



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

**DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)**



<b>BEDS Code</b>	140600010074
<b>School</b>	74 - Hamlin Park Elementary School
<b>School Address</b>	126 Donaldson Road, Buffalo, NY 14208
<b>District</b>	Buffalo City School District
<b>School Leader</b>	Faye Walton
<b>Dates of Review</b>	December 5-6, 2012
<b>School Accountability</b>	Priority
<b>Type of Review</b>	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet											
Grade Configuration	PK-8	Total Enrollment	524	% Title 1 Population	97.4	% Attendance Rate	89.4				
% Free Lunch	93.3	% Reduced Lunch	4.1	% Student Sustainability	38	% Limited English Proficient	0.6	% Students with Disabilities	18.1		
<b>Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes</b>											
# Transitional Bilingual	0	# Dual Language	0	# Self-Contained English as a Second Language		0					
<b>Types and Number of Special Education Classes</b>											
# Special Classes	7	# Consultant Teaching	0	# Integrated Collaborative Teaching				7			
# Resource Room	0										
<b>Types and Number Special Classes</b>											
# Visual Arts	1	# Music	1	# Drama	0	# Foreign Language	1	# Dance	0	# CTE	2
<b>Racial/Ethnic Origin</b>											
% American Indian or Alaska Native	0	% Black or African American	91	% Hispanic or Latino	4	% Asian or Native Hawaiian /Other Pacific Islander	0	% White	3	% Multi-racial	1.9
<b>Personnel</b>											
Years Principal Assigned to School	2	# of Assistant Principals	1	# of Deans	0	# of Counselors / Social Workers		2			
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	0	% Teaching Out of Certification	0	% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp.		3	Average Teacher Absences	3/(1 <sup>st</sup> 10 wks of school)			
<b>Overall State Accountability Status (Mark applicable box with an X)</b>											
School in Good Standing	N/A	Priority School	X	Focus District	X	Focus School Identified by a Focus District	N/A	SIG Recipient (a)	(g)		N/A
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	15.9%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	16.3%	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	47.7%	4 Year Graduation Rate (HS Only)		N/A			
<b>Credit Accumulation (High School Only)</b>											
% of 1 <sup>st</sup> yr. students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	% of 2 <sup>nd</sup> yr. students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	% of 3 <sup>rd</sup> yr. students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	6 Year Graduation Rate		N/A			

<b>Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA</b> <b>(Mark an "X" in the field(s) where school is identified for not meeting AYP.)</b>			
	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		Limited English Proficient
X	Economically Disadvantaged		
<b>Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics</b>			
	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		Limited English Proficient
X	Economically Disadvantaged		
<b>Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science</b>			
	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		
<b>Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for Effective Annual Measurable Achievement Objective</b>			
	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. Staff will use Bloom's Taxonomy, effective questioning techniques, and other best practices to engage students in higher-order thinking skills in order to improve their performance and the quality of their work.
2. Students will be required to support their answers by citing text, by building on the answers of other students, and by summarizing and rephrasing information.
3. Staff will implement strategies to improve students' writing skills.
4. Staff will implement a school-wide initiative for choral reading and require each student to have an independent reading book with them at all times.
5. The school staff will improve parental communication through increasing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) initiatives involving parents, encouraging two-way parental contact, and frequently monitoring teachers' phone logs.

**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	
<b>OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 2:</b>				<b>D</b>	

**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
<b>OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 3:</b>					<b>I</b>

**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
<b>OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 4:</b>					<b>I</b>

**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
<b>OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 5:</b>				<b>D</b>	

**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	
<b>OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 6:</b>				<b>D</b>	

School Review Narrative:

<b>Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions:</b> 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.	<b>Tenet Rating</b>	<b>D</b>
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**Debriefing Statement:** The school leader has a clearly articulated vision and goals for the school, and staff is both aware of and can readily articulate this vision and the school goals. Although the school leader and staff have a common focus, what is not well understood is a clear plan of action, with time lines and specific steps needed to realize the school goals. The school community in general was not clear on how they were to work together to realize these goals.

**Strengths:**

2.2 **The school has received a rating of *Effective* 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 shared the vision across the school community. Teachers can articulate the vision and school goals, and there is a common focus on goals and a sense of urgency for the work for all staff members. The school leader involved a wide cross section of the community in developing the school’s vision and mission statement in a revision process that began last year and was completed the beginning of this school year. All constituent groups interviewed verified that the school leader made considerable effort to involve a wide population of the school community in revising the school’s vision and mission statement. The whole school including staff, recite the school’s mission statement every morning immediately after reciting the “Pledge of Allegiance,” and those interviewed could explain what the mission and vision statement meant in their own words. It was clear after interviewing staff that the sense of urgency for achieving school-wide goals was present, with other constituents mirroring nearly the same sentiment. Teachers could state quickly and easily list the five major goals of the school. Consequently, school constituents were working together to realize the school’s goals and thereby increase student achievement and social and emotional well-being.

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.

- To the extent possible within the confines of District hiring practices and policies, the school leader makes hiring decisions and adjusts staff assignments to make the best use of human resources in the school. If a vacancy occurs during the school year, the school leader is able to interview candidates already hired by the District, and she asks applicants to teach a lesson before she offers a position. The school leader has made a concerted effort to acknowledge teachers whose skills and leadership she values in order to retain them. The staff also acknowledged the leader’s efforts to recognize their professional skills and strengths. Considering the limitations imposed by District policies on the leader’s ability to choose the most qualified candidates to fill positions, the school

leader makes reasonable efforts to find and retain the most qualified teachers and other staff for her school. Consequently, newly hired teachers are better prepared to provide instruction appropriate to the needs of students.

**Areas for Improvement:**

**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 encourages staff to collect and analyze student outcomes during grade-level team meetings and school-based interventions team (SBIT) meetings that address the needs of students with academic and behavior issues. However, there is not a clear practice of using evidence-based systems for schoolwide data collection and analysis, and data is not yet being used to review schoolwide systems. Although the school leader described a plan for modeling data collection and analysis processes, staff indicated that such collection and analysis is in the early stages. Staff were neither comfortable nor fluent in using newly introduced protocols and strategies for data collection and analysis to monitor and adjust teaching and lesson planning. During both the school support team (SST) and vertical teacher team focus group meetings, the review team found that staff were not comfortable discussing how data was collected and analyzed to guide instruction or support student social-emotional growth. There was no evidence to suggest that data were used widely to inform instructional planning, nor were feedback loops with examples of best practices observed. During the observation of the grade level meetings, the review team found that data collection and analysis was primarily anecdotal, with reporting of “what items on the test students seemed to have the most trouble with.” Consequently, without the **use of evidence-based systems to examine schoolwide practices**, the school has not yet made measurable progress toward achieving its mission-critical 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 leader and assistant leaders have developed a system for conducting and tracking daily, informal classroom walkthroughs, using “Power Walkthrough Observation and Planning Tool” published by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL). Staff indicated that school leaders cleared their schedules in order to make daily observations; teachers indicated they were observed frequently and provided with informal feedback immediately or shortly after the observation. The District provides attendance and on-time data for each classroom teacher from their School Wide Information System (SWIS). At the time of the review, procedures for monitoring of professional development (PD) opportunities related to teacher improvement plans had not yet been negotiated between the District and the teachers’ union, and PD is controlled by the District. The school leader is able to suggest, but not prescribe or mandate, specific PD offerings for

individuals or groups of teachers. As a result, school leaders are not able to link feedback from formal and informal observations with PD opportunities, even those facilitated by “in-house” academic coaches, support staff and other supervisors limiting the impact of PD.

**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**

**I**

**Debriefing Statement:** The school has curricula and some assessment tools, although the curricula are generic and only partly aligned with the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). These curricula have not been modified adequately to meet the needs of any student subgroups or for students in general. Neither teacher instructional practices nor student learning outcomes are maximized.

**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.

- The school leader and teachers have not yet fully implemented curricula appropriately aligned to the CCLS. The District provided five modules each of revised CCLS curricula for ELA and mathematics, and academic coaches work with grade-level teachers to plan and implement the modules. However, the review team did not observe schoolwide implementation of high quality, rigorous curriculum aligned to the CCLS. Classroom visits conducted by the team across the grades and subjects showed few examples of high quality, rigorous lessons that engaged students in either higher levels of thinking or inquiry. In most classrooms visited, the team observed the use of worksheets requiring recall and basic understanding rather than higher-order thinking and inquiry activities. Because of District practices and expectations that lack mechanisms to ensure the fidelity of PD to the original model, the quality of PD for teachers at a given school is entirely dependent on the training, understanding, interpretation, skill and delivery of the academic coach. Because District-prepared CCLS curricula as implemented lack rigor and mechanisms for student engagement, student learning opportunities are limited.

**3.3 The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* 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.

- Teacher lessons are not aligned to the CCLS despite support from academic coaches. Much instruction is teacher-directed to an entire class and focused on round- robin reading and isolated skills. Students do not spend quality time performing authentic reading and writing tasks. Teachers have no common planning time to ensure the quality of lesson delivery; while there are grade level meetings, lesson planning is voluntary. The review team observed few instances of higher order questioning, and lessons usually consisted of reviewing worksheets and filling in the correct

answers. In most classrooms visited, the review team did not observe teachers developing student deep understanding of key concepts. The school does not have a common lesson-planning format, or even a common lesson-planning strategy. Teachers and school leaders indicated that the District also does not have a consistent lesson plan format or strategy. Individual schools may adopt a lesson-planning format, but this has not yet occurred at the school. Teachers indicated there were no formal opportunities to examine the grade level curriculum to ensure a progression of sequenced activities and materials. No time has been set aside for collaborative examination and creation of rigorous, coherent CCLS lessons and unit plans, either across grades or across subject areas. Consequently, school leaders and teachers have not yet collectively examined the school's curricula to ensure the consistent delivery of a rigorous, coherent, CCLS-aligned curriculum, impeding students developing deep understanding of key concepts.

**3.4 The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* 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 do not have common planning time built into their daily schedule. Grade level meetings have preset agendas, with no time allotted for common planning. The review team found that teachers sporadically volunteer to plan together as time is available. There is no plan to assure teacher collaboration within or across grades. As a result, students do not have access to a robust curriculum that incorporates the arts, technology and other enrichment opportunities.

**3.5 The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* 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.

- The school leader has a conceptual plan for using New York State (NYS) assessment results, Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), end of unit theme assessments developed by a textbook publisher, and mathematics pre- and post-tests to develop teachers' skills in collecting, analyzing and using data to inform instruction. However, there is no clear evidence that the plan has been implemented or that staff are even aware that such a plan is being considered. Staff indicated they were struggling to derive meaning and use data to inform instruction. Grade level meetings are currently focused only on analysis of student responses from the themed tests of the reading program. The consistent use of data collection and analysis to drive instructional practice is not yet understood by or implemented by school staff, and the school has not yet enacted a coherent data plan to bring it to an actionable level. As a result, the school does not yet engage in strategic action planning that informs instruction and results in greater student outcomes.

**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 do not engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn, with few students performing proficiently at grade level. Consequently, few students, and even fewer students from identified subgroups, experience consistent and high 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 *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.

- The review team observed lessons at the school that mainly were planned for whole groups, with significant periods of teacher-directed instruction and limited small group work or differentiation to meet the individual learning needs of students. During most classroom visits, the review team observed round-robin reading and discrete skill instruction. The review team found little evidence of multiple points of entry for students during instruction. Teachers are using district-generated generic lesson plans with some modifications. Daily and unit lesson plans were photocopies of the district curriculum, with some handwritten modifications written on the photocopies. Consequently, most instruction does not promote active student engagement and inquiry.

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.

- The review team found instruction is not aligned to the CCLS. Instruction was focused on the teaching of discrete skills and was not aligned to the common core instructional shifts. The team observed that students were often compliant but not fully engaged in their own learning process. There was a schoolwide lack of understanding about the difference between differentiating instruction and the provision of Academic Intervention Services (AIS). When questioned about the class period entitled "Differentiation" on the schedule, the school leader described a four-tiered program offering for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Whole group instruction is provided during this period for students grouped in four "tiers." During walkthroughs and classroom visits, the review team saw whole group instruction with appropriate differentiation of activities for effective engagement of students at different achievement levels in one classroom. Most instruction was whole group and teacher directed and focused on discrete skills and oral [choral] reading. Teacher-directed whole group instruction was followed by whole group assignments for all students to complete, using the same worksheets for all students. Instruction was not aligned to the CCLS or to individual student needs. The instructional practices observed by the review team lacked academic rigor, and students were not engaged in complex or academically rigorous activities at appropriately challenging levels, which resulted in frequent student boredom, frustration and misbehavior. Consequently, multiple points of access to achieve targeted goals are limited.

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 staff has received training in using the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports program (PBIS); however, not all staff consistently apply PBIS. Instructional staff acknowledged that PBIS was implemented this year and that there was a schoolwide behavioral matrix, which gave students feedback on how to monitor and adjust their behavior. Teachers and school support staff (SST)

recognized that these behaviors needed to be explicitly taught at the beginning of the year, with regular and consistent monitoring and reinforcement to extinguish certain undesirable behaviors and encourage desirable ones. The review team observed that not all classrooms had rules posted; in some classrooms where rules were posted, they were not consistently enforced by adults; and consequences for misbehavior were inconsistently implemented across the school. The review team found that student displays of disrespect toward adults were pervasive and frequent. Students interviewed indicated they often feel unsafe. A number of classrooms were noisy, with a lack of purposeful work being assigned or completed. In some classrooms, students tended to be more compliant, but they were frequently off task and easily distracted. Consequently, students do not perceive the school environment as safe and responsive to varied student experiences; nor does it lead to high levels of 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.

- The use of data to inform lesson planning is not yet an active practice at the school. Teachers do not use assessment data routinely to monitor student learning, inform and adjust instruction, group students or provide feedback to students. Instead, teachers use their teacher manuals and District pacing charts to guide their instructional delivery. Classroom instruction is delivered across grades in a similar manner. Students receive the same assignment without consideration of data sources or learning needs. Teachers state that since the current school leader has arrived, they are beginning to feel empowered as professionals to modify the District lesson plans and pacing charts to meet the needs of their students. Still, there is little alignment with the CCLS shifts or time spent with students actively participating in their own learning processes through authentic reading and writing. Consequently, the lack of systematic use of data sources to inform lesson planning to meet individual student needs has impeded individual student progress.

**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:** There is a lack of understanding among staff of the resources available to support student social and emotional health. The Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) system is implemented unevenly, with staff frequently by-passing the process. Consequently, frequent student disruptions negatively affect the learning environment.

**Strengths:**

All ratings for this Tenet are either **Developing** or **Ineffective** 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 has developed some partnerships and systems to support social and emotional

developmental health. The school has many active volunteers who read with individual students as a “special reading buddy” at a designated time each week. The school/community partnership has a 21st Century grant for extended day activities, providing academic and social extension activities for about 100 students. Records show the program is well attended, with enrollment in the program on a first-come, first-served basis. The school has also implemented a Response to Intervention (RTI) system to support the social-emotional and academic needs of students. Members of the school support team (SST) indicated they evaluated students who had trouble in the classroom, with some students self-selecting interaction with the SST while others were referred by school personnel. The staff indicated to the review team that they feel that the small size of the school allows every child to be well known by at least one teacher. The RTI system has strategically organized “check-in” and “check-out” procedures that the members of SST believe are misunderstood by the larger school community. The SST asserted that because of the lack of understanding of RTI, the SST reported a high incidence of teacher and teacher assistant frustration when dealing with students with social and emotional challenges, and that suspension was still used as the most frequent remedy for students experiencing social and emotional maladjustment. Students interviewed perceived a lack of services available for those students most in need of intervention. Students reported they noticed little or no positive behavior changes in students who were suspended or removed from the classroom. Students reported incidents where some teachers displayed disdain for the students they taught. The SST reported there was frequent “hand-off” by some teachers to SST members, rather than the teacher working with the student through the levels of the system. Based on interviews with stakeholders, the team found this “overriding” of the PBIS rendered it much less effective.. The lack of fidelity to the original model with regard to the implementation of the PBIS system did not permit the SST to focus their expertise on effectively working with the most troubled students. The staff has not systematically analyzed incident reports of student misbehavior to identify root causes and problematic locations in the school for closer supervision. This along with inconsistent application of the PBIS system, especially for those students most in need of intervention, has lead to an atmosphere where students feel threatened and bullied, and teachers feel frustrated and ineffective. Consequently, the present overarching systems do not yet sustain social and emotional developmental health.

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.

- Although staff recognized the need to create and systematically implement a vision for social and emotional developmental health that is connected to learning experiences, only preliminary steps have been taken to implement such a vision. Based on visits to classes and interviews with the SST conducted, the review team found that a systematic process for dealing with the social and emotional challenges that negatively affect student learning, such as the District-provided PBIS system, has not been fully embraced by all staff and is not used consistently in the school. PBIS was introduced to the school at the beginning of the school year, with the intent that less time would be spent on behavioral and class management issues, and more time would be focused on the delivery of more rigorous and higher-order thinking and reasoning activities. Small posters and rubrics were noted around the building and in classrooms. Students and parents indicated they understand school expectations for behavior. However, inconsistent use of PBIS practices and lack of full understanding of the RTI system among staff, especially concerning students most in need of intervention, results in not all students, teachers and families experiencing the school as a safe and healthy environment.

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.

- All school constituents have articulated a desire for the school to become a safer environment that fosters a sense of ownership leading to greater student outcomes. Parents have taken an active role in making the school community safe during school dismissal routines with a “Traveling Bus,” consisting of parents who walk groups of students to and from specific points in the school neighborhood during arrival and dismissal times. Students reported they feel safe walking to and from school with this system. Teachers recognized that a sense of student safety positively influences student performance, yet effective measures have not been established to create a safer and more nurturing environment within the school. Students stated that they do not feel safe, and that they feel threatened, bullied and unsafe in some classrooms and in some common areas of the school. Students reported that they did not believe that all staff members were their advocates and that too few staff members directly intervened in situations where bullying was observed. As a result, students do not yet feel fully safe. The environment is not yet conducive to learning or fully fostering a sense of ownership that leads to improved student outcomes.

**5.5 The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* 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.

- Data are not used by the adults in the school community to address improvements in student social and emotional developmental health needs. The review team found that the school had no specific plan for its own “Closing the Gap” Student Support Team staff to use data in efforts to address student needs. Consequently, student social and emotional developmental health needs are not being met and efforts for students to become academically and socially successful are impeded.

**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:** While parents feel welcomed by school staff in the school setting, a collaborative school culture focused on the school’s vision and goals has not yet been realized. Student data is not shared or explained so that it can be understood by parents and students, and there is little evidence of shared responsibility for increasing positive student outcomes. Consequently, parents are not perceived or used as full partners in their child’s education.

**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.

- Parents reported that they feel welcomed when coming to the school, and documents reviewed by the team indicate that parent-community events are well attended. Letters are sent home each

Tuesday to communicate school events and what the school leaders call “ideals” or principles for academic and social success. A parent liaison is available to work with families on both personal and school issues. Parents stated that they believe the school has high expectations for students and involved parents in the educational process. However, stakeholders were not aware of, or could not recall, any specific strategies employed by the school to assist families with student success. As a result, the lack of clear strategies for families to engage with the school hinders opportunities for improved student 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.

- Information is disseminated to parents when required, but there is no plan for reciprocal communication. The school disseminates information to families about students during scheduled parent-teacher conferences. The school staff has not made efforts toward recognizing all cultural groups that make up the school community. Some students expressed embarrassment to be affiliated with this school, and do not believe that they are part of a positive, encouraging school environment. Some students indicated to the review team that they do not feel proud to be a member of this school community, and that this lack of pride fosters feelings of resentment and negativity. The SST indicated it has ongoing communication with parents, and parents stated that the SST and counselors were available to discuss student concerns. While the school strives to involve parents in their children's educational experiences, strategies for engaging families with teachers and the SST are not fully understood by family and community stakeholders. Consequently, effective planning and reciprocal communication with family and community stakeholders are impeded, and not all student strengths and needs are identified and 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 does not yet have a fully developed comprehensive plan to collaborate with families and community agencies to promote and provide PD across all areas of academic and social emotional developmental health. However, monthly parent-teacher organization (PTO) meetings have provided some PD activities for parents. The parent liaison described the content of the meetings, which were supported with agendas from meetings and attendance sign-in sheets. However, the PD reached only the few parents that attended the meetings. Thus, support for student academic success and social and emotional developmental health is inhibited.

**6.5 The school has received a rating of *Developing* 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.

- The limited sharing of data impedes parent and community ability to understand student learning needs. The review team found that teachers share some data at parent conferences and through student report cards but parents and community members are not able to discuss school data or understand its implications for student achievement and progress. Consequently the resources for parents to promote their children's learning and success are limited.

## **Recommendations:**

### **Tenet 2: School Leader Practices and Decisions**

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

- 2.3: Communicate and model best practices to address pertinent school goals, with a clear focus on analyzing data to guide instruction and the use of feedback loops.
- 2.5: Extend the supervision plan to include frequent formal and informal observations by the school leader as a basis for feedback and provide more in-house PD connected to improvement plans and other supports to teachers and other staff members.

### **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: Develop and implement as part of the SCEP strategies to provide PD to ensure that all staff understand the instructional shifts and strategies needed to implement the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and can develop clear, descriptive units of studies appropriately aligned to standards.
- 3.3: Develop a schedule that enables teachers to have collaborative planning time that can be used to create and examine coherent, rigorous CCLS-appropriately aligned curriculum plans across grades and subjects.
- 3.4: Ensure that teachers collaborate regularly so that students are provided a rigorous, CCLS-aligned curriculum that incorporates the arts, technology and other enrichment areas.
- 3.5: Revise and further develop the assessment plan based on a fully CCLS-aligned curriculum. Develop staff skills to implement strategies for collecting and analyzing a variety of student data. Incorporate into the SCEP strategies for the use of data to inform and revise instruction, especially for identified subgroups of students.

### **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: Implement research-based best practices to promote student engagement and inquiry within the context of CCLS-aligned unit and daily lesson plans. Include accommodations in instructional plans for groups of students and modifications for students according to their Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- 4.3: Revise the academic instruction schedule and academic intervention structures to support the instructional shifts of the CCLS and to meet the ongoing, data-driven needs of all students. Involve all teachers in the active and routine preparation of multiple points of access for all students to achieve targeted goals.

- 4.4: Review the structures and strategies of the PBIS to ensure a shared understanding by staff and students. Provide staff with ongoing support and regular feedback in applying PBIS consistently and equitably. Provide staff with ongoing PD support and feedback on culturally responsive teaching strategies to address students' varied experiences. Develop schoolwide expectations and norms for physical and intellectual safety to ensure high levels of student engagement and inquiry.
- 4.5: Ensure effective PD for all staff to enable them to begin to use data sources effectively to analyze information and inform instructional decision-making, including student grouping and instructional strategies. Communicate regularly and consistently so that students are aware of next steps and participate in their own learning.

### **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: Review the RTI system and structure; clarify referral processes; and provide PD to all staff to ensure a common understanding of the rights, roles and responsibilities of all constituents. Monitor the outcomes of all partnerships and give feedback to the school community so that social and emotional developmental health is improved and sustained.
- 5.3: Through staff and school community collaboration, develop, articulate and implement a vision for social and emotional developmental health that is connected to learning experiences. Review and refine the strategies for teaching explicit behaviors valued by the PBIS and other intervention systems so that successes are recognized and celebrated.
- 5.4: Through collaboration among all school constituents, define issues of greatest concern, such as bullying and cyber-bullying, that interfere with and hinder an environment conducive to learning and high student achievement. Undertake initiatives and provide training for all school constituents that promote a safer, supportive school community.
- 5.5: Develop and implement a plan, with input from school leaders, support staff and teachers, to gather and analyze data in response to student social and emotional developmental health needs. Monitor the plan and provide ongoing PD so that teachers are able to use data to support students to become both academically and socially successful.

### **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: Extend the school's connections with families and continue to offer opportunities for volunteering and engaging with the school so that families can support their children's learning and development.
- 6.3: Develop a respectful process for ongoing meetings and sharing of student data with families and community partners. Communicate regularly with families in culturally sensitive ways concerning student achievement information, using multiple tools so that student achievement is increased.

- 6.4: Collaborate with families and community agencies to incorporate into the SCEP strategies to provide PD for all school constituents across all areas of academic and social emotional developmental health.
- 6.5: Continue communication with families, sharing data in ways that help families understand student learning needs and successes and encourage families to advocate for student support. Provide a wide range of learning opportunities so that families increase their understanding of student data to support their child's progress.