



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	140600010066
School	North Park Middle Academy #66
School Address	780 Parkside Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14216
District	Buffalo City School District
School Leader	Maria Fasolino
Dates of Review	December 4-5, 2012
School Accountability	Priority
Type of Review	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet											
Grade Configuration	5-8	Total Enrollment	354	% Title 1 Population	92.6	% Attendance Rate	91.3				
% Free Lunch	85.8	% Reduced Lunch	6.8	% Student Sustainability	TBD	% Limited English Proficient	0	% Students with Disabilities	17.2		
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	0	# Integrated Collaborative Teaching	2						
# Resource Room	0										
Types and Number Special Classes											
# Visual Arts	All students	# Music	All students	# Drama	0	# Foreign Language	All 8 th	# Dance	0	# CTE	All 7-8th
Racial/Ethnic Origin											
% American Indian or Alaska Native	0.3	% Black or African American	74.3	% Hispanic or Latino	5.9	% Asian or Native Hawaiian /Other Pacific Islander	0.3	% White	18.9	% Multi-racial	0.3
Personnel											
Years Principal Assigned to School	2	# of Assistant Principals	1	# of Deans	0	# of Counselors / Social Workers	1/0.5				
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	0	% Teaching Out of Certification	0	% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp.	19	Average Teacher Absences	3.44/day				
Overall State Accountability Status (Mark applicable box with an X)											
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	19.1%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	19.9%	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	64.0%	4 Year Graduation Rate (HS Only)	N/A				
Credit Accumulation (High School Only)											
% of 1 st yr. students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	% of 2 nd yr. students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	% of 3 rd yr. students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	6 Year Graduation Rate	N/A				

Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA (Mark an "X" in the field(s) where school is identified for not meeting AYP.)			
	American Indian or Alaska Native	X	Black or African American
	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
X	White		Multi-racial
X	Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient
X	Economically Disadvantaged		
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics			
	American Indian or Alaska Native	X	Black or African American
	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
X	White		Multi-racial
X	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. Implement a classroom observation schedule to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Provide written formal and informal observations, including clear targets for improvement. Develop Teacher Improvement Plans for all teachers needing support. Include follow-up observations to monitor progress.
2. Attend all professional development opportunities on Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) for staff to ensure its effective implementation of instructional practices to positively impact student learning.
3. Use frequent data analyses to inform planning for Response to Intervention (RTI) and Expanded Learning Time (ELT) programs
4. Implement District Initiative of Positive Behavioral Supports and Interventions (PBIS) to organize evidence-based behavioral practices and systems into an integrated collection or continuum in which students experience supports based on their behavioral responsiveness to intervention.
5. Review and ensure that all lesson plans align to the written, taught and assessed curriculum (CCLS), the District instructional guides and supplements and ensure that differentiation is occurring and higher order thinking skills are being employed. Provide corrective feedback to teachers to improve CCLS alignment and inclusion of instructional shifts.

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

	OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 3:				I
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:				I
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:					I

School Review Narrative:

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

Debriefing Statement: The school leader’s practice and decisions are clearly articulated. However, the school community neither shares the school leader's sense of urgency nor sees how the school vision and mission for student achievement and social emotional health is to be used to implement a clear plan of action with specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound goals. Consequently, there is a sense of confusion, frustration and apathy among constituents.

Strengths:

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.

- Although the school leader’s control over staffing and fiscal decision-making is limited, with fiscal control only over petty cash, the school leader works to make hiring decisions and adjust staff assignments to make the best use of human resources in the school. The school leader indicated to the review team that if a vacancy occurred in her staff during the school year, she was able to interview candidates and make adjustments to meet the staffing needs at the school. She also stated that she made a concerted effort to acknowledge teachers whose skills and leadership she valued. The school leader screens applicants chosen by the District for teaching positions. There is no system in place for school leaders to be involved in the hiring of staff for the District. While District leaders determine the final allocation of staff for a school, the school leader does advocate for staffing needs. As part of the screening process, the school leader required all applicants to teach a lesson before being considered for a position at the school. The school leader has been able to find promising candidates and “coach out” poor performing applicants. The staff also acknowledged the school leader’s efforts to recognize their professional skills and strengths. Considering the limitations on the school leader’s authority to hire the most qualified candidates to fill positions, the school leader makes reasonable and public efforts to find and retain the most qualified teachers and other staff to meet school and student needs.

Areas for Improvement:

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

- Although the whole school including staff recite the school’s mission statement every morning immediately after reciting the “Pledge of Allegiance,” it was not clear from the focus group interviews that teachers, staff, parents and students shared an understanding of how the vision impacted student achievement and

well-being. The review team found during interviews that a sense of urgency among all groups of school constituents for achieving school-wide goals was absent. Only the school leaders communicated a sense of urgency for the need to create a shared vision and goals so that student achievement and well-being might be positively impacted. School leaders indicated the school vision and mission statement had been rewritten, with input from parents who attended Parent Association meetings; staff also was involved in the adoption. The review team found that no constituent group could speak to the school goals based on the School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP), earlier Comprehensive Education Plans (CEP) or results from the last School Quality Review (SQR), or other public documents. Although the school leaders indicated that documents, such as the SCEP, had been presented to the staff earlier in the school year, only when probed and prompted could the staff recall that such documents had been presented. Parents reported the school leaders share pertinent information with community stakeholders regarding school status and improvement plans; however, parents interviewed during the review were unable to articulate the prioritized goals of the school or their role in the school improvement process. Although, many constituents from the school community were involved in revising and rolling out the mission and vision statement, it was not seen or understood as a particularly important means of improving student well-being. Consequently, the staff neither shares the school leaders' understanding of the school goals nor understands them as specific, measurable and ambitious.

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 meetings regarding students with academic and behavior issues. The process of collecting, analyzing and using data on student outcomes is in development at the school. The review team found that there is no clear practice of using evidence-based systems to determine schoolwide practices. Teachers indicated that data collection and analysis are in the early stages and that they were neither comfortable nor fluent in using newly introduced protocols and strategies to monitor and adjust teaching and use it for lesson planning. The school leader described the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) teams and their responsibilities. While interviewing other school constituents, the review team found that many believed the PBIS is not being effectively implemented. The review team found that data has not been collected from the PBIS system, and interactions observed around the school confirmed that its use is not apparent. The school leader is knowledgeable about data and has begun to develop a system of data collection and analysis to review student work and assessment results. A school-based Inquiry Team has been formed. Although teachers use assessments of their choice and choose student work to review, the limited use of data by teachers to guide instructional delivery hinders progress toward school 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.

- There is a system in place to conduct informal observations. Teachers were grouped so that the school leader and her assistant made frequent, short informal classroom observations, or “pop-ins” on teachers during the month of September. The school leader indicated that teachers with the lowest growth scores from the previous year and any new staff members were identified for the initial “pop-ins.” The school leader has a small number of people assisting her with school leadership responsibilities and has good rapport with her leadership team who in turn support her. The members of this school leadership team indicated the school leader is approachable and available for support, advice, feedback and setting goals with them. Teachers indicated to the review team that they have infrequent informal classroom visits from the school leader with brief feedback coming to them via e-mail. Teachers also indicated that formal observations of teachers were a source of contention between the local teachers’ union and the District. The school leader has developed a timeline and a calendar for observations, with most staff scheduled for one formal observation, and a limited number of teachers scheduled for two formal observations. Documents showed that few formal observations have been completed to date, but the frequent informal observations with supportive feedback do not appear to be having a significant effect on teacher practices that is leading to improvement in student results. Limited documentation existed to show that feedback has been given to teachers based on observations, but there was no evidence of a follow-up timeline with a targeted support plan for teachers. Therefore, teachers do not use the results of the informal classroom visits to change their individual classroom practices. Consequently, students do not receive more rigorous, higher quality instruction.

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 staff has been exposed to each of the five modules of the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) aligned units designed for English language arts (ELA) and for mathematics. A schoolwide writing rubric has been adopted by the teachers. Although the school has curricula and some assessment tools, the curricula are generic, with some supplements based on the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). These curricula have not been modified adequately for any student subgroups or for students in general. Teacher instructional practices and student learning outcomes are not 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 *Ineffective* 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.

- Classroom instruction was aligned to a basal reading program for English language arts (ELA) and not to Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). Lack of instructional rigor and low levels of student engagement were noticeable during most of the school day across all grades and subject areas. A few “bright spots” were noted by the review team, but schoolwide implementation of high quality, rigorous curriculum aligned to the CCLS was not generally observed. During focus group interviews, staff noted that they were being asked to do too many things, without clearly delineated priorities and support. The school leader and teachers have not yet fully realized a strategic plan of action to ensure the implemented curricula and units of instruction are appropriately aligned to the CCLS. Staff have not received sufficient support in implementing the CCLS, thus limiting rigorous learning opportunities for students.

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.

- The District has provided five modules, or curriculum units, for ELA and five modules for mathematics. The school leader indicated that teachers have attended professional development (PD) sessions that addressed the modules and supplements developed by the District. Teachers were beginning to work together by grade levels to unpack the CCLS curriculum modules. The school leader and staff indicated that teachers in two grades have been working during their grade level meetings to “unpack” the standards to understand what they are teaching and why. Staff reported to the review team that they believed this was insufficient time for them to fully grasp and use the information effectively in presenting and planning lessons. This limits staff in integrating the CCLS, and students are not benefiting from rigorous CCLS curricula in daily instruction.

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.

- There are no common planning times available for teachers, and the lack of a common lesson-planning document makes it difficult for teams of teachers to co-plan lessons. The review team found that lessons and unit plans were frequently prepared by individual teachers rather than as subject or grade level teams. Classroom visits conducted by the review team indicated that few higher order questions were asked. Most lessons consisted of going over worksheets to fill in the correct answers, and no development of deep, conceptual understanding was observed in most classrooms. As a result, students do not have access to a curriculum that incorporates arts, technology, and enrichment opportunities tailored to their needs.

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 has formed a school-based Inquiry Team consisting of two teachers, a guidance counselor, a subject area coach, and a school leader. There was no information available at the time of the visit on the impact of this Inquiry Team. The school leader has conceptualized a plan for using State assessment results, district-wide gap analysis, DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) for screening purposes and Response to Intervention (RTI) checkpoint criteria for the school. The review team found that staff is struggling to understand what the data means and how

to use it to inform instruction. Data use by teachers is not a regularly occurring event. The school-based support team (SST) does not currently collect or use data to track PBIS or other interventions being used. School leaders and focus groups interviewed by the review team indicated the school would eventually have access to data from the new student information system, but they do not currently collect or use data to track interventions or the PBIS system. Because data analysis is not being used effectively to meet the learning needs of individual students or to make decisions on systems and structures in the school, an opportunity to improve instruction is not being realized.

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: There is a lack of understanding of differentiated instructional practices schoolwide and teachers are neither planning nor providing engaging instruction. Therefore, students are frequently bored, distracted or anxious and are not actively engaged in learning with frequent student disruptions that interfere with the learning process.

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.

- Many teachers have a “one-size-fits-all” approach to instruction and behavior management. The review team found most instruction was focused on whole groups, and did not promote student engagement and inquiry. “Round robin” or choral reading strategies and direct instruction on discrete literacy skills was observed. Teachers mainly asked low-level recall questions. Students were not able to explain their answers, and they were not asked to cite text that supported a response. The team observed few higher-level questions being asked, and lessons consisted of filling in the correct answers on worksheets. In most classrooms, students were not engaged in the type of inquiry based learning that leads to the development of deep conceptual understanding. The lack of organized lesson planning that includes established student goals and accommodations for individual student needs to promote engagement and inquiry results in a lack of student ownership 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.

- The school has discrete periods set aside in the weekly schedule for students in grade 5 and grade 6 to participate in a class titled “Differentiated Instruction.” However, based on the description of the goals given by the school leaders and staff and observations of the activities during these instructional periods, the review team found the terms “differentiated instruction” and “academic

intervention services” were used interchangeably. Fifth and sixth grade students all have an academically “tiered” activity during that time. The focus, as both reported to and observed by the review team is on mastery of discrete skills, versus strategies for allowing students multiple points of entry into the curricular materials. Differentiated instruction that allows for multiple points of access for all students is neither understood by nor considered the responsibility of every classroom teacher at every grade level. Thus, not all students are able to achieve their academic goals.

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

- The lack of a productive, challenging environment was widely observed by the review team. Students interviewed by the team indicated they often felt unsafe. The team found that students and families believed that the focus in the school was on what students could not do, not on the strengths the students brought to school. Students and families expressed concern that bullying was occurring at the school. Focus groups talked gingerly about the topic of culturally responsive instruction; however, there was no evidence that the approach was used in meaningful ways. The School Support Team (SST) indicated that training had been made available for all staff, but it was not mandated, nor was it well attended. Some classrooms were noisy, with lack of purposeful work, and implementation of consequences for misbehavior was inconsistent. Although most classrooms had posters of classroom rules and expectations on the walls, teachers inconsistently established and enforced classroom rules and were not observed referencing them or holding students accountable for them. Displays of disrespect toward adults were frequent. This contributed to a loss of learning time and limited 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.

- Teachers did not routinely use assessment data to inform and adjust instruction, group students, or provide feedback to students. Whole-group instruction, with teachers reading materials aloud to students or using round robin reading, and a focus on worksheets was the norm in classrooms observed by the review team. There was limited monitoring of student learning or development of explicit teacher plans based student needs. The review team found that most teachers used the teacher manual and the District pacing charts to guide their instructional delivery. Students received the same assignment without consideration of needs based on data sources. One co-teaching classroom was observed to have used testing results to group students for remediation, but most student-learning needs were not being met. As a result, teaching plans were not informed by data and did not 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: Although the school has been implementing the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program, it is inconsistently implemented, and PBIS-stated goals are non-existent or highly variable in the school, with bullying, name-calling and profanity largely being ignored by adults. Students and parents reported discomfort due to disruptive behaviors in classrooms and other areas in the school.

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 a process for teachers to refer students in need of support. The school relies heavily on outside partnerships to provide support for the social emotional development of students. The school has a partnership with Child & Adolescent Treatment Services (CATS) and the Buffalo Drug and Alcohol Program. The staff from the CATS and the Buffalo Drug and Alcohol Program is seen as part of the school staff, and they work cooperatively with the SST, teachers and school leaders. Based on staff and student interviews and observations, the review team found that some teachers did not have positive relationships with students, making both social emotional and academic needs difficult to address, and many students were not engaged in high-level academic work. During the focus group interviews, students indicated, "Teachers send students to the counselors to work out any issues." Consequently, teachers are overly reliant on the SST, with the expectation that the SST was responsible for student social and emotional developmental health needs, and thus teachers are not creating supportive environments in classrooms.

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.

- The school is in the first year of a multi-year implementation of the PBIS system. A systematic process for dealing with the social and emotional challenges that negatively affect student learning has been developed by school leaders and the student support team but it is not yet fully functional. Although the adults recognize the need for the school to articulate and systematically promote a vision for social and emotional developmental health that is connected to learning experiences, concrete steps have not been put in place for this to occur. Members of the SST were available for students who had trouble in the classroom; some students self-selected for interaction with the SST, while others were referred by school personnel. Suspension was often the remedy used for students experiencing social and emotional maladjustment. Students reported to the review team that they observed little improvement in behavior for students who were suspended or removed from the classroom. A high incidence of staff frustration was observed by the review team when dealing with students with social and emotional challenges. Students perceived a lack of services available for those most in need of intervention. The lack of a fully functional system to promote a vision for the social and emotional developmental health that is connected to learning experiences results in not all students receiving services to address their needs.

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.

- The school has a systematic referral process for dealing with students with social and emotional developmental health issues. Among teachers, there was a lack of understanding regarding their role in supporting student social and emotional developmental health. The PBIS system, although in its first year of use at the school, was not yet being used effectively in response to student needs. Parents interviewed expressed they understood how the school provided social and developmental health supports to students. However, neither teachers nor parents were clear on connection between the school vision and the referral system. Students reported that they feel threatened, bullied and unsafe in some classrooms and in common areas of the school and do not believe that all adults in the school are their advocates. The lack of direct intervention by adults in situations that feel unsafe to students prolongs a negative school climate. Consequently, the school does not yet foster a sense of ownership that is conducive to learning.

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.

- The school community does not currently use data to address improvements in student social and emotional developmental health needs. The SST stated that they had a plan to use data eventually, once they were trained on the use of the new student information system. The school leader indicated that grade level teams look at a variety of information at team meetings, but the review team did not find meeting minutes or other documents that showed how data was used. The lack of the use of data limits teacher ability to understand and respond to student social and emotional developmental health needs.

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

I

Debriefing Statement: A collaborative school culture focused on the school vision and goals has not yet been realized. While data from a variety of sources is available to the school, the school's data collection and analysis processes are not understood by the school community. Student data is not shared or explained so that it can be understood by parents and students. 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 indicated they feel welcomed in the school by the administrators and staff; however, parents are not actively involved in efforts that support increased student outcomes. A small group of parents regularly interface with the school leaders and appreciate the open door policy of the

school, as evidenced by interviews with parents and school leaders. The review team did not find evidence of opportunities for families to volunteer or engage with the school regarding student learning and development. Therefore, the current low levels of family engagement and limited family/student/school staff interaction limits student-learning outcomes.

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

- The school does not have a parent plan that supports effective planning and reciprocal communications with families and community stakeholders. Parent and family communications are usually one-way transactions, made with letters, flyers, pamphlets and computer-generated automatic phone messages. Information is shared about school events, attendance concerns, and other messages. Students are expected to deliver information to their families. Parents and families interviewed by the review team indicated that when they reached out to the school, they got information and assistance. Community partners, such as the staff for the after school program, indicated that they had infrequent contact with mathematics and ELA teachers, but to be effective, needed regular communication and planning time with teachers. As a result of the current home-school communication strategies, student strengths and needs are not being identified for stakeholders and used to augment learning.

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

- There were no offerings on the PD calendar regarding communication or working effectively with parents and families. The school does not provide information to families about community resources unless they specifically ask for it. Parents perceive that staff called only when something was wrong and indicated that they did not always pick up the phone to answer when the school called. Parents are not involved in the process to provide support for students with specific concerns. Consequently, the relationship between the school and the families is often perceived as negative or strained. The school's lack of linkages to the community to support student social and emotional health hinders progress toward improving student academic and social and emotional developmental health outcomes.

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

- The school does not have a plan that indicates how data is shared with families. Parents interviewed by the review team reported school leaders share information with community stakeholders regarding school status and improvement plans; however, parents indicated that there was very little information provided on how to support or improve student achievement. Data on community/family engagement are not tracked. Parents were unable to articulate goals that have been established for community/family engagement beyond increasing parent participation in school events. As a result, data was not used to promote dialogue among parents, students and other school constituents on how to increase student 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: Include in the S CEP strategies for clear and ongoing communication so that all school constituents develop a common understanding of all the aspects of the S CEP and the specific, measurable, ambitious goals that reflect the priorities aligned to the vision. Reinforce the positive role of each constituent group publicly and frequently.
- 2.3: Communicate pertinent school goals, with a focus on data-guided instruction and schoolwide instructional priorities.
- 2.5: Extend the supervision plan to include formal observations and regular, frequent informal observations and use these to provide feedback to staff and structure professional development opportunities.

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 a common focus on best practices for the instructional delivery of curriculum aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). Develop clear, descriptive units of study, appropriately aligned to the CCLS and consider what students need to know across all grades and subjects.
- 3.3: Provide PD and ongoing coaching support to staff to enable them to collaboratively examine and create coherent CCLS aligned curriculum maps, pacing guides, units and lesson plans that introduce complex materials that build students' deep conceptual knowledge around specific content.
- 3.4: Provide common planning time to all staff, including after school program staff, to participate regularly in grade level and subject meetings and ensure that students are exposed to a CCLS-aligned curriculum that enables students to discover, create and communicate information in all subjects, including the arts, technology and other enrichment areas.
- 3.5: Use a variety of assessment tools to identify patterns of student learning that lead to the adaptation of instruction and collect data that captures current levels of student achievement in order to map out a clear and timely path for individual student progress and growth.

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: Focus on the implementation of best practices for student engagement and higher-order questioning to align instructional delivery to the CCLS. Revise instructional practices and plans to include accommodations for groups of students and provide instructional interventions to students that lead to inquiry and engagement.

- 4.3: Clarify the differences and commonalities between forms of differentiated instruction in order to offer students multiple points of entry to engage with complex materials. Revise the intervention block to meet the ongoing data-driven needs of students. Train teachers to support both individual student needs, as well as group needs, to enable all students to achieve their targeted goals.
- 4.4: Create a schoolwide environment that demonstrates sensitivity to the needs of diverse groups of students and in which there is a common understanding of acceptable and safe behaviors. Explicitly teach clear behavioral expectations and consistently reinforce through PBIS. Have staff and school leaders regularly monitor implementation.
- 4.5: Use and develop a variety of data sources and analyze the information provided to inform instructional decision-making, including student grouping and classroom instructional strategies, and revisit these analyses frequently. Develop consistent strategies and explicit plans for school leaders, teachers and students to communicate regularly and consistently so that students are aware of their next steps to participate in their own learning process.

Tenet 5: Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health

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

- 5.2: Continue to develop, strengthen and support PBIS and the system for student referral.
- 5.3: Provide ongoing PD for PBIS and other programs to build staff capacity to support student social and emotional developmental health that results in a safe, respectful learning community.
- 5.4: Work together as a school community so that all staff is able to articulate the school vision and the role of student social and emotional developmental health. Support constituents so that they know how the work of the school is linked to student social and emotional developmental health, how this support is tied to the school vision and how to foster a sense of ownership that leads to greater student outcomes.
- 5.5: Develop an understanding of how to use data to address student social and emotional developmental health needs that align to academic and social success. Analyze root causes of student misbehavior and establish consistent practices for those students most in need of intervention. Develop and implement programs that address students who feel threatened and bullied, and assist teachers who feel frustrated and ineffective with personalized PD that empowers and encourages them to develop effective responses to student needs.

Tenet 6: Family and Community Engagement

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

- 6.2: In collaboration with families, develop plans, strategies and programs that encourage families to freely and frequently engage with the school, leading to increased student success
- 6.3: Develop a process with families and community partners for family and community education and reciprocal and regular communications concerning student data. Align supports so that school staff communicates regularly

with families concerning student achievement information, using multiple tools so that student progress is enhanced.

- 6.4: Provide ongoing PD support for all school staff on how to actively seek and sustain healthy partnerships with families and community organizations that is linked to student needs.
- 6.5: In collaboration with families and all other school constituents, incorporate into the SCEP strategies to communicate and share data so that families can understand student learning needs and successes and advocate on behalf of students. Use a wide range of communication modes with families to elevate their understanding of student data and empower families to use this knowledge to support student learning.