



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code/DBN	150901040007
School	Moriah Elementary School
School Address	39 Viking Lane, Port Henry, NY 12974
District	Moriah Central School District (CSD)
School Leader	Valerie Stahl
Dates of Review	June 10-11, 2013
School Accountability	Focus
Type of Review	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet											
Grade Configuration	PK-6	Total Enrollment	443	Title 1 Population	61%	Attendance Rate	94%				
Free Lunch	51%	Reduced Lunch	18%	Student Sustainability	NP	Limited English Proficient	0%	Students with Disabilities	20.6%		
Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes											
#Transitional Bilingual	N/A	#Dual Language	N/A	#Self-Contained English as a Second Language		N/A					
Types and Number of Special Education Classes											
#Special Classes	2	#Consultant Teaching	0	#Integrated Collaborative Teaching		NP					
# Resource Room	12										
Types and Number Special Classes											
#Visual Arts	1	#Music	1	#Drama	NP	# Foreign Language	NP	# Dance	NP	# CTE	NP
Racial/Ethnic Origin											
American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	Black or African American	1%	Hispanic or Latino	0%	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0%	White	99%	Multi-Racial	0%
Personnel											
Years Principal Assigned to School	7	# of Assistant Principals	1	# of Deans	0	# of Counselors / Social Workers		3			
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	0%	% Teaching Out of Certification	0%	% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp.		6%	Average Teacher Absences	4%			
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)	NP		(g)
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	52%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	45%	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	100%	4 Year Graduation Rate (HS Only)		N/A			
Credit Accumulation (High School Only)											
% of 1 st yr. students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	% of 2 nd yr. students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	% of 3 rd yr. students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	6 Year Graduation Rate		N/A			

NP = Not Provided

Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA			
	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		Limited English Proficient
	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
X	White		Multi-racial
X	Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient
X	Economically Disadvantaged		
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science			
	American Indian or Alaska Native		Black or African American
	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
	White		Multi-racial
	Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient
	Economically Disadvantaged		
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for Effective Annual Measurable Achievement Objective			
	Limited English Proficiency		

Describe the school's top priorities (no more than 5) based on the school's comprehensive plans (SCEP, SIG, DCIP, etc.):

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS DESCRIBED BY THE SCHOOL:

1. Continue to implement instructional practices aligned with the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS).
2. Continue PD in areas of Common Core Curriculum (ELA), teaching students from poverty (Eric Jensen), and effective teacher practices (Lemov, Bambrick-Santoyo).
3. Continue to embrace data as a driver of instruction and instructional decision making through School Based Intervention Team (SBIT), interims, benchmarking, progress monitoring, and classroom data.
4. Continue collaborative practices through weekly grade-level meetings and quarterly data reviews.
5. Continue to explore, develop, and improve parent/school relations, engagement, and communication.

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

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

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

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

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
3.2	The school leader and staff support and facilitate the quality implementation of rigorous and coherent curricula appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) in Pre K-12.			X	
3.3	Teachers ensure that unit and lesson plans that are appropriately aligned to the CCLS coherent curriculum introduce complex materials that stimulate higher-order thinking and build deep conceptual understanding and knowledge around specific content.			X	
3.4	The school leader and teachers ensure that teacher collaboration within and across grades and subjects exists to enable students to have access to a robust curriculum that incorporates the arts, technology and other enrichment opportunities.			X	
3.5	The school leader and teachers develop a data-driven culture based on student needs, assessments and analysis, which leads to strategic action-planning that informs instruction and results in greater student achievement outcomes.				X
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 3:				D	

Tenet 4 - Teacher Practices and Decisions: Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students and pertinent subgroups experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
4.2	Teachers use instructional practices and strategies organized around annual, unit and daily lesson plans to meet established student goals and promote high levels of student engagement and inquiry.			X	
4.3	Teachers provide coherent, appropriately aligned Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)-based instruction that leads to multiple points of access for all students to achieve targeted goals.			X	
4.4	Teachers create a safe environment that is responsive to students' varied experiences, tailored to the strengths and needs of all students, and leads to high levels of student engagement and inquiry.			X	
4.5	Teachers use a variety of data sources including screening, interim measures and progress monitoring to inform lesson planning, develop explicit teacher plans and foster student participation in their own learning process.			X	
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 4:				D	

Tenet 5 - Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health: The school community identifies, promotes, and supports social and emotional development by designing systems and experiences that lead to healthy relationships and a safe, respectful environment that is conducive to learning for all constituents.

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

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

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

School Review Narrative:

Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions: Visionary leaders create a school community and culture that lead to success, well-being and high academic outcomes for all students via systems of continuous and sustainable school improvement.	Tenet Rating	D
<p><u>Debriefing Statement:</u> The school leader has a vision that has not been fully communicated to all stakeholders. The lack of a school vision hinders the development of systems to support school improvement.</p> <p><u>Strengths:</u></p> <p>All ratings for this Tenet are either Developing or Ineffective and therefore comments are listed under Areas for Improvement.</p> <p><u>Areas for Improvement:</u></p> <p>2.2 <u>The school has received a rating of <i>Ineffective</i> for this Statement of Practice:</u> 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).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Although the school embraces the District vision to “raise student achievement and potential by meeting social and emotional needs, through a rich, highly effective curriculum,” based on discussions with school leaders, staff, and parents, the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) found that the school does not have its own shared vision for achieving its goals. The IIT also noted that the School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP) includes a school goal to revisit the District’s mission and vision statements. During interviews with the IIT, staff were not able to articulate the District’s vision nor the school vision nor the goals in the SCEP; however, staff reported that the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) is a major goal. The IIT also learned that there is no outline of how school goals connect to the District’s vision. The school leader reported that the primary school goal is to achieve a student level of thirteen on interim assessments. Although the school leader recently posted the number thirteen throughout the school on classroom doors, this was done without any explanation. Some of the teachers interviewed by the IIT were not aware of the purpose for the number thirteen. Although all constituents interviewed by the IIT expressed the desire for all students to be successful in school, the school community seemed unaware of the vision put forth by the school leader. The school’s lack of an articulated vision for achieving school-wide goals impedes the development of a shared understanding of the school’s vision and inhibits the creation of a shared sense of urgency for the school community to improve and achieve school-wide goals. <p>2.3 <u>The school has received a rating of <i>Developing</i> for this Statement of Practice:</u> 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-</p>		

critical goals.

- From interviews and documents reviewed, the IIT found that the school does not have a school-wide structure to use evidence-based systems to examine and improve instructional practices. Although the school leader creates an expectation that staff use best practices for school and student progress and achievement, the school uses limited systems to collect and analyze outcomes. The school leader uses student progress on grade-level interim assessments and quarterly assessments in reading and mathematics, to provide feedback to staff. The school leader reported that she communicated and facilitated the implementation of expected school-wide strategies, such as using *6+1* and *Four Square* in writing, and CUBES (Circle key numbers, Underline the questions, Box math action words, Evaluate: What steps do I take, and Solve and Check) in mathematics to support the improvement of student achievement. Teachers reported to the IIT that the school leader communicates what strategies to teach but does not explain how they should teach these strategies. However, from documents reviewed, the IIT learned that grade-level meetings are used to identify and record school-wide practices for consistent implementation of the school curriculum. Unlike the other grades in the school, grade six does not have formal grade-level meetings. The school leader reported that she is working on developing school goals and building leadership in the school. For example, each grade level has a representative, who speaks to teachers and facilitates the building of consensus on the identification of curriculum resources. The representative then functions as a liaison to school leadership to communicate grade-level preferences. The school leader reports she has an open door policy, allowing students and families to share any concerns, including student social and emotional developmental health needs. The school leader reported to the IIT that community and family engagement is an area of weakness. Although the District maintains a Facebook page, the elementary school is not involved in this social networking service. During IIT review, the school leader stated that while she did not have a plan for improving family engagement, she was in the process of developing school-wide goals that she will communicate to all stakeholders. Although the school has implemented activities to improve student achievement, the lack of clearly articulated goals and the use of limited systems for collection and analysis of student and teacher data hinder the school community's ability to examine and improve individual and school-wide practices and thus hampers the achievement of mission-critical goals.

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

- The school leader reported to the IIT that she evaluates school instructional needs and develops plans for securing personnel. However, the school leader reported that the available school budget ultimately determines the hiring process. For example, due to the loss of the Safe School-Healthy Student Grant, a social worker position was scheduled to be eliminated in June 2013. Although the District did not provide funding to continue this position, the school leader and District did not plan for the hiring of additional staff or reorganizing existing staff to offset the loss. The IIT found that the school leader uses static structures to address student and teacher needs. The school leader reported that the school has not received any funding increases and that any available resources are used to address the needs of low performing and at-risk students. For example, the school

purchased *Moby Math* and *Brain Pop* programs, among others, to support student achievement. The school no longer provides in-house professional development (PD) due to the loss of several grants. The school leader handles the school schedule, student programming, teacher common planning time, and after-school tutoring activities for general education students. The assistant principal is responsible for coordinating special education services. Although the school schedule provides basic classes to teach reading and mathematics for students who are falling behind, teachers interviewed by the IIT shared that the students with disabilities subgroup does not receive the same academic support interventions made available to the general education students. Although the assistant principal is responsible for coordinating the programming, support, and fiscal needs of students with disabilities, there was not a separate budget for her to allocate resources. Although the school does link some funding decisions with school improvement efforts, the IIT did not find that there was a clear connection between the allocation of funds and school and student goals. The lack of clearly identified school-wide and student goals limits the school leader's capacity to organize resources and make strategic decisions to ensure that there is achievement in school improvement and student goals.

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

- From interviews and documents reviewed, the IIT learned that the school leader has a system for frequent teacher observations. Documents and teacher interviews indicated that teachers received at least one formal observation feedback report per year, as well as informal feedback throughout the year. During a review of teacher observation feedback, the IIT found that observations lead to instructional support for teachers. For example, feedback from one teacher observation contained suggestions for curriculum content and instructional practices to improve student learning. However, the IIT noted that observational feedback reports did not contain comments related to the use of data to inform instruction. Teachers receive and sign their observation feedback reports that include areas for improvement; however, the school leader and teachers reported to the IIT that improvement plans did not include PD recommendations to address improvement expectations. Documents reviewed indicated that the school leader does not track individual teacher observation notes and progress. Although the District offers PD opportunities for all school staff, the school does not provide school-level PD. The school piloted the *My Learning Plan*, an observation tracking system, and may implement the program next school year. Staff interviews indicate that not all teachers participated in the pilot of the observation tool. Although the school leader has a system for frequent teacher observations, the lack of links between the findings from school observations and the provision of PD opportunities as well as a lack of tracking of the progress of teacher practices based on student data, limit the promotion of continuous improvement and accountability for student progress.

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
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Debriefing Statement: The school leader and staff are beginning to develop rigorous and coherent curricula and assessments that reflect the CCLS. The school provides opportunities for collaboration on instructional practices to increase student achievement across all grades and subject areas. The school collects data from various sources but does not evaluate data consistently or use data analysis to inform instruction. The lack of development and implementation of curriculum and lesson plans reflective of the CCLS, and consistently informed by data, hinders school capacity to tailor curriculum and instructional practices to meet the needs of all students.

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 reported to the IIT that the school uses modules for its English language arts (ELA) curricula for kindergarten to grades six that are aligned with the New York State (NYS) CCLS. Although reviews of curriculum documents indicated that kindergarten to grades two used the NYS CCLS modules for mathematics, as indicated by the school leader, the school has not adopted a mathematics curriculum aligned to the CCLS for all grades. From a review of the PD plan, the IIT found that the school has maintained a focused on ELA and plans to have PD on the CCLS for mathematics. Staff informed the IIT that teachers have received PD on the implementation of the curricula and the use of the modules for ELA for kindergarten to grade six. The school leader informed the IIT that, although the school does not use curriculum mapping, it was her belief that the implementation of CCLS-based curricula would eliminate the need for curriculum mapping in the future. The lack of PD, CCLS-based curricula, and lesson plans for all subjects and grade levels inhibit the quality implementation of rigorous and curricula that are aligned to the CCLS.

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.

- From interviews with school leadership and staff, the IIT learned that the school schedules weekly grade-level team meetings for all grades, except grade six. Teachers reported that some subject

teachers attend these meetings. Teachers reported the meetings are used to discuss data and to share ideas regarding instructional strategies. The school operates under a system that special education students have a more skills-based and specialized instructional program, so these students do not receive the same support services as general education students. In classrooms visited, although lessons were grade-level appropriate, some classes did provide students with complex materials and the IIT noted that most students were disengaged from lessons. During the document review, the IIT found ELA and mathematics lesson plans that were misaligned to the CCLS. The lesson plans omitted pertinent information, such as techniques for using complex materials to stimulate higher-order thinking, and methods for creating points of access and points of assessment for diverse learners. The lack of instructional planning and assessment in alignment with the CCLS inhibits the provision of coherent curricula that introduce complex materials and stimulate higher-order thinking and therefore hinders student development of deep conceptual understanding and knowledge of instructional content.

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.

- Although the school schedules formal grade-level meetings for kindergarten to grades five, as indicated to the IIT by the school leader, teachers do not have formal vertical subject meetings. The school leader further indicated that teachers in these grades could choose to realign the grade-level meetings to include other grades and/or subject areas, when needed. There are no grade-level or subject meetings for grade six. Based on documents reviewed, focus group interviews, and classroom visits, the IIT found that the school does not have a structured strategy for integrating arts and technology in its curriculum. Although classrooms have technology resources to support instruction, a technology course is not available for students. In addition to after-school academic supports, at the time of the IIT visit, the school offered students two enrichment opportunities, one in support of anti-bullying and one to promote self-esteem for girls in grades four and five. The lack of formally scheduled time for teachers to meet together within and across grades and subjects limits opportunities for staff to collaboratively plan, share best practices, and integrate arts and technology into instruction. A lack of collaborative planning hampers the development and implementation of robust curricula.

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 a system for collecting data but not for analyzing or correlating data. The school leader reported to the IIT that she plans to seek assistance from the District Office to conduct data correlation to identify trends. From interviews with staff and documents examined, the IIT learned that, although the school regularly collects student data such as Response to Intervention (RTI) data, Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports (PBIS) data, State assessment results, and unit assessment data, the data is not consistently used to identify trends and/or areas of focus. The school leader

shared outcome data with the IIT but she was not able to articulate how the data results informed her decisions, classroom instruction, and/or support services for students. The IIT was informed that the school does not fully train staff on the various uses of data to differentiate instruction. For example, teachers reported that they received training on understanding and interpreting data. However, only one teacher shared how she used data to plan her lessons. Based on discussions with teachers and a review of instructional documents, the IIT determined that the school is not providing teachers with sufficient support to develop the requisite skills to use data to inform instructional practices and improve student achievement. The IIT was informed that the school leader had posted the number thirteen on classroom doors throughout the school a few days prior to the IIT review, but at that time she had not informed staff of the significance of the number. During interviews with staff, some teachers reported they recently learned that the number thirteen was the assessment goal for the school to score on an upcoming interim assessment. The inconsistent use of data to inform and improve instruction hinders the development of a data-driven culture where the results of data analysis are used to inform instructional decision-making and strategic action-planning to address identified student needs and foster student success.

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 do not consistently engage in strategic instructional practices designed to address the diverse needs of students and to promote consistently high levels of thinking, achievement, and sustained engagement. The lack of implementation of these strategic practices limits school capacity to promote student engagement and foster the development of high levels of thinking and achievement.

Strengths:

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

Areas for Improvement:

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

- From interviews, documents reviewed, and classroom visitations, the IIT found that many teachers are beginning to use data to inform their lesson planning. However, data is not being used consistently to establish student goals and to tailor instruction to meet student needs. The lesson plans reviewed and lessons observed by the IIT did not demonstrate the use of data to inform what students needed to know, learn, or understand. Although teachers espoused the belief that grade-level data analysis provides opportunities to collaborate on student achievement needs, based on classroom visits, the IIT found that instruction focused primarily on worksheet completion and

lacked appropriate differentiation for varying student ability. The IIT also found that instructional practice did not stimulate high levels of student thinking and learning and that instruction did not promote student engagement or foster student inquiry. Based on staff interviews, the IIT found that teachers wrote learning objectives for each student; however, students were not aware of these goals. In addition, the IIT noted that none of the grade six lessons referenced assessment goals, even though the students were preparing for grade six assessments. The lack of consistent instructional planning that is organized to meet student goals and which incorporates differentiated instruction hinders the school's ability to maximize student engagement and inquiry.

4.3 The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice: Teachers provide coherent, appropriately aligned Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)-based instruction that leads to multiple points of access for all students to achieve targeted goals.

- From interviews, documents reviewed, and classroom visitations, the IIT learned that teachers implement an ELA curriculum that was designed to reflect the CCLS for kindergarten to grade six. In conjunction with its existing mathematics curriculum, the school uses NYSED CCLS mathematics modules for kindergarten to grade two. The school has not adopted a CCLS-aligned mathematics curriculum for all grades. From interview responses and documents reviewed, the IIT found that teachers are encouraged and recognized for using effective engagement strategies such as *Think-Pair-Share* and independent group work. During classroom visits, the IIT did not see academically challenging tasks and the IIT found that there was no differentiated instruction to meet the needs of the diverse learners within the classrooms. Two classes had independent group work, with students working on worksheets and practicing for a class play. The lesson plans reviewed by the IIT did not include instructional strategies to promote higher levels of engagement and inquiry. A review of the responses to the DTSDE School Self-Assessment indicated that the school was not using texts appropriately matched to reading levels for all students. The lack of comprehensive CCLS-aligned curricula and the lack of development and implementation of differentiated instruction based on student needs limit the provision of multiple points of access for all students to achieve their targeted learning 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.

- From interviews, documents reviewed and classroom visitations, the IIT found that the school leader establishes behavioral expectations for general education students and the school follows the PBIS model to foster appropriate behavior. Teachers reported to the IIT that they work together to have a shared sense of safety within the school by locking the classroom doors. In interviews conducted by the IIT, students and parents reported that there is an inconsistent message about the safety conditions of the school. For example, although the school has a buzz-in entry system and video cameras, parents shared that anyone who signs-in can walk around the school. The IIT observed students exhibiting positive behavior in classrooms visited, but also observed that students were disengaged with the instructional material. For example, during visits to grade six

classrooms, the review team observed students working on generic test preparation lessons that did not contain any new material and appeared extremely easy for all students. Instruction observed by the IIT did not include strategies to promote higher levels of engagement and inquiry. Due to generic instruction that is not tailored to student needs and experiences and the lack of a universal understanding that the school has established a safe environment, inhibits the school's ability to establish a culture that is responsive to varied student experiences and which leads to high levels of student engagement and inquiry.

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.

- From interviews and documents reviewed, the IIT found that the school processes data from a variety of sources. The IIT reviewed data provided by the school that came from the following sources, the Safe School-Healthy Student Grant, RTI, PBIS, the 2011-12 State assessments, and the school portfolio system. The IIT found that data is not used consistently to inform instructional decision-making and provide student feedback. For example, the school does not use relevant data results to provide appropriate grade-level materials in reading. In addition, from a review of lesson plans, the IIT found that teachers do not use the data results to develop explicit lesson plans that foster high expectations for student achievement. The school has a data team that meets weekly to discuss the RTI process, with progress monitored bi-weekly. Students shared that they receive feedback on their performance through five-week progress reports and quarterly report cards. Special education students receive detailed ten-week progress reports. Students shared that parents are contacted when students perform below average, and students may be required to attend after-school support, remediation, or may be pulled out of class for mathematics assistance. The school leader reported that she has seen a two-year data trend of growth in State assessment results between 2010-11 and 2011-12. The school leader informed the IIT that data determines eligibility for support services such as Academic Intervention Support (AIS) and RTI. The school leader asserted that teachers are expected to group students based on classroom data analysis and data from interim assessments and benchmarks. However, at the time of the IIT visit, the review team did not find any evidence that data informed teacher action plans for student grouping. Data is not disaggregated and analyzed to identify correlating trends and the school leader reported to the IIT that data correlation is an aspect that the school intends to explore in the future. Although the school collects and processes a variety of data, the lack of a data-based culture and a systemic approach to connecting areas of academic need and instruction limit the use of data to inform lesson planning, develop explicit teacher plans, and provide feedback to students in a way that fosters student participation in their own learning process.

Tenet 5 - Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health: The school community identifies, promotes and supports social and emotional development by designing systems and experiences that lead to healthy relationships and a safe, respectful environment that is conducive to learning for all constituents.	Tenet Rating	D
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Debriefing Statement: Although the school has a number of social and emotional developmental health supports to promote a safe school environment, the high incidence rate of bullying throughout the school community negatively influences the relationships in the school and on the school bus. The school lacks a vision related to social and emotional developmental health and there is no data generated or analyzed for use in examining best practice or student growth in this area. The lack of coordination of academic and social-emotional support and services provided for students with IEPs, and for students who do not have IEPs, limits the establishment of a respectful environment that is conducive to learning for all constituents.

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.

- From interviews and documents reviewed, the IIT learned that although the school has established partnerships that support and sustain social and emotional developmental health, there is no overarching system to coordinate or evaluate these efforts or their effect on student success. The IIT was informed that the school is in the process of developing a system to address the social and emotional developmental health needs of students. For example, the school is developing a site-based referral system for student support that includes an Essex County Mental Health (ECMH) Clinic office at the school where school psychologists oversee school referrals to the ECMH clinic. The school also has the *Families and Schools Together (FAST)* program to facilitate school partnerships with families. Through staff interviews and document reviews, the IIT found that the School-wide Information System (SWIS) program, which is the discipline tracking and recording system for PBIS, is in its last year of funding. The school is investigating the *School Tool* program to replace this resource. However, the school leader reported that the *School Tool* program has limitations with tracking data and progress for grades kindergarten to five. The school uses the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program*, primarily for students in grade five. The school uses *Girls on the Run* for grade four and grade five girls, which is a program that promotes healthy relationships through running. The school also provides RTI and AIS services. Although the school has established partnerships and supports to promote social and emotional developmental health, the school did not submit any evidence to the IIT that these partnerships, programs or services benefitted all students or the intended student populations, or that the school was providing adequate resources to meet the needs of all students. The school's limited development of systems

and partnerships and the lack of a fully implemented data-based referral system impede the school's ability to identify and address student social and emotional developmental health and academic needs.

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

- Although the school does not have an articulated overall school vision for social and emotional developmental health, teachers reported to the IIT that the school uses the PBIS model to outline the skills and behaviors expected of students, as well as to develop a school program to teach, support, and measure social and emotional development for students. The school leader and teachers reported to the IIT that they noted progress with student behavior and improved interactions in the classroom. Teachers asserted that the school encourages positive behavior by identifying students as All Stars and issuing Viking Awards to students for being responsible in the school community. From interviews and documents reviewed, the IIT found that all staff received PD in RTI. Staff and students reported the school is safe; however, parents expressed safety concerns to the IIT regarding how the school manages people visiting the school and how the school addresses bullying on the school bus. Parents reported that visitors to the school are not required to sign out, so they can be anywhere in the school, and the school staff do not know when they leave. In addition, parents and students reported that there are numerous incidents of bullying on the school bus. Students shared with the IIT that they are proud of their participation in academic enrichment activities, such as the *I Stand against Bullying* (ISAB) Video Placement Contest where the school received an honorable mention. Based on documents reviewed and interview responses, the IIT found that funding for the school's Safe School-Healthy Student Grant would end June 2013. As a result of the loss of funding, the school anticipates losing some student support staff. The grant supported the provision of PD from Ruby Paine and Eric Jenson's programs focused on providing support to students in poverty. Although the IIT inquired, the school leader did not provide the plan for sustaining the services supported by the grant. Because of the school's development of social and emotional expectations, students are beginning to understand the importance of social and emotional developmental health for academic success and are feeling supported in the classroom. However, although the school has installed some programs and systems to support students and improve student behavior, the lack of a school vision for social and emotional developmental health hampers the promotion of full learning experiences that create and maintain a safe and healthy environment 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.

- The IIT found that the school has a welcoming atmosphere. During IIT interviews with students, parents, teachers, and school leaders, the IIT was informed that the school is safer; however, parents and students disclosed that bullying occurs on the school bus. Documents reviewed by the IIT indicated that the school leader shares discipline data monthly at faculty meetings. Based on

interviews with parents and teachers, the IIT was informed that parent volunteers appear to be an under-utilized resource to assist in the school. Parents indicated that they do not assist within the school or on the school bus daily, and that they may only volunteer on school trips. Although students, teachers, and parents expressed a sense of responsibility for the improvement of student test scores in all subject areas, they were more concerned with the level of bullying throughout the school community. Some teachers expressed uncertainty about their role in supporting the social and emotional developmental health of some special education students. The lack of an environment that is perceived as safe and conducive to learning inhibits the school's ability to promote a sense of ownership for student success by all constituents and hampers the school community capacity to optimize student 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 student social and emotional developmental health needs, so students can become academically and socially successful.

- The school leader informed the IIT that the school is developing systems to augment the staff's ability to identify and address student social and emotional health needs. For example, in September 2012, the school mailed a mental health survey to parents. Students also completed a survey entitled "Me and My World" to assess their social and emotional developmental health needs. However, the IIT did not find any evidence that the school made changes based on survey results. Moreover, even though the school has a data team that reviews data weekly, including referrals for PBIS and RTI, the review team did not find evidence that the data team used the parent and student survey data to coordinate school-wide changes to support student social and emotional developmental health needs. In addition, the school does not provide the same intervention opportunities to all students. Although the school participates in programs to support social and emotional development such as the *Olweus*, *Girls on the Run*, and *FAST* programs, the school presented the IIT with no data on the outcomes of the programs. During staff interviews, the IIT was informed that staff believe these programs have no impact in the classroom. Although the school is in the process of implementing strategies to assess the social and emotional developmental health needs of students, the lack of access to pertinent data and the lack of a data-driven culture limit the school's ability to use data to identify and respond to student needs and thereby enhance student success.

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

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: The school is developing a culture designed to increase parental engagement. Parents are encouraged to participate in their child's academic success. However, the school does not provide staff PD targeted toward fostering family engagement. Teachers and staff do not communicate the results or implications of student performance data to families fully. This lack of communication of student performance limits family understanding of student progress and limits school ability to foster a shared responsibility to

improve student achievement and success.

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 leader informed the IIT that she has an open door policy. Parents and students reported they feel welcome in the school and have easy access to see staff. However, parents asserted, and the IIT confirmed, that the school does not track visitors' movements in the school. Documents reviewed and interviews conducted by IIT indicated that the school provides five-week progress reports, quarterly report cards, and annual parent reports that contain the Individual Student Report that provides families with information about their child's results on the State ELA or mathematics assessments. Parents informed the IIT that volunteer opportunities are available only by invitation, and are generally limited to infrequent field trips. As a result, parents asserted that they did not have opportunities to be active participants in their child's academic success in the classroom. Although the school creates a welcoming atmosphere in which students feel connected, the school's limited volunteer opportunities discouraged families from frequently engaging with the school to promote 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.

- From interviews and documents reviewed, the IIT learned that the school staff is aware of the diversity of the school community and is in the process of developing a plan to identify the needs of the community. Staff interviewed by the IIT explained the referral process for students with academic, social, and emotional needs and described how teachers, support staff, students, families, and community stakeholders work to ensure that student needs are met. The IIT was informed that the school is developing family and community outreach. The school has a parent group and parents, teachers, and school leaders informed the IIT that because the school community is small, everyone knows each other. The school facilitates some family nights and parent days that include parent-teacher conferences, game nights, and student recognition ceremonies. Students reported that the school also facilitates family dinner nights. From staff interviews and documents reviewed, the IIT found that the school sends home monthly newsletters. In addition, some staff shared, through informal conversations with families, that they have provided resources to families, including information on food bank locations, shelters, and alternative domiciles. The school staff communicates via email, phone calls, conference meetings,

and letters in the mail, and in student backpacks. The District has a Facebook page, but the elementary school was not accessing this social media service as a method of reaching out to families. Parents reported the school is improving communication between the school and home through the FAST program. However, the funding for the program ended June 2013 and the school leader did not share a plan to continue the efforts using the FAST model. Although the school provides some opportunities for parental engagement, the school has no overarching plan to ensure effective planning and reciprocal communications with all stakeholders. This lack of planning impedes the school's ability to ensure that families and community stakeholders are able to identify student strengths and needs and are able to use this information to improve learning and student success.

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

- From interviews and documents reviewed, the IIT learned that the Safe School-Healthy Student Grant funded PD to inform teaching practices that support the needs of students living in poverty. However, documents reviewed and interviews conducted by the review team indicated that although the school has the *FAST* program to facilitate school partnerships with families, the school did not use grant funds to provide staff with PD on developing partnerships with families or identifying community resources for families. Teachers refer parents to the school leader and support staff to provide resources. At the time of the IIT visit, teachers reported that historically, parents have not needed much support from them. Teachers shared that the school community is small, so communicating with parents is ongoing. Parents and teachers shared with the IIT that they converse with staff about student progress reports. Parents reported that the school leader and school psychologists assist them with referrals to outside agencies for counseling, food banks, or additional academic support. Although parents interviewed by the IIT indicated that the school partners with families and community agencies, the lack of explicit PD for teachers related to fostering partnerships with families and community agencies limits the school's ability to engage all families and community partners in promoting student academic, social, and emotional growth.

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.

- From interviews and documents reviewed, the IIT found that the school provides families with student performance data and parents shared that the school uses a data chart to allow students to track their own achievement. Although parents receive quarterly report cards, five-week progress reports, interim assessment scores and other data, the school leader and staff reported to the IIT that the school does not have a systemic method for engaging families on how to understand the data within the various reports, or about how parents can interpret the data to best support their child. During IIT interviews, parents reported that school leaders gave a presentation on achievement data but school leaders did not fully explain the implications of the data. Although staff interviewed by the IIT indicated that the school provides parents guidance on how to

understand student data results during parent-teacher conferences, parents reported that there are minimal opportunities to understand the data during these meetings. Parents explained they seek additional information from specific school staff to understand the data. Based on interview responses, the IIT learned that parents were unaware of the school goal to achieve a student level of thirteen on interim assessments or of school plans to address the school's accountability designation. Although parents indicated to the IIT their belief that the school leader is working to improve communication between the school and home through the FAST program, the IIT did not find evidence of the FAST program improving the flow of information. The lack of learning opportunities to understand how to use data inhibits the ability of the school to ensure that families are empowered and encouraged to understand and use data to maintain reciprocal communications with the school in support of student learning and success.

Recommendations:

Tenet 2: School Leader Practices and Decisions

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

- 2.2: Develop a written vision concerning student achievement and well-being that is uniformly seen, heard, and known across the school community. Include community stakeholders in developing the vision for the school. Develop and share school-wide goals that align to a specific and results-oriented vision.
- 2.3: Use data systems that are inter-connected, correlated to identify trends, and lead to the collection and analysis of outcomes that include feedback loops and examples of best practices to improve student achievement.
- 2.4: Create a system for programming instruction for students and teachers that is based on performance data and student needs. Allocate academic support resources equitably to ensure that the needs of all students are met. Analyze the fiscal capital available to the school community more than once a year to make funding decisions that address the school-wide goals.
- 2.5: Ensure the implementation of a system for the frequent observation of targeted teacher practices throughout the school year that result in relevant feedback and teacher improvement plans. Tailor and differentiate PD opportunities based on identified needs. Conduct periodic check-ins with staff that leads to an understanding of the next steps necessary to be able to yield a positive year-end outcome for all students and 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: Adopt a CCLS-aligned mathematics curriculum for all grades. Provide consistent and systematic school-wide support across all subjects that are cohesive, comprehensive, and appropriately aligned to rigorous and coherent CCLS curricula. Ensure that unit plans are clear, descriptive, and consider what students need to know across all grades and subject areas.
- 3.3: Implement an accountability system for all grade and subject area teachers to formally participate in grade-level and/or vertical subject meetings to collaboratively create and examine coherent, appropriately aligned curriculum unit plans across their grade/subject. Develop appropriately aligned pacing calendars across all grades and subject areas that expose students to a progression of sequenced complex materials that promote higher-order thinking skills and help students analyze information. Review requirements for AIS services for all students to ensure that the academic needs of all subgroups are met.
- 3.4: Create opportunities for all teachers to work in partnerships within and across grades and subjects on a regular basis, targeting what is taught and why it is taught. Ensure students have exposure to a standards-based aligned curriculum that enables them to discover, create, and communicate information that includes the arts, technology, and other enrichment areas.

- 3.5: Collect timely data (formative and summative assessments including screening, interim measures and progress monitoring) and share it with teachers and instructional staff for the purpose of having them assess school effectiveness, identify student needs, and promote high levels of student learning and success. Use data resources to identify patterns of student learning that lead to the adaptation of instruction that 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 fully align with the concepts in the Effective column of Tenet 4 the school should:

- 4.2: Create lesson plans informed by data (summative, interim, attendance, IEPs, etc.) and grade-level goals for all groups of students. Use instructional practices and strategies aligned to data-based lesson plans that include accommodations to meet the needs of all students. Ensure instruction provides instructional interventions to all students that promote inquiry and engagement. Create achievement goals for all students and ensure instruction that promotes achievement of these goals. Assist students with creating short- and long-term goals based on grade-level benchmarks that lead to student involvement in their own learning.
- 4.3: Create and implement comprehensive CCLS-aligned curricula for all subjects and grade levels. Develop expectations for instructional practices based on the CCLS instructional shifts for all curricular areas. Create lesson plans that include multiple entry points of access and promote student engagement. Ensure lessons are designed to challenge students to do more self-monitoring and analysis toward achieving their collective and individual learning goals.
- 4.4: Provide coaching, modeling, PD and ongoing support for teachers regarding instructional strategies on questioning techniques that encourage student skill development with higher-order thinking, discussion, and engagement. Monitor implementation of CCLS-aligned instruction and provide feedback on next steps to ensure improved instruction and student outcomes. Provide targeted PD on maintaining a safe school community that connects positive student behavior with successful learning experiences to improve student engagement and responsiveness.
- 4.5: Ensure teachers use and analyze various data sources to inform instructional planning, including decision-making on student grouping and instructional strategies. Ensure all teachers provide all students frequent data based feedback and next steps for accomplishing success.

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: Create a comprehensive and formalized system to use the existing resources/partnerships for the benefit of all school constituents. Establish policies, procedures and systems to implement and track referrals and to assess outcomes. Create a sustainability plan for the support services offered that transitions with the students throughout each grade level at the school. Correlate behavioral and social/emotional data with the academic data to assess trends, identify gaps, and address targeted needs. Share correlated data with all staff and ensure teachers use it to inform instructional planning. Develop protocols for staff to correlate classroom and interim

assessment data elements to assess trends and potential implications for supporting and grouping students across all grades and subject areas.

- 5.3: Create a social and emotional developmental health vision for families, teachers, and students. Provide staff PD that promotes the vision and builds staff capacity to support all students toward experiencing a safe and successful learning experience.
- 5.4: Create a sustainability plan to maintain the culture promoted through the Safe School-Healthy Student Grant. Develop parent volunteer opportunities to assist in the reduction of the bullying incidents.
- 5.5: Provide teachers PD to understand how to use data to address students' social and emotional developmental health needs connected to academic success. Develop a structured school-wide system for assessing, referring, tracking, and transitioning student support needs toward a positive learning experience. Develop clear and strategic school-wide approaches to respond to potential gaps from staff attrition and the discontinuation of grant funding to limit obstacles toward addressing the social and emotional developmental health and behavior of all students.

Tenet 6: Family and Community Engagement

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

- 6.2: Develop a parent volunteer program focused on student learning and family engagement. Broaden the open-door policy that connects academic progress and family engagement to ensure appropriate access to all school staff throughout the school day. Develop a sign-out system for visitors in the building such as using family volunteers to ensure the school can keep track of visitors.
- 6.3: Continue to develop family outreach activities. Create written communication protocols to establish clear home-school partnerships, and to communicate the role of families toward improving student learning.
- 6.4: Provide PD opportunities for teachers on how to actively seek and sustain healthy partnerships with families and community organizations that are linked to student academic, social, emotional, and behavioral needs.
- 6.5: Share correlated data with all staff and ensure teachers use it to inform instructional planning. Provide training opportunities to all families on how to understand and use data to promote a more informed dialogue between parents, students, and teachers centered on learning and success.