



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

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



<b>BEDS Code/DBN</b>	662300010002
<b>School</b>	Family School 32
<b>School Address</b>	1 Montclair Place, Yonkers NY 10710
<b>District</b>	Yonkers Public Schools
<b>School Leader</b>	Susan Fierson
<b>Dates of Review</b>	April 11-12, 2013
<b>School Accountability</b>	Focus
<b>Type of Review</b>	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet												
Grade Configuration		PreK-8	Total Enrollment		583	% Title 1 Population		35	% Attendance Rate		88	
% Free Lunch	47.9	% Reduced Lunch	2.9	% Student Sustainability	NP	% Limited English Proficient		12.3	% Students with Disabilities		24.2	
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		11	# Consultant Teaching		0	# Integrated Collaborative Teaching				4		
# Resource Room		1										
Types and Number Special Classes												
# Visual Arts	1	#Music	1	# Drama	0	# Foreign Language		1	# Dance	0	# CTE	0
Racial/Ethnic Origin												
% American Indian or Alaska Native	0.34	% Black or African American	21.8	% Hispanic or Latino	50.3	% Asian or Native Hawaiian /Other Pacific Islander		0.17	% White	22.3	% Multi-racial	0.5
Personnel												
Years Principal Assigned to School		2	# of Assistant Principals		1	# of Deans		0	# of Counselors / Social Workers		1	
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate		0	% Teaching Out of Certification		0	% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs Of Experience		9.8	Average Teacher Absences			
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)			
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	28.5%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4		32%	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4		4 <sup>th</sup> – 60.3% 8 <sup>th</sup> – 39%	4 Year Graduation Rate (HS Only)		N/A		
Credit Accumulation (High School Only)												
% of 1 <sup>st</sup> yr. students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	% of 2 <sup>nd</sup> yr. students who earned 10+ credits		N/A	% of 3 <sup>rd</sup> yr. students who earned 10+ credits		N/A	6 Year Graduation Rate		N/A		

NP = Not Provided

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

<p><b>Describe the school's top priorities (no more than 5) based on the school's comprehensive plans (SCEP, SIG, DCIP, etc.):</b></p>
<p><b>SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS DESCRIBED BY THE SCHOOL:</b></p> <p><b>NONE PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b></p>

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

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

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

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

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

	<b>OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 3:</b>			<b>D</b>	
<b>Tenet 4 - Teacher Practices and Decisions: Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students and pertinent subgroups experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.</b>					
<b>#</b>	<b>Statement of Practice</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>I</b>
4.2	Teachers use instructional practices and strategies organized around annual, unit and daily lesson plans to meet established student goals and promote high levels of student engagement and inquiry.			X	
4.3	Teachers provide coherent, appropriately aligned Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)-based instruction that leads to multiple points of access for all students to achieve targeted goals.				X
4.4	Teachers create a safe environment that is responsive to students' varied experiences, tailored to the strengths and needs of all students, and leads to high levels of student engagement and inquiry.			X	
4.5	Teachers use a variety of data sources including screening, interim measures and progress monitoring to inform lesson planning, develop explicit teacher plans and foster student participation in their own learning process.			X	
	<b>OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 4:</b>			<b>D</b>	
<b>Tenet 5 - Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health: The school community identifies, promotes, and supports social and emotional development by designing systems and experiences that lead to healthy relationships and a safe, respectful environment that is conducive to learning for all constituents.</b>					
<b>#</b>	<b>Statement of Practice</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>I</b>
5.2	The school cultivates the development of overarching systems and partnerships that support and sustain social and emotional developmental health.		X		
5.3	The school articulates and systematically promotes a vision for social and emotional developmental health that is connected to learning experiences and results in building a safer and healthier environment for families, teachers and students.			X	
5.4	All school constituents are able to articulate how the school community is safe, conducive to learning and fosters a sense of ownership that leads to greater student outcomes.			X	
5.5	The school leader and student support staff work together to develop teachers' ability to use data to respond to students' social and emotional developmental health needs, so students can become academically and socially successful.			X	
	<b>OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 5:</b>			<b>D</b>	
<b>Tenet 6 - Family and Community Engagement: The school creates a culture of partnership where families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being.</b>					

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

School Review Narrative:

<b>Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions:</b> Visionary leaders create a school community and culture that lead to success, well-being and high academic outcomes for all students via systems of continuous and sustainable school improvement.	<b>Tenet Rating</b>	<b>D</b>
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**Debriefing Statement:** The school leader has a clear vision, and she has developed consistent goals. However, constituents do not understand the vision and goals explicitly and are therefore unable to articulate them consistently.

**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.

- While the district has final authority over fiscal and hiring decisions, the school leader has made staffing and programmatic decisions that enable the school to meet the academic and social needs of the students and school. Interviews conducted by the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) indicated the school leader and the assistant school leader review school data to monitor how programs are working to inform personnel and programming decisions. Document review and interviews with teachers verified the school leader has implemented distributed leadership processes that actively engage teachers in giving input into school decisions. Some examples cited by teachers and confirmed by the school leaders, indicated that teachers volunteered for various committees on professional development (PD) programs, school safety, and activities to build community and collegiality. After reviewing student academic achievement from the previous year's State assessments for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics and analyzing incident reports, the school leader organized an enrichment period into the master schedule for students in grades seven and eight. The school leader also created literacy blocks for all students, based on the primary goal to improve reading skills school- wide. The school leaders indicated this focus would encourage and allow the whole school to take immediate action to improve student academic achievement. Using the previous year's assessment data, the school leaders and teachers organized students into small groups based on skill levels and support needs. The school leader scheduled staff to meet student needs. She scheduled all available adults, including reading teachers, general education teachers, teaching assistants, and literacy substitute teachers to participate with small groups of students during the literacy blocks. Additional teaching aides also assisted small groups of students during the kindergarten through grade two literacy blocks. English language learners (ELLs) and special education students also received specific supports within the literacy blocks from English as a second language (ESL) teachers and special education teachers. Staff and the school leaders reported that the school leader advocates to the district with the input of constituents for positions and resources to support school needs. The school leader, working within district fiscal and personnel guidelines, works with teachers to make strategic decisions to organize resources concerning human, programmatic and fiscal capital. Consequently, the school has the infrastructure to improve and achieve student goals.

## **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 Educational Plan (SCEP).

- The school leaders and a teacher leadership committee developed a vision statement with many goals that is gaining support among staff, families, and students across the community. The school vision is to provide a safe, healthy, child-centered school environment characterized by the integration of technology to support data-driven, differentiated, small group instruction. During interviews, the parent and student groups each described a few of the many broad actions supporting the school vision and goals shared by the school leaders, such as improving mathematics and ELA scores on New York State (NYS) assessments, or improving student behavior school-wide. However, the one goal that all school stakeholders interviewed by the IIT reported was to improve literacy skills among all students at all grades. Interviews with teachers, parents and staff, and a review of documents, including the School Comprehensive Educational Plan (SCEP), showed at least 27 school goals, many of which were broad actions. For example, “Identify area of concern for individual students and analyze student learning trends” was cited as the goal for the review of ELA assessment data. The same action was repeated for the goal for the review of mathematics assessment data. Other goals stated actions, such as using NYS assessment data in ELA to improve and drive instruction to enhance student performance targeted to all student groups and had timelines of September 2012 to June 2013. Teachers received support to develop individual and personalized action learning plans for students. However, the IIT review of individual student learning plans indicated they were incomplete because they lacked student achievement outcomes or other evidence of follow-up measures. School constituents share understanding of and agreement with some components of the school vision and goals; however, no group was able to articulate the entire vision and goals as set forth in the written version. Furthermore, goals were not stated in specific, measurable, ambitious, results oriented, and timely (SMART) terms. Consequently, school stakeholders do not yet consistently understand the long-term vision, which limits the attainment of and sense of urgency for achieving school-wide goals.

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 is in the beginning stages of encouraging staff to use structures that lead to the collection of data and analysis of outcomes in areas of critical need, such as student social and emotional development, teacher practices, and student achievement. School leaders reported during interviews with the IIT that they make brief daily walkthroughs and that by the end of the week they have visited every classroom. The school leaders also reported they use these informal visits to gauge school-wide practices, such as the effectiveness of teacher use of the Positive

Behavioral Intervention Supports (PBIS) system. Teachers and school leaders reported this program is beginning to have a positive effect on the social and emotional environment in the school through reduced student incidents. However, the IIT found that student data was not yet available or monitored by school leaders and teachers to support these claims, which were based on anecdotal evidence. The school leader revised the master schedule to allow weekly grade level meetings so teams could plan and revise lessons together. Interviews with teachers and a review of documents, however, indicated that most of the meetings did not occur regularly, or teachers used the time to plan as individuals. While the school leaders have created structures and leaders are developing protocols for data analysis and goal setting, the structures did not yet form a coherent system. Based on the evidence provided by interviews, observations, and document review, the IIT found that weekly PD sessions facilitated by the reading teacher and the English as second language (ESL) teacher did not involve follow-up conversations with either the facilitators or the school leaders to monitor how teachers used the information that was shared. While teachers indicated they found the feedback from formal and informal observations relevant, there was no systematic follow up to observations to track changes in teacher practices. Likewise, while teachers received information on improving instructional practices based on an analysis of student assessment data, there was no monitoring to determine if the teaching strategies produced the intended outcomes in student achievement. In addition, there was limited evidence of follow-up or further assessment of student achievement outcomes to track progress toward individualized student goals. While the school has identified intended goals, the data and analyses, linking the goals to student achievement outcomes were not compiled. Therefore, the school is not yet able to ensure that identified practices improve student outcomes. Because the school leader is in the early stages of using evidence-based systems to identify and improve areas of need, progress toward mission critical goals is limited.

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

- The school leaders have developed and implemented a system for frequent observations of targeted teacher practices throughout the school year; however, teachers are not provided with actionable feedback with timelines for improvement. Interviews with school leaders, teachers and other staff and a review of documents, including formal observations and informal or walkthrough observation logs, show that this system has resulted in feedback that teachers indicated they find relevant. Documentation and interviews with the school leaders indicated that school leaders make regular daily walkthroughs, as well as longer informal classroom visits and formal observations that result in verbal and written feedback to teachers. However, IIT review determined the feedback stopped short of actionable plans with follow-up timelines to monitor improvement. Based on the school leaders' analysis of the observation data, and the teacher committee recommendations for PD, the school developed programs to address the PD needs of both groups of teachers and individuals. However, school leaders and teachers pointed out that the district collective bargaining agreement limited teacher improvement plans only to those teachers having unsatisfactory reviews. The school leaders reported to the IIT at the time of the review that no teacher in the school currently required an improvement plan for unsatisfactory performance. Consequently, the lack of actionable feedback with timelines to monitor and guide improvement limits staff accountability for

continuous improvement.

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

**Tenet Rating**

**D**

**Debriefing Statement:** While the school has structures to support teacher collaboration for lesson planning and teachers have prepared action plans for all students, the school is still in the beginning stages of developing a more rigorous and coherent curriculum that supports the CCLS to improve student-learning outcomes for all students and identified subgroups.

**Strengths:**

All ratings for this Tenet are either **Developing** or **Ineffective** and therefore, comments listed are 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 beginning stages of working to support the development and implementation of curricula that support the CCLS shifts. The IIT reviewed curriculum maps, units, and lesson plans that showed the school curricula considered the standards, along with what students needed to know at each grade level. Teachers interviewed by the IIT remarked that the whole curriculum was in an active state of growth and change, and that teachers were continuing to rethink and revise their curriculum decisions as they developed a greater understanding of the CCLS instructional shifts and individual student needs. Teachers and school leaders reported a reading teacher and an ESL teacher facilitated the weekly PD session for ELA, which focused on small group instruction for reading fluency and comprehension. However, teachers reported they did not have the classroom sets of leveled libraries for students that accompany the ELA curriculum due to district budget constraints encountered over the summer and during September. Teachers reported they searched for their own informational, non-fiction texts online. Teachers said they encountered difficulties with finding appropriate materials, especially those that delivered the same information but at different reading levels. Interviews with teachers and school leaders indicated the mathematics coach supported teachers in small, grade-level groups or on a one-on-one basis to implement the CCLS modules from *EngageNY*. However, classroom observations did not show the implementation of the CCLS shifts for mathematics and inconsistent implementation of the ELA shifts. Because of the inconsistent implementation of the CCLS, not all students experience the academic rigor necessary to achieve academic success.

3.3 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** Teachers ensure that unit and lesson plans align appropriately to the CCLS coherent curriculum, introduce complex materials that

stimulate higher-order thinking and build deep conceptual understanding and knowledge around specific content.

- Teachers for kindergarten through grade six have weekly, grade-level common planning time, which the school leaders described as congruence meetings for lesson planning. However, IIT observations of some of these meetings, along with teacher and school leader interviews, indicated that lesson planning for ELA was the only subject that teachers addressed in grade-level groups. Teachers reported that ELA program materials arrived at the school several weeks after school started, and that due to budget constraints, the district cancelled orders in September for classroom libraries of leveled books to support the CCLS shifts for ELA. Teachers reported they found non-fiction reading materials from free online sources and noted they were not confident the materials they used were supporting students at the correct level of difficulty. The IIT review of some of the readings teachers printed from online sources indicated that the sources did not introduce accurate, complex materials that stimulated higher order thinking. The IIT also found that some readings teachers provided to students were labeled incorrectly as non-fiction, or did not aptly address the teacher-identified topic. According to teachers, the coach, and school leaders, mathematics teachers were planning to incorporate CCLS instructional shifts, facilitated by the mathematics coach either individually or as requested by small groups of teachers. However, the IIT found during observations that the introduction of complex materials was inconsistent across grade levels in mathematics classes. Consequently, the inconsistent introduction of complex materials that stimulate higher-order thinking limits student access to the deep conceptual understanding and knowledge around specific content necessary for academic success.

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

- While there are established structures for teachers to collaborate across and within grades to target literacy skills, there is inconsistent incorporation of the arts, music, or other enrichment areas into the curriculum. Review of the master schedule and interviews with teachers and school leaders by the IIT indicated the school has a weekly PD session to focus on improving ELA skills and instructional strategies, as well as weekly grade level, and vertical teacher meetings. Although school leaders and teachers reported that weekly congruence meetings were scheduled for teachers to meet in grade level teams to plan and integrate subjects, the IIT observations of these meetings and teacher interview responses showed they occurred inconsistently or were used for other planning purposes. The school leader reported that the students in grades seven and eight had one period daily for enrichment of core subject areas, such as mathematics, ELA, science, and social studies. Teachers interviewed by the IIT noted that they used specific strategies during these periods to support students to progress toward higher levels of thinking. The IIT observations of the enrichment periods showed an emphasis on writing across the curriculum using prompts based on Bloom's Taxonomy. Teachers and students from all grades reported regular use of technology resources during classroom activities and that the school received PD and technical support from a consultant. School leaders reported they supplied carts of laptop computers for teachers to use with students. However, the IIT observed teachers, but not students, using the interactive white boards as a backdrop, overhead projection, or to show samples of student worksheets or

mathematics problems. The IIT observed teachers using computers in the classroom, but student use was limited or not observed during the IIT visit. Enrichment opportunities available to students include classes in art and music, but the IIT did not observe the integration of these enrichment classes with core subjects during classroom visits. School leaders reported that social studies classes use community resources, such as field trips to local museums and historic landmarks to expand student learning. While the school leaders have provided structures and opportunities for regularly scheduled meeting times, teacher collaboration within and across grades is inconsistent. The inconsistent collaboration among teachers to integrate the arts, technology, and other enrichment areas limits student opportunities to experience a rigorous and robust curriculum.

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

- While the school leaders collect data and share it with staff, there are few systems and structures in place for teachers to use data to inform instruction or create action plans to increase student achievement. The school leaders reported they collect timely data from formative and summative assessments, including screening, interim measures, and progress monitoring and share the data with teachers and other instructional staff, such as special education, reading, and ESL teachers, and literacy and mathematics consultants. Interviews with school leaders and teachers indicated the staff is learning to use and practice strategies during PD so that they can assess school performance data, identify student needs, and devise action plans to promote high levels of student learning and success. School leaders and teachers had developed action plans, and used summative assessments to identify patterns of student learning to inform instruction for ELA in the lower grades, specifically students in grade three. However, the IIT found there was a gap in using data to inform instruction continuously in all grades and other subjects, and for supporting the varied learning needs of all students. For example, teachers in the lower and middle grades reported they were learning how to use the Lexile Framework to match reading materials to student reading levels. However, such analysis did not occur for other subject areas, or at the upper grades to support student-learning needs. Teachers in the lower grades are using data when adapting ELA instructional plans; however, this data analysis does not occur consistently in other subjects, such as mathematics, social studies, and science. Consequently, without a comprehensive school-wide data-driven system and clear expectations regarding data use, data is not consistently used for action planning that informs instruction, which limits 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:** Teachers are engaged in decision-making and developing strategic practices in order to address the gap in student achievement; however, the inconsistent use of explicit instruction and higher order thinking questions limit high levels of student engagement.

### **Strengths:**

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

- The IIT found that some teachers use instructional practices and strategies organized around annual, unit, and daily lesson plans. However, there was little evidence that staff consistently used strategies based on student data to promote high levels of student engagement and inquiry. Interviews, document review and observations by the IIT showed that lower grade ELA teachers had plans that were informed by data, such as summative and interim assessments and grade-level goals for students. The IIT found that lower grade ELA teachers created individual plans with short- and long-term goals for groups of students based on assessments of grade-level benchmark performance. The IIT observed these practices during small group instruction in ELA classrooms and to a lesser extent in mathematics in the lower and middle grades. ESL teachers assisted during the school group instruction. Some ELA teachers scheduled one-on-one conferences with students to review and revise action plans and to develop communication strategies to engage students by giving them regular and specific feedback on their current progress and actions for next steps to increase student academic achievement. However, on other grade levels and in mathematics classes the IIT found these practices were inconsistent. As a result, not all students are accessing instruction that promotes high levels of student engagement and inquiry.

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

- Some teachers are beginning to incorporate CCLS shifts in their instructional practice; however, instruction does not provide students with a wide variety of ways to engage in learning. The IIT found teachers do not provide instruction that supports the CCLS across all grades and subjects. Classroom observations conducted by the IIT, and interviews with school leaders, teachers and other instructional staff indicated that while teachers were using instructional practices aligned to standards, these practices did not lead consistently to increased student achievement. During classroom visitations, the IIT found that teachers were providing teacher-centered, and lecture-style instruction to students, even as they planned for the use of new teaching strategies. The high incidence of teacher-telling, and lower-level recall questioning strategies observed by the IIT, limited the ways through which students were able to access information and meet student achievement goals. The IIT found delivery of instruction was identical in most classrooms, with little accommodation or differentiation to meet the diverse needs of students. Therefore, instruction does not lead to multiple points of access for all students so that they achieve 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.

- While the classrooms were generally compliant, there was inconsistent understanding of acceptable behavior and instruction was not always tailored to the needs of all students. The IIT found that while teachers had developed a PBIS plan for acceptable student behaviors, upper grade students did not consistently cooperate or respond positively to the PBIS. During student interviews, some upper grade students indicated that a few teachers were dismissive in addressing the problems of a handful of challenging students. Interviews with teachers and students, document review, and observations showed school leaders and teachers used a PBIS system of "Bee Coupon" rewards given to students based on the Three Be –'s Rubric: "Be responsible, Be respectful, and Be a problem-solver." Students interviewed during the focus groups indicated that most teachers were very caring and supportive, although students could identify a small number of teachers who seemed unconcerned with their academic or emotional problems. The school implemented a Response to Intervention (RTI) plan for tiered academic supports. However, during classroom visitations, the IIT found that while teachers used strategies that were sensitive to diverse groups of students and their needs, almost half the teachers asked lower-level thinking questions, with very little wait time, or appended a student's name to the question, thereby implying that the rest of the class was not involved with the response. Other questions required students to recall or make superficial connections related to instructional materials that were not compelling to students. While teachers foster a compliant classroom environment, which provides access to learning opportunities, low expectations for student responses and the lack of consistently rigorous materials with low-level questioning strategies impede student inquiry and engagement

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

- While the school leader expected staff to collect and use data sources, including regular benchmark assessments and individual student action plans, teachers used this information inconsistently in their lesson planning. Observation of teacher work groups and interviews with teachers indicated staff were scheduled weekly to analyze information provided from a variety of sources, especially grade level benchmark assessments to inform instructional decision-making. However, the IIT found through classroom visits that small group instruction based on student needs identified through formative assessments occurred consistently only in the lower grades for ELA. Teachers reported they gave data- based feedback, and students confirmed receiving the feedback during post-assessment conferences. However, the feedback the students received was general and did not lead to next steps for improving performance. Consequently, teachers' inconsistent use of data to inform lesson planning and provide feedback to students limit student participation in their own learning process.

<b>Tenet 5 - Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health:</b> 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.	<b>Tenet Rating</b>	<b>D</b>
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**Debriefing Statement:** The school has designed structures and is using programs that promote social and emotional development. However, constituents do not consistently understand or apply protocols that lead to a safe respectful environment that is conducive to learning for all throughout the school.

**Strengths:**

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

- The school has established a system that allows each child to be known by a designated adult who coordinates social and emotional developmental health needs. Interviews with the student support team (SST) indicated a system for referral and support for all students that addresses barriers to social and emotional developmental health and academic needs was in place. Teachers confirmed that they report students with academic concerns to the SST during regularly scheduled pupil support meetings. The SST then plans a series of interventions for the individual students and follows up with teachers at six-week intervals to assess student progress. Interviews with teachers and the SST indicated the cycle repeats until the student has attained achievement goals. Interviews with school leaders, teachers, students and parents, as well as document review, indicate the school had developed partnerships with Andrus Olweus to provide a program of weekly meetings for students and teachers to identify and prevent bullying. The school worked with outside agencies, such as a homeless advocate and tutoring program, the Andrus Satellite Program for family counseling, and a home and hospital program, parent advocacy and intensive day treatment programs to develop supports for families experiencing homelessness, medical, and mental health issues. The IIT found through an examination of documents, including RTI/PBIS program outcomes that the number and types of student behavioral infractions and suspension rates declined. The school leaders and SST gather and analyze data to determine social and emotional developmental and achievement outcomes for students through annual reviews of student and family responses to and engagement with outside agencies. Because the school uses data to identify areas of need and cultivates partnerships, student social and emotional developmental health is supported and sustained.

**Areas for Improvement:**

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 developing a vision to provide a safe, healthy, child-centered school environment characterized by the integrations of technology to support data-driven, differentiated, small group

instruction, adult understanding of the skills and behaviors connected to social and emotional developmental health and how these behaviors relate to academic success. While some constituents were able to articulate aspects of the vision and of the skills necessary for social and emotional health, this was not consistent throughout the school community. Interviews with the school leaders, the SST, teachers, parents and students, and document review indicate the school was developing a curriculum program for character development to teach, support, and measure social and emotional developmental health for students. In addition, there is an anti-bullying program and ongoing teacher, parent, and student education on cyber bullying in place. However, these programs are not aligned to defined strategies for assessing outcomes of the programs on student achievement and social and emotional health. Interviews with school leaders and the SST indicated the school PD to build adult capacity in terms of supporting students' social and emotional developmental health was in the developmental stages. The lack of a widely understood vision, with SMART goals connected to student social emotional developmental health and academic improvement constrains the school's ability to build a safer and healthier environment for families, teachers and students.

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

- School constituents did not consistently describe what the school community was doing to make the school feel safer and more conducive to learning. While students expressed to the IIT that they felt physically safe, and reported that most staff supported them to be "better students" and that their teachers cared about them and their academic growth, interviews revealed that among teachers, there was uncertainty regarding their role in supporting students' social and emotional developmental health. Teachers also expressed uncertainty concerning how their role in student social and emotional developmental health ties into the school vision. With further probing of teacher, parent and student understanding, the IIT determined that each constituency of the school community, teachers and other school staff, parents, and students were all describing the importance of enjoying the social aspects of a caring school community, and treating and being treated with kindness. However, teachers indicated they expected the school leaders to be in charge of most aspects of safety, and the guidance counselor and other student support personnel to be responsible for most aspects of social and emotional developmental health. The school leaders described themselves and their physical proximity to the school entrance as "gatekeepers" for the community. Parents were able to express how the school provided a sense of physical safety, such as revised procedures for entering the school. However, parents did not demonstrate a clear understanding of how practices concerning social and emotional developmental health, intellectual safety and the school's vision connected to high expectations for student achievement. While school constituents believe the school is physically safe, teachers do not understand fully their role in supporting student social and emotional development health, and developing high expectations for all students, which hinders greater student academic achievement outcomes.

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

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

- The school leaders encourage specific teachers, such as special education and ESL teachers, to address student social and emotional developmental health needs. The SST indicated during interviews that staff obtain data from a list of specific documents, including individualized education programs (IEPs), teacher-created individualized ELA action plans developed collaboratively with the literacy consultant and reading teachers, infraction data and the school code of conduct. The SST reported they are in the early stages of working with teachers to develop their ability to use data to respond to student social and emotional developmental health needs and supporting teachers during the weekly morning PD sessions. Special education teachers and the guidance counselor spend time in more than one school and therefore were not always available to participate in the PD sessions. They indicated they found out what happened at the PD from teachers with whom they worked. While the school leader and student support staff reported they expect staff members to use data to address student needs effectively, teachers ability to use data to respond to students' social and emotional developmental health needs is in the developmental stages. Teachers have begun to discuss the use of data to support the learning and teaching processes during the weekly PD sessions; at the time of the school visit, there were no functional feedback loops among school leaders, teachers, consultants and the SST concerning the use of data to support student social and emotional developmental health needs and growth. Because data analysis processes, procedures and protocols are in development, the SST does not yet work fully with teachers to use data, which hampers students in becoming more 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**

**E**

**Debriefing Statement:** The school has created a culture where families, staff and community members are working together to share responsibility for the overall wellbeing of students. As a result, parents are engaged and are able to support the progress and well-being of their children.

**Strengths:**

6.2 **The school has received a rating of *Effective* 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 a welcoming place responsive to families and community members. Interviews, document review, and observations conducted by the IIT indicated the school has designed an open-door policy to ensure access to school leaders and staff, while maintaining school safety and security. Interviews with school leaders and families noted the school functioned as an accessible and friendly local community center. Interviews with families, staff, and students indicated the school community espouses an inviting, trusting, and respectful relationship with diverse families and community stakeholders by hosting a variety of activities, including health fairs, fundraising for storm victims, housing a food pantry, and holding science fairs and mathematics contests. The

school offers families opportunities to volunteer and to engage with the school to focus on student learning and development. The Parent and Children Together (PACT) group encourages parents, grandparents, and other family members to volunteer at the school each Wednesday. Students and Mature Adults Read Together (SMART), pairs a primary grade student with volunteers from the Jewish Council of Yonkers. The school also works with the Homeless Advocate Tutoring Program and Parent Advocate Council (PAC) programs to provide additional supports for children and families. The school fosters a feeling of safety, belonging and trust, which encourages families to freely and frequently engage with the school, leading to opportunities for increased student success.

6.3 **The school has received a rating of *Effective* 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 staff respects and acknowledges the diversity of the existing knowledge and culture held by families and community members. The school leaders and staff indicated they participated in PD offered by the district in the past few years to assist them in becoming more sensitive to the needs of the students they serve. Interviews with school leaders, teachers, and families, as well as document review by the IIT indicated the school used *ConnectEd* weekly to send out computer dialed recorded telephone messages to keep families informed about school events. Document review and interviews with parents and school leaders indicated that parents received information and support through workshops funded by Title I and Title II as part of the PAC activities, where parents and staff engaged in dialogue about school achievement and school initiatives. Parents also met with teachers during parent-teacher conferences to discuss their child's current academic progress. The school also developed and maintained a website to keep families informed of school activities, student homework, other class assignments, and home activities to support their child's education. The team also reviewed documents that showed the school staff sends communications out to families and provides translators for school meetings upon request. The school staff regularly communicates with families concerning student achievement information using multiple tools in all pertinent languages. Because of these practices, the school engages in effective planning and reciprocal communication with family and community stakeholders so that students' strengths and needs are identified and used to support their learning and success.

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

- The school leaders, teachers, and staff collaborate with families and community agencies to provide PD and support across all areas of academic and social and emotional developmental health. Interviews with parents, school leaders, teachers, and other staff, along with document review indicate the school brings in volunteers and outside partners through SMART, PACT, PAC workshops and other activities, such as health fairs. At the school leader's request, district staff provided monthly workshops to parents and staff at the school in several areas concerning academic achievement and social and emotional developmental health. These workshops included information about the CCLS and instructional shifts, technology uses in the classroom, the district

APPR, the hands-on science program, the new mathematics series, the the social studies curricula, and an overview of State assessment data for the district and the school. The school sponsored PD to train SMART volunteers and parent volunteers, provided family presentations as part of the Olweus character and anti-bullying program, and other programs on cyber-bullying presented by the local assistant district attorney (ADA) office. Other school-sponsored PD informed families and the community about RTI/PBIS, health, wellness and nutrition, and the school introduction of the personalized learning/student needs assessments, and additional data analysis of school assessment results. As a result, the school's PD plan promotes and provides PD across all areas, which supports student success.

**Areas for Improvement:**

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

- The school community provides learning opportunities for families who actively seek to understand student data. The team reviewed documents and conducted interviews with school leaders, families, and teachers that indicate the school provides informational workshops for families through the PAC, supported by Title I and Title III funds. During interviews conducted by the IIT, families reported that the school sent home regular progress reports, and teachers were accessible and reached out to them concerning their children. Families also indicated whenever they reached out to the school, they were provided with information and resources to understand student achievement data and ways in which families could provide additional supports. The school community shares data, and families can access it to understand student learning needs and successes; however, the school is not yet sharing data in a manner that encourages all families to use and understand data. While the school is providing programs and seeking other strategies that permit dialogue between parents, teachers, students, and other school constituents centered on student learning and success, the family and teacher attendance is limited to a small but dedicated core group. Therefore, not all students are benefitting from the rich home-school connection. Consequently, not all parents are engaging in an on-going dialogue with school constituents, which limits their ability to advocate for their children.

## **Recommendations:**

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

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

- 2.2: Review and update the school vision and mission as a school community. Provide multiple opportunities and venues to include a wide constituency from the school and community to review and update the SCEP to address a limited and prioritized set of school goals. Build in criteria for measuring the goals and assessing and reflecting upon their effectiveness as part of the goal-setting process. Ensure that goals are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, time-bound, and fully understood by all school constituents, including their individual and group roles for attaining them and their effectiveness.
- 2.3: Encourage and ensure the staff uses dynamic, adaptive, and interconnected systems that lead to the collection and analysis of outcomes. Identify and support practices in areas that affect school and student progress and achievement, including feedback loops and examples of best practices connected to student achievement. Communicate pertinent school goals that are timely, transparent, and widely available to all stakeholders.
- 2.5: Ensure that school leaders provide relevant feedback, create, and monitor improvement plans for all teachers. Use the APPR rubrics to develop feedback loops to track the progress of teacher practices based on a variety of relevant quantitative and qualitative student data. Provide PD aligned to the needs of teachers based on their individual plans. Conduct periodic check-ins with other school leaders and staff members that provide next steps necessary to yield a positive year-end rating.

### **Tenet 3: Curriculum Development and Support**

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

- 3.2: Provide consistent and systematic support to teachers across all grade and subjects appropriately aligned to rigorous and coherent CCLS curricula. Work with teachers to ensure fidelity of implementation for appropriately aligned CCLS curricula. Develop cohesive, comprehensive curricula with clear, descriptive units of study appropriately aligned to standards that consider what students need to know across all grades.
- 3.3: Develop and use pacing calendars or guides and CCLS-aligned unit plans across all content areas and organize the content in a logical progression of sequenced and increasingly more complex materials. Use the daily and weekly meeting periods to examine and revise CCLS-aligned curriculum unit plans to ensure effective incorporation of CCLS instructional shifts in all subject areas. Collaboratively develop, share, and use CCLS-aligned lesson plans in all content areas with a focus on higher-order questioning and discussion, and multiple points of entry to engage all students in higher-order thinking and analysis of information.
- 3.4: Use some of the daily and weekly meetings and planning periods to work in cross-curricular and cross-grade groups to develop curricula and aligned lesson plans that infuse the arts, technology and other enrichment areas into all subjects. Focus regularly on what is taught and why it is being taught so that all students' needs and strengths are addressed.

- 3.5: Use assessment tools to identify patterns of student learning that lead to the adaptation of instruction. Analyze collected data, leading to the development of instructional plans for groups of students that capture current levels of student achievement and map out a clear and timely path for progress and growth.

#### **Tenet 4: Teacher Practices and Decisions**

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

- 4.2 Ensure, through PD and monitoring that teachers develop and use plans that are informed by data, and provide accommodations or modifications for students with disabilities and ELLs. Ensure that teachers set goals. Ensure the goals for each student are revisited at frequent and regular intervals to modify and adjust them based on interim and other assessment data. Ensure that teachers implement instructional interventions that activate student participation in their own learning experience.
- 4.3: Assess PD to monitor and ensure instructional practices align to CCLS, curriculum maps, unit and lesson plans so that it leads to student learning and achievement. Support teachers to ensure students have a wide variety of ways to engage in learning so that students achieve their targeted goals.
- 4.4: Assist teachers in creating environments where there is a common understanding and recognition of acceptable and safe behaviors through teaching behavioral expectations explicitly. Assist teachers and all staff in setting and maintaining high academic achievement expectations for all students. Support teachers, staff, and students in collaborating to develop a community of learners that encourages self-efficacy. Assist teachers in developing techniques to stimulate student thinking by asking questions that relate to instructional materials that contain high levels of text and content complexity.
- 4.5: Ensure, through PD and monitoring, that all staff uses data effectively to analyze information and inform instructional decision-making, student grouping, and lesson planning. Use formative assessments, progress monitoring, and frequent feedback to students to empower them to actively participate in, and take ownership of their own learning process. Monitor instructional strategies through data analysis to ensure choices and provide desired student achievement outcomes. Provide all teachers with the opportunity to share their practice collectively.

#### **Tenet 5: Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health**

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

- 5.3: Ensure all school constituents can articulate the skills and behaviors that demonstrate social and emotional developmental health and lead to academic success. Develop PD and implement a program or curriculum that teaches, supports, and measures social and emotional developmental health for students, so that a significant number of students demonstrate these skills. Provide PD for all staff that promotes and supports self-efficacy. Develop PD programs that build adult capacity in supporting student social and emotional developmental health that result in a safe, respectful learning community.
- 5.4: Ensure teachers across the school are able to articulate the school vision, how it is connected to student social emotional developmental health, and the role the teacher plays in achieving the vision. Support parents so that they are able to express the work the school does that links to the social and emotional developmental

health of their children, and how this support ties to the school's vision. Assist all community stakeholders in setting and maintaining high expectations for student academic achievement and self-efficacy.

- 5.5: Ensure student support staff work with teachers to develop an understanding of how to use data to address student social and emotional developmental health needs so that students are able to work to their full potential.

### **Tenet 6: Family and Community Engagement**

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

- 6.5: Ensure the school community provides a wide range of learning opportunities. Develop interactive modes of presentation for families to examine student data and elevate their understanding of how to use the data to understand their children's needs. Develop programs to share data across the school community in multiple ways and settings to ensure families understand student learning needs and successes so that they can advocate on behalf of their children.