



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR DISTRICT AND SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS (DTDSE)



BEDS Code/DBN	07-06-00-01-0021
School	Elmira Free Academy
School Address	933 Hoffman St., Elmira, NY 14905
District	Elmira City School District
School Leader	John D. Wood
Dates of Review	March 12 – March 14, 2013
School Accountability	Focus
Type of Review	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet											
Grade Configuration	9-12	Total Enrollment	836	% Title 1 Population	100%	% Attendance Rate	85.7				
% Free Lunch	45	% Reduced Lunch	7	% Student Sustainability	64	% Limited English Proficient	.5	% Students with Disabilities	16.4		
Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes											
# Transitional Bilingual	1	# Dual Language	0	# Self-Contained English as a Second Language	0						
Types and Number of Special Education Classes											
# Special Classes	4	# Consultant Teaching	4	# Integrated Collaborative Teaching	18						
# Resource Room	3										
Types and Number Special Classes											
# Visual Arts	13	# Music	8	# Drama		# Foreign Language	10	# Dance		# CTE	3
Racial/Ethnic Origin											
% American Indian or Alaska Native	1%	% Black or African American	24%	% Hispanic or Latino	2%	% Asian or Native Hawaiian /Other Pacific Islander	1%	% White	71%	% Multi-racial	2%
Personnel											
Years Principal Assigned to School	5	# of Assistant Principals	2	# of Deans	0	# of Counselors / Social Workers	4.5				
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate		% Teaching Out of Certification		% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp.		Average Teacher Absences	9.5				
Overall State Accountability Status (Mark applicable box with an X)											
School in Good Standing		Priority School		Focus District	X	Focus School Identified by a Focus District	X	SIG Recipient (a)	(g) X		
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	58.8%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	34.9%	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	79%	4 Year Graduation Rate (HS Only)	72.3%				
Credit Accumulation (High School Only)											
% of 1 st yr. students who earned 10+ credits	28%	% of 2 nd yr. students who earned 10+ credits	66%	% of 3 rd yr. students who earned 10+ credits	89%	6 Year Graduation Rate	80.2%				

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		Black or African American
	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
X	White		Multi-racial
	Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient
X	Economically Disadvantaged		
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics			
	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) 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. Decrease the suspension rate of special education students by 10%.
2. Increase classroom attendance for all students by 5%.
3. Increase the graduation rate for all students by 5%.
4. Increase the passing rate on the ELA Regents exam by 2% for all students.
5. Increase the passing rate on the Algebra Regents exam by 10% for all students.

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:					I

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

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

	achievement outcomes.				
	OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 3:				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:			D	
Tenet 5 - Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health: The school community identifies, promotes, and supports social and emotional development by designing systems and experiences that lead to healthy relationships and a safe, respectful environment that is conducive to learning for all constituents.					
#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
5.2	The school cultivates the development of overarching systems and partnerships that support and sustain social and emotional developmental health.			X	
5.3	The school articulates and systematically promotes a vision for social and emotional developmental health that is connected to learning experiences and results in building a safer and healthier environment for families, teachers and students.			X	
5.4	All school constituents are able to articulate how the school community is safe, conducive to learning and fosters a sense of ownership that leads to greater student outcomes.			X	
5.5	The school leader and student support staff work together to develop teachers' ability to use data to respond to students' social and emotional developmental health needs, so students can become academically and socially successful.				X
	OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 5:			D	

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

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
6.2	The school atmosphere is welcoming and fosters a feeling of belonging and trust, which encourages families to freely and frequently engage with the school, leading to increased student success.			X	
6.3	The school engages in effective planning and reciprocal communication with family and community stakeholders so that students' strength and needs are identified and used to augment learning.			X	
6.4	The entire school community partners with families and community agencies to promote and provide professional development across all areas (academic and social and emotional developmental health) to support student success.				X
6.5	The entire school shares data in a way that empowers and encourages families to use and understand data to promote dialogue between parents, students and school constituents centered on student learning and success.				X
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 6:					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	I
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Debriefing Statement: The school does not have an articulated vision with aligned goals that is shared by all constituents. Systems and structures that support the collaborative use of data to create goals and action plans for the improvement of student achievement are not in place, which negatively impacts school improvement.

Strengths:

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

Areas for Improvement:

2.2 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* 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 does not have an articulated vision with corresponding school-wide goals that is shared and understood across the school community. The school leader indicated to the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) that the Building Leadership Team (BLT) drafted a vision statement for the school in January 2013. While the IIT’s examination of the self-assessment document and SCEP indicates a statement noting a commitment to supporting and nurturing students and building character, respect, and student success, there are no specific, measureable school-wide goals for the improvement of student achievement and well-being. The school leader reported to the IIT that goals tied to the vision have not yet been established. While the BLT shared the draft vision statement with the staff, they have not yet shared it with parents. Moreover, The IIT found no evidence that the vision for the school has been embraced by the staff or has been developed based on data. Although nine out of nine teachers reported a sense of urgency about improving student achievement, they were not able to identify specific, targeted and measurable goals for their content area or for the school as a whole. During interviews with the IIT, students were not able to articulate a vision for the school, and parents reported the school vision was to increase the graduation rate. Without a clearly articulated vision with aligned, measureable goals shared and understood by all constituents, collaboration toward the achievement of school-wide goals is hindered.

2.3 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* 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 leaders do not have clear, evidenced-based systems or structures in place to examine and improve practices in areas of critical need. There are few systems for the use of data in the school and the school leader reported, “Current systems for gathering data are not accurate.” The school leaders collect data on discipline referrals and attendance and meet with the support staff every two weeks to discuss students referred to them for attendance and discipline problems. However, the IIT found no evidence that the school uses data and evidence-based systems to create and monitor school goals or that the school leader encourages or has expectations for staff use of data to inform classroom practices. Surveys showed that only 34.8 percent of teachers agreed with the statement, “My school has a clear decision-making process.” Only 32.4 percent of teachers agreed with the statement, “Decisions result in action in my school/area.” The IIT’s review of minutes of faculty meetings indicated that the meetings are not focused on instruction; agendas reflect informational sharing and procedural items. Although there is contractual time at the end of each day from 2:15 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., this time is not used for grade-level or department meetings. Teachers reported in interviews that there are no regularly scheduled department meetings or identified use for time at the end of the day for identification or sharing best practices or for the use of data to improve student achievement. Consequently, the lack of evidenced-based systems and structures to make decisions, analyze data, share best practices and create action plans in key areas, impedes progress toward improving student achievement and mission critical goals.

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

- Decisions regarding human, programmatic and fiscal resources are made at the district level and have been significantly impacted by budgetary cuts. While the district makes the final decisions regarding human, programmatic and fiscal resources, the IIT found that the school leader does not communicate the school’s needs to the district and has not made decisions to maximize use of available resources. The school leader reported that due to budgetary constraints, there has been no hiring of staff for the past three years and class sizes have increased. He stated that some grade twelve classes have over 30 students and that cuts to the transportation budget have limited bus routes, negatively impacting school attendance and participation in afterschool programs. The IIT found no evidence that the school informed the district of the negative impact of these issues, proposed plans to the district based on school needs, or that he attempted to ameliorate the problem at the school level through alternate scheduling of teachers or classes. The school leader reported to the IIT that while he would like to switch from the longer block schedule they currently use to a regular schedule the decision is made at the district level. Teachers in the vertical teacher focus group also expressed concerns about the effectiveness of the block schedule. While he school leader revised the block schedule to include five 77 minute blocks, creating the opportunity for teachers to meet from 2:15 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., staff reported that they are not required to use this

time for collaboration. The school leader has not required that teachers meet for grade level or department meetings. While the district’s decision-making authority regarding the use of resources limits the allocation decisions of the school, the school leader has not communicated the needs of the school to the district or used available resources effectively, which hinders the school’s overall improvement and student achievement goals.

2.5 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* 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 has not developed a schedule for formally observing teachers or tracking progress of teacher practices based on student data and feedback. Professional development (PD) opportunities are not linked to data from observations, and there is no system for the explicit improvement of teacher practices. The review of documents and observations by the IIT showed that the school leaders have completed few formal observations, and no formal improvement plans are in place for teachers who have been identified as ineffective. The school leader indicated that the assistant principals began to conduct formal observations at the time of the on-site visit by the IIT in March 2013. The school leader reported that the assistant school leaders are receiving training in the use of Teachscape software so that they will be able to gather evidence and provide feedback to staff. However, there is no formally communicated schedule for completing observations and evaluations. While 50.7 percent of teacher survey respondents reported that “The school leader visits my class on a regular basis,” and 64.4 percent reported that “The leader provides instructional guidance and feedback,” there is currently no standard form for classroom walkthroughs or processes for providing feedback to teachers. Because of the lack of a fully developed system to track observations, provide feedback and relevant PD, staff are not held accountable for continuous improvement, which hinders increased student achievement.

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
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Debriefing Statement: The school is developing curriculum and assessments for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics to support the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). However, school-wide implementation of rigorous CCLS units and lessons, with modifications for tiered instruction, and a continuous system for monitoring and assessing student progress, is not in place. This negatively impacts teachers’ ability to maximize instruction to support student learning and subgroup achievement.

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 staff are in the early stages of working to support the development and implementation of curricula that support the CCLS shifts. While the school leader and staff have begun developing curriculum that supports the CCLS in ELA and mathematics, they have not followed this process consistently in other content areas. Social Studies and science teachers indicated that they received PD on CCLS shifts and have started to incorporate them on a limited basis. According to the SCEP, by June 2012, all ELA and mathematics teachers are required to design daily instruction with clearly developed performance indicators drawn from the district curriculum documents and with standards from the Common Core. The school leader reported that the School Improvement Grant (SIG) enabled the school to fund a consultant to assist teachers in developing ELA and mathematics units and lessons aligned to the CCLS. Document review by the IIT indicated that the outside consultant provided staff with templates to facilitate the design of lesson plans that support the CCLS. Teachers reported that they found the PD on writing units that support the CCLS helpful; however, they noted that to fully meet the expectations of the CCLS, additional assistance was needed for instructional practice to implement the units and lessons. While, six of six ELA lesson plans reviewed by the IIT identified instruction that supports the CCLS, and three of four lesson plans reviewed in mathematics identified instruction that supports the CCLS, instructional practice within classrooms did not often reflect elements of the CCLS. In only seven of thirty-four classrooms visited by the IIT, were students engaged in rigorous tasks that reflected the expectations of the Common Core. Because the school is in the beginning stages of implementing rigorous curricula that support the CCLS, students are not consistently provided with the concepts or strategies necessary for their academic success.

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

- Teachers are beginning to develop lesson and unit plans that support the CCLS. However, few of the lesson and unit plans reviewed by the IIT addressed higher order-thinking skills, included differentiation of instruction, or the complex tasks necessary to meet the expectations of the CCLS. Some departments meet informally or share plans electronically. Eight of nineteen lesson plans reviewed by the IIT showed evidence of complex texts being used in the lesson. Nine of nineteen lesson plans exhibited opportunities for students to address higher-order thinking, and five of nineteen lesson plans showed evidence of planning for student discourse. There was little evidence of unit plans aligned to CCLS with the exception of three ELA units developed with the guidance of a

consultant during PD training for staff during the summer. Only five of nineteen lesson plans reviewed by the IIT revealed opportunities for students to be involved in inquiry and problem-solving. Because teachers are not consistently using lesson and unit plans that support the CCLS, not all students are engaged in rigorous, complex learning experiences, limiting their access to deep conceptual understanding and knowledge necessary for academic success.

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 clear structures and systems in place for collaboration across and within grade levels. The lack of structures for collaboration inhibits staff's ability to ensure that students have access to a robust curriculum that incorporates the arts, technology and other enrichment opportunities. Any collaboration that is done by staff is inconsistent and on a voluntary basis. The school leader and staff reported that grade level and department meetings do not occur regularly, and there are no formal opportunities to collaborate with enrichment area teachers in the arts or technology. They indicated that contractual time at the end of the day is not used for collaboration on a formal basis, and collaboration during faculty meetings is limited. Students reported inconsistencies among teachers' use of technology in classes. They reported that most teachers use the interactive whiteboards/SMART Boards as a large overhead projector or occasionally to show video clips. Students also noted that students only use the whiteboard when the teacher needs it fixed because it is not working properly. The IIT did not observe content area teachers incorporating art, music, or related areas or enrichment area teachers incorporating content from the core area curricula. Consequently, the lack of systematic collaboration among teachers to integrate the arts, technology and other enrichment opportunities into the curriculum hinders student's exposure to a rich and robust curriculum.

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 few systems and structures in place for teachers to use data to inform instruction or create action plans to increase student achievement. The school leader reported "limited data analysis is taking place in the school." He noted that the school has a significant amount of data but he and the staff do not use it well. Citing the low passing rate on the algebra Regents examination, the school leader noted that he did not know how to figure out the reason for this problem. The school leader added that the school does not have vertical collaboration across grades to look at skill deficits but indicated the school is planning a data boot camp for the summer in mathematics. He reported that English teachers are more likely to use formative assessments than mathematics teachers but that teachers do not have the skills and understanding to use data effectively within the classroom or as a school-wide system. During the mathematics department meeting observed by the IIT, all six mathematics teachers were not able to agree on how to decipher an item analysis report from a January Regent's examination. The teacher survey results reviewed by the IIT indicated that less than half of the teachers (47.8 percent) felt they "use data effectively." Even

fewer teachers, 41.2 percent, agree that the school uses data, research, and best practices. Six of six mathematics teachers stated that they have not analyzed their summative data or Regent’s mathematics scores since they attended a BOCES run workshop three years ago. Consequently, the lack of a data-driven culture that identifies student needs and informs action planning and instruction impedes improved student achievement 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

D

Debriefing Statement: Some teachers engage in practices that are aligned to the CCLS and promote varying levels of student learning. However, curricular and instructional adaptations to address the gap between what students know and what students need to know are not widely evident, and teacher practices do not consistently promote deep analysis and higher level thinking. As a result, students are not receiving instruction that consistently promotes student engagement that fosters college and career readiness.

Strengths:

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

Areas for Improvement:

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

- While some teachers have lesson plans and units of study that support the CCLS, there is little evidence to show that staff use effective strategies based on student data to inform their lesson plans and instruction and promote high levels of student engagement and inquiry. The IIT found during observations that most staff did not use instructional practices and strategies that include accommodations for groups of students with disabilities or general education students struggling with the content. Classroom instruction is largely whole group and teacher directed. Three of thirty-four classrooms visited by the IIT had no differentiation of the lesson. During a department meeting, teachers stated that there is no time to adjust instruction and cover all the content needed for the course. Sixty-five percent of the teacher survey responses indicated the use of scaffolding in their curriculum to support student learning; however, this was not supported during classroom visits, as students with disabilities and general education students did not receive differentiated instruction in thirty-one of thirty-four classrooms visited by the IIT. While staff survey responses indicated that 85.7 percent of teachers agree that a common instructional strategy was providing opportunities for students to work in group formats, this was not evidenced during classroom visitations. Just nine percent of 34 classrooms visited by the IIT were students observed working in intentional instructional groupings. The majority of classes used a whole group lecture format. In

addition, only five of 19 lesson plans reviewed by the IIT showed evidence of planning for student discourse. In fourteen of thirty-four (41 percent) of classrooms visited by the IIT, teachers presented students with higher order thinking questions. In those instances, students were dependent upon high levels of teacher prompting for higher level questioning as well as recall. In only eight of 19 lesson plans reviewed by the IIT was there evidence of complex texts being used in the lesson, and only nine of 19 lesson plans included opportunities for students to address higher-order thinking. The IIT observed limited evidence of direct explicit instruction for the special education students or general education students. While the staff survey indicated that 80 percent of the staff agreed their curriculum included remedial and higher level learning components, lesson and unit plan review and classroom visits indicated that students were inconsistently engaged in rigorous CCLS aligned learning linked to student achievement goals. As a result, students are not accessing instruction that consistently promotes high levels of student engagement and achievement.

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.

- Staff are in the beginning stages of using instructional practices that support the CCLS in ELA, mathematics and other content areas and are not consistently adapting their instruction to meet the needs of all students. During classroom visitations the IIT noted that lessons did not consistently reflect alignment to the CCLS and the instructional shifts of close reading of text, writing from sources, and key mathematical practices were not evident in most classroom visits by the IIT. Students were engaged in text, higher-order thinking skills or inquiry-based lessons in fewer than fifty percent of the thirty-four classrooms visited by the IIT. Teachers are not providing a wide variety of ways to engage in learning to enable students to achieve targeted goals. During a department meeting, teachers stated that there is no time to adjust instruction and cover all the content needed for the course. While 65 percent of the staff reported in the teacher survey that they use scaffolding in their curriculum to support student learning, this was not supported during most classroom visits by the IIT. Three of 34 classrooms visited had no differentiation of the lesson. In 31 of 34 classrooms visited by the IIT, instruction was predominately delivered in a whole group lecture format. There was little evidence of utilizing specific strategies or varied instructional groupings to meet the diverse needs of the students. In two of two integrated co-teaching classrooms visited by the IIT, the students with disabilities remained in a whole group formation and the co-teacher went from student to student to support their learning. Consequently, inconsistent alignment of instruction to the CCLS and the lack of instructional differentiation result in limited opportunities for multiple points of access for students to achieve instructional outcomes and targeted goals.

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

- Compliant student behavior is the norm throughout the classrooms in the school. Classrooms visited by the IIT were orderly, and students demonstrated respect for teachers and their peers. The IIT observed behavioral expectations posted in every classroom. However, orderly and compliant behavior did not lead to high levels of student engagement in the classroom. Instruction is largely whole group and teacher directed and an environment that ensures that all students are challenged is not fully evident. The student survey responses indicated that 71 percent of students agree or strongly agree with the statement, “My teachers treat me with respect.” Teachers stated that they do not see any racial issues in the building, but there were some disparities noted with regard to student enrollment in courses. Documents reviewed by the IIT indicated that student enrollment in higher-level courses, particularly advanced placement (AP) and honors courses do not reflect the racial demographics of the school. While approximately a quarter of the school population is African American, they are sparsely represented in the higher-level courses. The student survey findings indicate that less than half, 44 percent, of students agreed with the statement, “My school has high expectations for students.” Forty-one percent indicated they felt welcomed, thirty-six percent reported that classes are interesting, and forty percent agreed that their teachers understand the ways they learn best. While five of nine parents interviewed by the IIT reported that teachers altered learning to meet their child’s learning styles and needs, five of nine parents also stated that teachers do not care if their child is successful or not and had experienced inconsistencies in teacher expectations. Because teachers are not consistently creating an environment that communicates high expectations and instruction that meets the needs of all students, high levels of student engagement are limited.

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 do not use data effectively or consistently to inform the development of lesson plans and instructional practices within the classroom and to provide feedback to students about their progress and goals. Although forty-one percent of teachers surveyed indicated that the school uses data, research, and best practices, teachers reported in interviews that they need support in data analysis to determine student gaps in learning. Teachers reported that they use formative assessments often; however, this was not evident during classroom visitations by the IIT. During classroom visitations, evidence of formative assessments was observed by the IIT in seventeen of thirty-four classrooms, and these assessments were primarily checks for understanding, with teacher questioning and walking around the room as the primary means form of formative assessment use. Teachers lack of use of data to inform instruction and make decisions about individual student progress, limits the ability of students and teachers to monitor student learning and make adjustments to ensure gaps in achievement are addressed. As a result, students are not participating in their own learning process, which hinders student achievement.

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
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Debriefing Statement: The school is in the process of re-establishing some systems, such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), and communication of a school vision to all constituents concerning student social and emotional health. However, the lack of specific goals and staff's limited understanding of the use of data impairs the school's ability to optimally support a healthy learning environment for students.

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.

- While the school has a system in place for student referral and support, it is not a coordinated system with partnerships that effectively address barriers to student social and emotional health needs. The student support team reported that they meet with school leaders every two weeks to discuss students referred by teachers or school leaders. School leaders collect data such as office discipline referrals (ODRs), attendance, tardiness, and suspensions for the basis of their referrals. Teachers make referrals based on their concerns of students in their classes. Counselors regularly make home visits when students are chronically absent. The student support services team indicated that while the PBIS system had been in the building for several years, it had gradually faded from use. The noted that the PBIS is in the beginning stages of being reinstated. The school has put in place a reward system whereby students earn points for good behavior and acceptable grades toward lanyards, which gives them privileges throughout the building. The IIT found no evidence that the school uses data to cultivate partnerships to support and sustain social and emotional health. The school leader reported that there are a number of community agencies with which the school partners, such as family services, which provides a counselor who specializes in crisis intervention; however, services are not coordinated. While the systems in place are sometimes able to uncover reasons for, and then mitigate issues concerning behavior of individual students, such as students who are chronically absent, there is no evidence that the school has a system to address the pervasive culture of disengagement resulting in high absenteeism school-wide. The lack of coordinated services and partnerships results in gaps in the school's ability to support the social and emotional development health needs of all students.

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

- While the school has drafted a school-wide vision statement that addresses social and emotional well-being, the school has not articulated a plan to realize the vision. The vision statement focuses on celebrating diversity, building respect, expanding ideas, and providing a safe haven and sense of pride and inspiration to students. The school has taken a few initiatives to support the vision. Staff reported that PBIS, which has behavior expectations as part of the programming, is being reinstated. They also noted that the school had begun a lanyard program, which enables students to earn points behaviors and academic achievement. During classroom visitations, the IIT noted that behavioral expectation posters were evident in every classroom and that students were compliant in 24 of 34 classrooms. Those classrooms where the majority of students were not engaged, students were zoning out, resting their heads or talking with their friends. There was little evidence of rude or disrespectful behavior in classrooms. The school leader reported that the attendance and suspension rates are high, and skipping class is prevalent. Staff reported that there is no PD in place that builds adult capacity in supporting students' social and emotional developmental health. Without a widely understood and articulated vision and plan for social and emotional health that includes PD support, the school is not consistently able to provide a school environment that is a healthy place for all constituents.

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.

- While some members of the school community indicated there have been improvements in school safety and the environment is conducive to learning, other constituents expressed concern about school safety. The school leader and staff reported in interviews that there is no longer an alternative high school in the district due to budget cuts. They expressed the belief that this has resulted in an increased amount of behavior problems. Teachers reported that the school's suspension rate is high but indicated that is because the school is no longer permitting behavior that once was tolerated. Staff indicated that behavior expectations are reinforced at an assembly at the beginning of the school year and through behavioral posters in classrooms. They reported that PBIS is in the beginning stages of being reinstated and noted the implementation of a reward system whereby students earn points for good behavior and acceptable grades toward lanyards, which give them privileges throughout the building. Students interviewed by the IIT reported that they feel safer this year than last because there are fewer fights. However, only 39.5 percent of student survey respondents indicated that the school provides a safe, secure environment for staff and students. In the student group interview, all twelve students agreed that while they could name a teacher they would go to for academic assistance, they stated they would not go to a staff member for assistance with a personal problem. On the other hand, in the same student survey, over half of all students (65.3 percent) indicated that student supports were available: they know where to go if they are having trouble, feel counselors/teachers listen to them, and they are able to get help and

guidance for their future. Parents interviewed by the IIT reported that their children have grown in positive ways that foster student success, due to the influence of the school. Three parents stated that the guidance department does an excellent job of assisting students with their needs. Consequently, the lack of consistency among constituents regarding school safety and a positive learning environment, limits students sense of ownership and 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.

- While the school leaders and student support staff use limited data to identify student needs, they do not support teachers in the use of data to identify student social and emotional needs. The school leaders report they keep abreast of data such as detentions, suspensions, report cards, attendance, and tardiness to identify students for discussion at Kid Talk meetings, which take place every two weeks, for student support staff and school leaders. Teachers can also refer a student for discussion at the meeting if they observe troubling behavior. While 59.4 percent of support staff survey respondents indicate the school leader supports data-driven inquiry and school wide planning, the IIT found no evidence of expectations that teachers use data to respond to student social-emotional health needs. Teachers reported that the school leader and support staff did not provide assistance to teachers to enhance their ability to use data to address social and emotional needs of students. Without greater understanding of how to use data to address student social and emotional developmental health needs, student academic and social success is being negatively impacted. The absence of support for teachers in identifying and using data to respond to students' social and emotional developmental health needs limits their ability to help students become academically and socially successful.

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

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Debriefing Statement: The school lacks sustainable systems and structures to ensure strong partnerships with families and the community. While there are pockets of support for student academic progress and social emotional growth, there is no formal parent and community engagement plan or long-term goals connected to a plan. Parents who actively seek school and student information are able to access it; however, there are a significant number of parents who are not engaged and therefore are unable to support their child's progress and well-being.

Strengths:

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

Areas for Improvement:

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

- The school is welcoming to parents who initiate the relationship. Teachers are encouraged to have regular contact with parents and are required to keep a log of such contacts and submit it monthly to school leaders. Teachers reported their methods for contacting parents included phone calls, emails, and letters. Student support staff indicated that the school has an open door policy. While the school community encourages relationships with families and students in need, there are limited efforts made to promote parent volunteer opportunities. Four of nine parents interviewed by the IIT stated that the school district is open to parents volunteering in the classroom or at school related functions. Some parents reported, however, that there is a lot of red tape that makes it difficult to volunteer. Of nine parents who were interviewed by the IIT, four reported that the building was safe, secure, and welcoming. The remaining five parents indicated that the school was not welcoming and found school staff to be unresponsive to emails they had sent. The IIT staff survey indicated 81.5 percent of staff reported they actively engage families in conversations around students' home connections, and 69.7 percent reported they are effective in maintaining home connections. Only 40.9 percent, however, reported they have successfully built the school/home partnership. While the school makes some effort to reach out to families, parents do not always feel welcome to become more involved in their child's education. As a result of inconsistent feelings of acceptance in the school, not all families are full partners with school staff to support 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.

- The school uses multiple forms of communication with families and community stakeholders, including the school website, the district newsletter, the school billboard, progress reports, and report cards. According to parents interviewed by the IIT, some teachers communicate frequently with parents and some teachers do not. One parent reported hearing from co-teachers but not from content teachers. Five of the nine parents interviewed by the IIT reported that the current forms of communication were not meeting their needs. The school is launching a Parent Portal on the school website in September 2013. Parents were hopeful that this would help mitigate their communication concerns. Just over half, 55.2%, of staff survey responses indicated the quality/frequency of communication with families is sufficient. Less than half the staff, 40.9 percent, believes they have successfully built a school/home partnership. The student support staff reported that all families in the school have someone who speaks English at home, so there is little need for translations. Staff also indicated that they have used the Spanish teacher in the building at times and reported that the parents of one Chinese student came to the school with a translator. A guidance counselor stated that they have a list of available translators to meet the needs of the

parents and students when attending meetings. While multiple forms of communication are used, little of it is reciprocal in nature and not all parents are satisfied with the level or type of communication to meet their needs, which limits opportunities for families to support their children's learning and success.

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.

- While the school shares some information with families regarding community resources, the school does not provide PD for targeted staff on seeking and sustaining partnerships with families and community agencies. Student support staff reported the school has a limited number of partnerships within the community, and they make referrals for families and students in need of services. The guidance office reported they connect families to community resources such as Trinity, Children Integrated Services (CIS), Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), Glove House, Family Services, Catholic Charities, and Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID). When asked by the IIT how many and which students were receiving services through these organizations, student support staff reported they do not track this information, citing confidentiality issues. Student support staff reported there is a handbook of all community organizations, but it is in need of updating. The school refers ten to fifteen students per year to Upward Bound, a tutoring and enrichment program provided by a partnership with Cornell University, to receive support with the goal of helping them gain acceptance to college. However, five of nine parents interviewed by the IIT, reported insufficient home/school communication and only 40.9 percent of staff surveyed reported they have successfully built the school/home partnership, leaving many families without pertinent information about community resources. The school leader stated that there is no PD for staff that pertains to making connections with outside agencies and/or families. Because of the lack of PD for staff and the limited nature of the partnerships, many students are not receiving the supports needed to promote student success.

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

- The school community does not provide learning opportunities for families to understand student data. The school leader reported that while the school is planning to offer learning opportunities for parents on how to read the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) assessment reports and other forms of data, there are currently no such opportunities available for parents. According to the school's self-assessment, the only student data that parents receive are progress reports and report cards. Parents who were interviewed indicated they would like to receive more data regarding their student's performance and participate in workshops so that they can better understand the data. Because the school does not provide parents with opportunities to increase their understanding of school and student data, their ability to advocate on behalf of their children's needs is limited.

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 Share the draft vision created by the BLT, with the staff, students and parent groups for feedback and revision. Ensure the vision statement reflects high aspirations for all students. Use this vision to guide decision-making, goal setting, and the use of resources within the building.
- 2.3 Create a functional school inquiry team with clear direction in the use of data to inform school goals and practices. Establish and communicate school-wide achievement goals, using data from NYS Regents Comprehensive Examinations, Advanced Placement Exams, local assessments, PBIS, interim assessments, and other data producing assessments, which are shared, and monitored by stakeholder groups. Formalize the use of Data Driven Dialogue and other data protocols to ensure objective review of data and creation of action plans.
- 2.4 Utilize resources to provide strong, expert instructional coaches to support and monitor high quality, job embedded PD for staff in developing and implementing CCLS aligned units, lessons, and instructional practices. Monitor the use of time in classes in supporting the goals of a block schedule: student engagement, inquiry, student focused discourse, and problem solving. Establish common planning and grade-level meetings, utilizing the time from 2:15 to 3:00 p.m. more formally. Review schedule and contractual obligations to capture time for vertical and horizontal meetings. Require specific targeted agendas, driven by data and the professional learning needed to implement the CCLS and the instructional shifts.
- 2.5 Create and communicate a schedule of informal and formal observations of teacher practices that provides on-going, descriptive and timely feedback to teachers, promoting continuous improvement in classroom instructional practice in support of measurable student achievement. Use the newly created Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) protocols for teacher improvement plans to provide targeted, time-bound goals for improvement of teacher practices utilizing measurable targets that can be monitored. Ensure that expectations for teacher performance are clear to the entire staff.

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 Review curriculum in all content areas to ensure alignment with the Common Core for social studies/ science and all technical areas. Require PD in the use of close reading strategies, text dependent questions, text based discussion and the use academic vocabulary for all content area teachers
- 3.3 Ensure time and PD for teachers to create unit and lesson plans that align with the CCLS and the Tri-State Rubric expectations. Provide templates for unit and lesson plans that are aligned to the Tri-State Rubric expectations to support the development of CCLS aligned tasks and curricula. Require the use of curriculum templates for lesson and unit design to ensure high levels of thinking, differentiation, and appropriate use of instructional practices aligned with the CCLS and the instructional shifts.

- 3.4 Schedule grade-level and common planning times for teachers to collaborate that include special education teachers to ensure that the CCLS are consistent across grade-levels. Schedule special area teachers to enable them to meet with grade-level and vertical teams to ensure that the arts, technology and enrichment opportunities are available to support student achievement. Require commonly developed agendas, minutes, and action strategies from all grade-level meetings that focus on the use of data and implementation of the CCLS and Instructional shifts. Provide protocols for staff to structure the review of data, including student work products, lesson plans, and assessments.
- 3.5 Ensure the implementation of CCLS aligned curriculum and assessments across grade levels that allow for the collection of data to inform instruction and identify curriculum gaps. Provide teachers with PD in creation of learning targets and formative assessment strategies to gather evidence of student learning. Provide PD in the use of data to inform instruction.

Tenet 4: Teacher Practices and Decisions

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

- 4.2 Provide job embedded, rigorous PD for staff and school leadership in the ELA/literacy and mathematics practices identified in the instructional shifts. Provide job embedded PD for staff and school leadership in creating student centered classroom instruction that includes strategies for active student engagement that specifically includes protocols for student discourse.
- 4.3 Provide job-embedded PD for staff and administration in using data to differentiate instruction for students, including setting targeted learning goals for individual students. Review the uses of technology within the school to ensure a targeted, strategic use to support individual students.
- 4.4 Create a culture of high expectations for students among staff, that is reflected in classroom instructional practices that are rigorous and student centered. Promote the establishment of norms and clear expectations for collaboration, student discourse, and classroom behavior that are based on high standards for all students.
- 4.4 Provide job- embedded PD for teachers and school leaders focusing on the link between learning targets and the alignment of formative assessments. Help teachers understand the difference between checking for understanding and the use of formative assessments to inform instructional practice. Provide job embedded PD for teachers and school leaders in supporting students to use data to set goals and monitor progress and reflection.

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 Convene a committee of staff, community partners, and parents to create a vision for student social emotional health. Provide PD for identified staff on the use of data to identify areas of need so that key partnerships can be cultivated that impact student social emotional health. Periodically monitor and evaluate

the effectiveness of partnerships and programs to ensure that ongoing improvement is taking place and make adjustments accordingly in an iterative process.

- 5.3: Provide PD for staff so that all school constituents can articulate the skills and behaviors that demonstrate social and emotional health and lead to academic success. Continue with plans to reinstate PBIS in the building and include plans to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies such as incentives for positive behavior. Provide PD for staff on how to collect and analyze data in order to assess program effectiveness and make adjustments accordingly.
- 5.4: Create opportunities for students and their families to share their concerns about safety and other issues that affect the learning environment in the school. Provide regular opportunities for reciprocal communication between constituent groups, including parents, students and staff, to foster a sense of ownership in the educational process.
- 5.5: Provide opportunities for the school leader and student support staff to work with teachers to support them with the collection and analysis of data to address students' social and emotional developmental health needs in support of academic and social success.

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: Create a family engagement plan that includes opportunities for parents to volunteer in the school. Provide PD for staff focusing on how to make parents feel welcome when entering the school. Conduct a parent survey to learn about preferences with regard to communication to encourage their involvement in the education of their children.
- 6.3: Provide PD for staff members regarding how to communicate with parents in a way that is welcoming and respectful of their input and is reciprocal in nature, so that parents and teachers can effectively collaborate to meet the needs of students.
- 6.4: Provide PD for staff that focuses on making connections with outside agencies and families and is aligned with the school's vision and goals for student success. Update the handbook of community organizations and develop strategies for sharing this information with families.
- 6.5: Provide a wide range of opportunities for families to learn about how to understand student data so that families are able to partner with the school to promote student success.