goal setting and provide more information to parents about how to support their children to achieve the goals

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: Continue grade level meetings and school leader-led PD and add vertical collaboration opportunities to align ELA and mathematics curriculum to the CCLS. Introduce teachers to the Tri-State Rubric during school leader-led PD so that teachers can ensure their unit and lesson plans are CCLS aligned. Have the ELA coaches in their monthly embedded PD for teachers address providing accommodations to meet the needs of students with disabilities. Make it a priority to address the gaps in alignment in the mathematics curricula by seeking District support in this area.
- 3.3: Increase embedded PD on strategies to appropriately pace and sequence unit and lesson plans to promote students' higher order thinking and critical analysis skills. Address scheduling needs that would allow the involvement of art, music, and RtI reading teachers in grade level meetings.
- 3.4: Increase collaboration between enrichment staff (art, music, technology) and grade level staff to ensure curricula provides students with engaging opportunities to discover, create, and communicate effectively.
- 3.5: Implement embedded PD to enable school leader and staff to use assessment tools to adapt instruction and map a path for individual progress and growth based on student needs.

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 staff use appropriate assessment tools to incorporate differentiated instructional interventions in their annual, unit, and daily lesson plans that include accommodations for varied learners through monitoring and feedback loops. Communicate the expectation to staff that they should identify and communicate short- and long-term goals to students in order to promote student involvement in the own learning.
- 4.3: Provide staff with PD to adapt instruction based on student needs and increase teachers' repertoire of strategies to engage students in learning so their targeted goals can be achieved.

- 4.4: Provide teachers with PD on strategies they can use to consistently challenge students at all ability levels. Tailor instruction for various types of learners to foster high levels of student engagement. Monitor use of strategies to hold staff accountable for consistent use of these strategies. Provide targeted assistance as necessary so that teachers learn to challenge and engage students.
- 4.5: Continue to use data to adjust student grouping and increase teacher understanding of how to use data to adjust instructional strategies. Provide frequent teacher feedback to students based on analysis of data and support student participation in their own learning. Regularly monitor staff use of data.

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:

- 5.5: Review all current data used to identify and monitor student social emotional health, create a team to research best practices, and develop an action plan around the use of data so that it is aligned to both social and academic needs. Continue opportunities for student support staff to work with teaching staff, sharing best practices in order to create a common understanding of how all staff can use data to address the needs of students. Hold all staff accountable for ongoing, systematic use of data to address student needs by monitoring data usage and evaluating its effectiveness.

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: Develop an action plan to support comprehensive parent involvement. Survey parents on a number of topics, including: best ways to receive information (e.g., flyers sent home in backpacks are not consistently received); possible participation in volunteer activities; best times for attendance at PTA meetings; topics they would like to know more about; and other topics generated by the team. Provide PD for staff to support outreach to parents and encourage their involvement so that communication is frequent and reciprocal.
- 6.3: Identify all non-English language speakers in the school community and ensure all correspondence is consistently translated. Regularly seek input from parents to foster an on-going dialogue so that student strengths and needs are identified and learning is augmented.
- 6.4: Solicit ideas from family members regarding the kinds of afterschool activities that parents would like for their children. Research partnerships in the community that could provide additional opportunities for families during out of school time so more slots are available for students. Provide PD for staff on strategies for creating home and community partnerships to bring together family needs with community resources.
- 6.5: Include a wide range of learning opportunities as part of the parent involvement plan for families to increase their understanding of student data and develop a plan for regularly sharing data with families in user-friendly ways. Include student learning needs and successes and provide strategies that enable families to advocate for their children's ongoing support.