



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	08-12-00-05-0003
School Name	Norwich Middle School
School Address	89 Midland Drive Norwich, New York 13815
District Name	Norwich City School District
School Leader	Scott Ryan
Dates of Review	June 4-6, 2013
School Accountability Status	Focus School
Type of Review	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet																	
Grade Configuration	6,7,8	Total Enrollment	432	SIG Recipient	X	Title 1 Population	%	Attendance Rate	94 %								
Free Lunch	47%	Reduced Lunch	7%	Student Sustainability	%	Limited English Proficient	0%	Students with Disabilities	14%								
Number of English Language Learner Classes																	
#Transitional Bilingual	0		#Dual Language		0		#Self-Contained English as a Second Language			0							
Number of Special Education Classes																	
#Special Classes	1		#Consultant Teaching		0		#Integrated Collaborative Teaching			0							
# Resource Room	2																
Number Special Classes																	
#Visual Arts	0		#Music	3		#Drama	0		#Foreign Language	3		#Dance	0		#CTE	0	
Racial/Ethnic Origin																	
American Indian or Alaska Native	%		Black or African American	3%		Hispanic or Latino	3%		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	2%		White	92%		Multi-racial	0%	
Personnel																	
Years Principal Assigned to School	2		# of Assistant Principals	0		# of Deans	0		# of Counselors / Social Workers			2					
Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	0%		Teaching Out of Certification	2%		Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp.	16%		Average Teacher Absences		%						
Credit Accumulation (High School Only) and Performance Rates																	
% of 1 st yr. students who earned 10+ credits			% of 2 nd yr. students who earned 10+ credits			% of 3 rd yr. students who earned 10+ credits			4 Year Graduation Rate								
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	21%		Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	19%		Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	11%		6 Year Graduation Rate								

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		All Students
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Math			
	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		All Students
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		All Students
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, DIP, etc.):

None Provided by the School

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			X	

	continuous improvement.				
	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:				I
Tenet 5 - Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health: The school community identifies, promotes, and supports social and emotional development by designing systems and experiences that lead to healthy relationships and a safe, respectful environment that is conducive to learning for all constituents.					
#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
5.2	The school cultivates the development of overarching systems and partnerships that support and sustain social and emotional developmental health.				X
5.3	The school articulates and systematically promotes a vision for social and emotional developmental health that is connected to learning experiences and results in building a safer and healthier environment for families, teachers and students.				X
5.4	All school constituents are able to articulate how the school community is safe, conducive to learning and fosters a sense of ownership that leads to greater student outcomes.			X	
5.5	The school leader and student support staff work together to develop teachers' ability to use data to respond to students' social and emotional developmental health needs, so students can become academically and socially successful.				X
	OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 5:				I
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
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Debriefing Statement: The school leader has a vision based on a set of priorities that focuses on alignment of outcomes and assessments, mathematics and ELA shifts to the Common Core Learning Standards, explicit instruction, a shift in grading, and guided reading. There are some structures in place to improve practices to support student outcomes in these critical areas. However, the vision and school-wide goals are not identified in the School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP) and are not clearly understood across the school community. As a result, teachers are working on a variety of initiatives with little clarity of purpose or integration, which limits sustainable school improvement.

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.

- The school leader considers student and teacher needs when making decisions to allocate resources and organize staff. The school leader stated that he has fully staffed his school and added the following staff based on student need: an academic intervention services mathematics teacher, another school leader, and a reading teacher. Teachers interviewed by the IIT stated that inconsistency in staff for grade seven English language arts (ELA) resulted in two staffing changes being made last year. The school leader revised the school schedule to provide teachers with time to collaborate during the school day and with another 20 minutes at the end of the day. Teachers reported that they receive the materials they need for their instruction in a timely manner. The school leader stated that the district’s Network Team created a list of items that were needed to implement the new mathematics modules. The school leader procured the items listed to ensure his staff would have these items in a timely manner. Mathematics teachers reported that stopwatches were included on this list and arrived in time to use in the classroom. The school leader’s strategic decisions help to ensure that resources are in place to promote the achievement of 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 does not have a vision that was created by a select group of staff and families and that is

known and supported by the school community. Although the school has goals that address students with disabilities, the school leader has not articulated school-wide goals that are specific, measurable, ambitious, results oriented, and timely (SMART). The school leader indicated that he has a vision for the school that focuses on alignment of outcomes and assessments, shifts in the mathematics and ELA curricula to reflect the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), explicit instruction, changes in grading practices, and guided reading. He reported, however, that he feels his vision does not align with the Quality Improvement Process (QIP), the Regents Reform Agenda, and the Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness process. Based on the integrated intervention team's (IIT) interviews, the IIT found that individual understanding of the school's vision and goals varies greatly across the school community. Various staff members reported these goals: to increase student reading achievement by two grade levels and to help students achieve Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals and objectives; for students to write a non-fiction piece in every subject; and for teachers to implement the explicit teaching and the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model; and, to implement the CCLS. The school leader indicated that the school goals were outlined in the school's QIP plan. The QIP plan sets goals for the special education program and service delivery and includes one measurable goal for students with disabilities. This goal states, "By end of the school year 2014-15, 65 percent of middle school (grades six through eight) students with disabilities will demonstrate a weighted student growth percentile of 85 or better in both ELA and math." The absence of a common vision with corresponding SMART goals that is widely understood by all school stakeholders limits the school community's shared sense of urgency about 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 & teacher practices; leadership development; community/family engagement; and student social and emotional developmental health) that make progress toward mission-critical goals.

- The school leader encourages teachers to use data and engages staff in conversations about data, but has not developed interconnected systems that lead to the consistent collection and analysis of outcomes. There are no feedback loops in place or systems to follow up on conversations about student data. Staff interviewed by the IIT indicated that the school leader sometimes engages teachers in conversations about data. Reviewers noted that there are some structures in place to improve practices to increase student outcomes in critical areas. For example, documents reviewed by the IIT identified the use of explicit instruction, formative assessment, and initial application of CCLS instruction as preferred practices. The absence of integrated systems to identify instructional practices that lead to high levels of student achievement limits the school's progress toward mission-critical goals.

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

- The school leader observes teachers on the schedule required by the district's approved Annual

Professional Performance Review (APPR) plan but does not provide teachers with timely feedback. There is no evidence that student data are considered in evaluating teachers, that teacher improvement plans are developed, or that teachers are given targeted professional development (PD). Special Education School Improvement Specialist (SEIS) staff observe and provide feedback to special education teachers. According to the school leader, the school's APPR system mandates that all teachers receive two formal classroom observations each year. While the school leader stated that he provides feedback to teachers thirty days after the observations, teachers expressed frustration about the delay in receiving feedback and indicated that the timing does not allow them to quickly adjust their instructional practices to improve student achievement. Although the School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP) states that benchmark assessments and data-driven instruction are used to track teacher performance, teachers interviewed by the IIT were not able to articulate if these data had been shared with them by the school leaders. The Director of Special Programs is responsible for the evaluation of special education staff. Additionally, the SCEP indicated that SEIS coach special-education teachers and that coaching includes pre-observations, observations, and post observation feedback. Special-education teachers indicated that the SEIS feedback is timely and improves their instructional practices. The absence of timely feedback from observations, teacher improvement plans, and targeted professional development limits the school's ability to hold administrators and staff accountable for continuous improvement.

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.

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: While the CCLS are used to frame learning outcomes in classrooms lessons, the school has not adopted curriculum maps or units of study to ensure that students receive a curriculum that prepares them for high school. The school is at the early stages of implementing academic rigor and instructional differentiation to meet the needs of sub-groups of students. The lack of a fully implemented CCLS limits hinders the school's ability to provide an engaging curriculum and improve student-learning outcomes.

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 district and school have provided teachers with some professional development and collaboration time for implementing the CCLS. The support has focused on understanding what the standards require students to know and be able to do but has not included how to integrate instructional strategies to promote the instructional shifts associated with the CCLS. In addition,

the school has not developed and implemented clear, descriptive units of study that reflect the CCLS, and reviewers did not see evidence of curriculum maps being used. The district's CCLS implementation has been centered on unpacking the standards; that is, determining what the standard means that a student must know and be able to do. The school leader stated that the biggest change for the school is in the alignment of curriculum and instruction to CCLS ELA and mathematics standards. Teachers indicated that the district network team provided some training on the CCLS shifts. A review of documents showed that the district provided representative teachers five days of CCLS module training during the summer. The school leader stated that the school would adopt the New York State ELA and mathematics modules in the 2013-14 school year. Upon review of the SCEP, the IIT noted that ELA, mathematics and special education teachers received professional development in Explicit Instruction using the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model, sometimes referred to as "I do it, we do it, you do it." Teachers reported that they need help aligning the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model with the CCLS modules, because they believe the former is based on lesson outcomes and the modules are not. The lack of a clear vision to support that implementation of the CCLS through PD and through the development of CCLS-aligned units of study has limited the school's ability to fully implement the CCLS and ensure that students are being provided with a rigorous, cohesive, and coherent curriculum.

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.

- Many unit and lesson plans used by teachers do not support the CCLS. Teachers reported that grade-level meetings are held monthly and subject-area meetings for each grade, daily. In these meetings teachers sometimes, but not regularly, discuss how the standards relate to their lesson plans. Upon a review of lesson plans by the IIT, reviewers noted that lesson plans that support the CCLS were limited. Teachers reported that a curriculum reflecting the CCLS is in place for mathematics but not for other subjects. The SCEP states that writing aligned to the CCLS is expected in all content areas. According to the school leader and teachers, the school has adopted the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model to improve instructional practice and support the implementation of CCLS. In some classrooms visited, the teacher followed the model by posting lesson outcomes in the classroom. The school leader stated that he expects that ELA and mathematics teachers will align daily classroom outcomes to the CCLS and measure the attainment of all students in achieving these outcomes. The absence of unit and lesson plans that support the CCLS limits teachers' ability to ensure that lessons follow a coherent curriculum that consistently stimulate higher-order thinking and build deep conceptual understanding and knowledge around specific 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.

- Teachers do not meet collaboratively across all subjects to develop unit and lesson plans incorporating enrichment opportunities. The school leader reported that the schedule allots twenty minutes each

day for teacher collaboration. According to the SCEP, teachers have regular opportunities to collaborate, including monthly department meetings, common planning times, staff meetings, and release days. This collaboration is limited to subjects that the school leader has identified as core subjects: mathematics, ELA, social studies and science, but does not include the arts or technology. Teachers reported that lesson and unit plans are frequently prepared by individual teachers rather than by subject or grade-level teams. In classrooms, reviewers noted minimal use of technology by students. Because teachers across all grades and subjects do not collaborate with enrichment area teachers in unit and lesson planning, students have limited access to a robust curriculum that incorporates the arts, technology, and other enrichment opportunities.

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.

- The use of data in the school focuses on identifying patterns of student learning to inform instruction and establishing a common language to support student learning across grade levels. The QIP identifies the use of the following data sources: New York State grades three through eight assessments, ELA and mathematics student benchmark data, and reading benchmark data for students with disabilities. In interviews with the IIT, ELA and mathematics teachers indicated that they are using benchmark assessments to inform their instruction. The school leader stated that staff examine ELA benchmark data to identify standards on which students are doing well and on which they are struggling. While strategies are sometimes put into place such as re-teaching during extension time, grouping students by what they need, and providing enrichment and support, teachers stated that they do not use data to consider modifying instructional practices to support specific student learning gaps. Because teachers do not consistently engage in strategic-action planning based on examination of data, their ability to foster greater student achievement outcomes is hindered.

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.

Tenet Rating

I

Debriefing Statement: Teachers are receiving professional development to improve instructional practices to support students (i.e., gradual release of responsibility, explicit instruction, formative assessment). However, because teacher-directed instruction is the predominant mode of instruction, and teacher use of higher-order questioning, differentiation, and specially designed instruction is infrequent, there are limited opportunities for students to be engaged at deep conceptual levels and to achieve their targeted learning goals.

Strengths:

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

Areas for Improvement:

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

- Teachers do not develop annual, unit and daily lesson plans that are consistent across grade levels, that support the CCLS and that provide the appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities in all subjects. Some teachers indicated that they are using benchmark assessments to inform their grouping of students. However, teachers reported that lesson and unit plans are frequently prepared by individual teachers rather than by subject or grade-level teams. The school leader reported that the school will adopt the New York State CCLS Modules in 2013-14. The IIT noted, during classroom visitations, that teachers do not consistently provide accommodations for students with disabilities required by students' individualized education plans (IEPs). For example, in one general-education classroom visited by a reviewer, the teacher did not know, without looking at his records, that one student in the class had a disability that required accommodations. In an ELA classroom visited by an IIT member, the teacher did not provide a student with the accommodations he required for writing assignments. However, in another classroom, a resource teacher was observed providing an appropriate accommodation to a student with a disability. The absence of consistent annual, unit, and daily lesson plans that support the CCLS and provide accommodations for students with disabilities limits teachers' ability to meet established student goals and promote high levels of 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.

- There is no evidence that the school had developed CCLS curriculum maps. Teachers do not provide instruction aligned to curriculum maps that support the CCLS and do not consistently provide students with a wide variety of ways to engage in learning. In classrooms visited by the IIT, much of the instruction was in the form of communicating directions around completing tasks with little student inquiry. For example, in a mathematics class visited, after the teacher presented the lesson, students worked independently on the task. At the end of the work period, only one of fourteen students responded to the teacher's question about the work they had done. In another classroom visited, the teacher provided whole-class instruction on a figure of speech and did not differentiate instruction for a student with disabilities. In a mathematics classroom visited, a teacher devoted the entire class to a discussion of one math problem. Because the instruction was not appropriately paced, only two students appeared to be engaged for the duration of the lesson. Because teachers are not using instructional practices aligned to CCLS curriculum maps and are not consistently differentiating instruction for varying student needs, students' ability to reach targeted goals is limited.

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

- The school has not established behavioral expectations that are shared by all classes. Responses to inappropriate student behavior are reactive and punitive. General-education teachers do not consistently ask questions that relate to instructional materials that contain high levels of text content complexity. In interviews, teachers reported that the code of conduct is not universally enforced and there is a perception that certain rules and expectations are no longer being enforced. One staff member interviewed stated, “Hallways are sketchy this year because we are not all clear about the rules, and we may be afraid to say something to a kid because we don’t know if that’s the rule: swearing, hot drinks, and students wearing hoods.” In one classroom, the review team observed that the teacher did not intervene when a student was disruptive while harassing another student. In another classroom, reviewers noted that behavior expectations were not posted and that the teacher’s expectations for behavior were inconsistent during the class. The IIT noted that in most general education classes, instructional interventions for students with disabilities consisted mainly of one-on-one teacher and student interactions where the teacher asks questions to scaffold the student’s learning. However, all of the observed interactions ended with the teacher giving the student the answer rather than allowing the student to discover the answer on his/her own. The absence of behavioral expectations that are shared and enforced by all teachers and the lack of instructional use of questions related to complex materials limits student engagement and inquiry.

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

- Student grouping in general-education classrooms is often not based on data. The school leader stated that staff examine ELA benchmark data to identify standards on which students are doing well and those on which they are struggling. Strategies such as re-teaching during extension time, grouping students by what they need, and providing enrichment and support are then put into place. However, the review team observed that most classes are teacher directed and little evidence was seen of student grouping for differentiated instruction. In interviews with the IIT, teachers stated that instructional practices to support specific student learning gaps are not considered or identified. Because teachers do not consistently analyze data to inform instructional decision-making and student grouping, and because most instruction is teacher directed, teachers are not monitoring student progress and are not providing feedback to students in order to foster student participation in their own learning process. Student participation in their own learning is limited.

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

I

Debriefing Statement: The school community does not have formal structures to support the social and emotional growth of students. The school vision and behavioral expectations to address the social emotional needs of students are not clearly understood across the school community. Social and emotional developmental health is not identified as a priority area in the SCEP. These factors impact the quality of the

learning environment for the school community and makes for inefficient use of school resources.

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 *Ineffective* 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 does not have a system for identifying and addressing the social and emotional needs of students. The school has partnerships with community organizations but teachers did not articulate the role of partnerships in addressing student needs. The school leader stated that the school's vision is "character and competence of the whole child" and teachers are expected to address the academic, health, behavior, and attendance needs of students. The SCEP states that teachers meet individually with selected students during advisory time to build relationships. The SCEP indicates that the school's priorities include redesigning and implementing a functioning student assistance team, holding bi-weekly counselor meetings, and having counselors regularly meet with grade-level teams. One school leader reported that the school collects behavioral data and discusses it at monthly meetings. The school does not, however, use the data to support students' social and emotional health or to monitor students' behavioral intervention plans. The school website indicates that services are available for students in the following areas: individual and group counseling, referrals to other services, orientation for new students and students transitioning from elementary to the middle school. The district website indicates that the school has partnerships with the Big Brother/Big Sister program, the Norwich Police Department, Child Protective Services, and the Liberty Partnership Program through SUNY Morrisville. No staff member identified these partnerships as being part of an overarching system to support student social and emotional health. Support staff reported that they work most frequently with social services, mental health, and Catholic Charities. The absence of an overarching system for identifying and addressing student needs limits the school's ability to support and sustain students' social and emotional developmental health.

5.3 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* 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 does not have a shared vision for students' social and emotional health but does have a code of conduct. There is no evidence of a curriculum/program that teaches, supports, and measures social and emotional developmental health. Teachers have not received professional development on meeting students' needs in this area. When students were asked by the IIT if there are rules for behavior they replied: "Respect yourself and others. If the teacher is talking, don't talk. In our planner there is a code of conduct, you have to sign it." Teachers reported that the

code of conduct is not universally enforced. The SCEP describes an advisory time during which teachers meet with selected students to build relationships and strengthen culture. The school website indicates that the school dedicates an hour block during the middle of the day for both lunch and advisory time. Students interviewed by the IIT indicated that the advisory time allows them to get some extra help in their classes but not all students are assigned to a teacher. Students indicated that assemblies are held about issues of student safety, but that bullying is an issue in the school, particularly in the school bathrooms. Teachers stated that they see many students with emotional needs and they do not know how to deal with them. One teacher reported that staff needs professional development on handling bullying, cyberbullying and cutting class. A school leader reported that the school does not currently offer professional development on building capacity to support students' social and emotional needs, but training will take place in the fall for some staff who may then turn-key the training to others. Documents reviewed by the IIT indicated that PD has been provided by the school for staff in the past on topics include cutting (self-mutilation,) bullying, cyberbullying, and responding to students emotional needs. The absence of systems to support social and emotional developmental health, including an articulated vision, a curriculum, and PD, creates a school environment that is not always safe and respectful.

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.

- Across the school community, there is uncertainty about roles and responsibilities in creating a school community that is safe and conducive to learning. According to students and parents, the school does not effectively deal with fighting and bullying. Teachers are unsure of their role in enforcing rules. Students reported that bullying, cyberbullying, and fighting occur regularly in the school, even though students may be suspended for fighting. They also reported that bringing problems to the attention of the guidance counselor sometimes leads to more fighting. Students reported that they go to their advisor during the designated period and do whatever the advisor tells them to do. Students indicated that the school leader helps them with their problems when they go to him. They reported that the main problem they bring to the school leader's attention is bullying. Teachers interviewed expressed that they are uncertain what their role is with regard to the social and emotional health of their students. A teacher reported that teachers are uncertain about which rules they should enforce in the hallways. Parents also reported that there are fights at the school and suspending students is not always effective in ending the fights. Some parents expressed concern that not enough was being done by staff at the school to actively protect students. Parents indicated that the school holds assemblies where the school leader reminds students of the rules and stated that the school leader reiterates the idea of respect in all interactions he has with parents and with students. Parents also articulated that the school leader is open to discussing rules and they feel that their children have a voice in decisions that are made at the school concerning them. However the absence of effective programs to promote students' social and emotional health and safety impedes the school community's efforts to be safe and conducive to learning, and lessens students' sense of ownership to promote positive student outcomes.

5.5 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader and

student support staff work together to develop teachers' ability to use data to respond to students' social and emotional developmental health needs, so students can become academically and socially successful.

- There was no evidence that school leaders and support staff work with teachers to develop their understanding of how to use data to support students' social and emotional developmental health. School leaders do not expect teachers to use data for this purpose. The school leader reported that he uses incident reports to identify the frequency of specific kinds of infractions or to identify specific students or groups of students who are reported frequently. The IIT noted, through document review, that there were incident reports collected by the school leader. One staff member reported that no data on students' social and emotional health are collected and reported to staff. Because the school leadership and student support staff do not work with teachers on understanding how to use data to respond to student social and emotional needs, student needs are not consistently being met in order to be 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

D

Debriefing Statement: The school does not have a parent organization and limited numbers of parents participate and volunteer in school activities. Family and community engagement goals are not identified in the SCEP. There remains a challenge to increase communication and parent participation. As a result, many parents are not participating as partners with the school and sharing in the responsibility for student success, which negatively impacts student growth and well-being.

Strengths:

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

Areas for Improvement:

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

- Families have access to the school leader and staff welcomes new students. The IIT found no evidence of opportunities for parents to engage with the school. One parent reported that they had had very good communications with teachers and the school leader and could reach out to many staff members with questions. Other parents stated that the communication they receive from teachers has been excellent. The school website indicates that the school provides an orientation for new students and students transitioning from elementary to the middle school. The website includes the phone contact information for two school counselors. The school does not have a parent organization. The absence of opportunities for families to engage with the school limits the school community's ability to increase 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' strengths and needs are identified and used to augment learning.

- The school communicates through several media with parents about school activities and student performance. Teachers are not yet placing student grades on the online data portal for parent access. The school's communications do not address the information needs of all families. The school leader indicated that information on standards-based grading, the school homework policy, advanced course placement and bullying with a focus on cyberbullying has been offered to parents. Documents reviewed by the IIT confirmed this statement. On the school website, the school nurse provides information regarding vaccines, head lice, colds and flu, and pertussis. The school leader stated that 65 percent of the school's parents have accounts on the school's online portal, but complications with switching to standards-based grading and inconsistency in data entry by teachers has prevented student data from being shared with parents. Teachers stated that they have not used the online portal to communicate with parents about grading because it is new. Teachers indicated that they have postcards available to report academic successes or good behavior to parents. One parent reported that an Advanced Placement teacher sends regular e-mail communications to keep parents informed of what is happening in the classroom. Documents reviewed showed that teachers maintain logs of phone calls made to parents. In November and March, the school holds parent-teacher conferences for the 16 lowest performing students in each grade. The gap between the information that the school communicates and the information that families need limits families' ability to identify students' strengths and needs to support student success.

6.4 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* for this 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 has some partnerships with community agencies that support some students, but there are not enough partnerships to provide for the social and emotional health needs of all students. There is no evidence that the school provides teachers with professional development on seeking and sustaining partnerships with families and community organizations. A support staff member reported that the Liberty Partnership Program, which provides academic support for students, is the school's best resource. Support staff reported that the school works most frequently with social services, mental health, and Catholic charities. Support staff indicated that, although they are able to provide some support for students, they wish they could provide more and cited insurance and funding as roadblocks. Insufficient partnerships and the absence of professional development on seeking additional partnerships limit the school's ability to support student success.

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

- The school does not share data with families in ways that help them understand student learning

needs and successes. In addition, the school does not provide families with opportunities to increase their understanding of school and student data. In an interview with the IIT, the school leader stated that the school does not provide learning opportunities on student data for parents. The school website has information about the CCLS from the National PTA for parents. Parents expressed frustration about school report card data being reported in August, which they believe is too late. The school has not provided parents with sufficient information about the new grading system and remediation. Parents indicated that district newsletters gives them some sense of what is happening but contain nothing specific about grading policies. Because the school has not ensured that families understand school and student academic performance data, families' ability to enter a dialogue centered on student learning and success is limited.

Recommendations:

Tenet 2: School Leader Practices and Decisions

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

- 2.2: Ensure that select school staff and families collaborate in the creation of a school vision. Develop SMART goals that align with that vision. Make the vision and goals known to all stakeholders so that there is a shared sense of urgency regarding student achievement.
- 2.3: Implement systems that are dynamic, adaptive, interconnected and lead to the collection and analysis of outcomes to inform practice. Ensure, through professional development and monitoring, that all teachers use evidence-based practices that foster student progress and achievement. Establish feedback loops to continuously evaluate practice. Ensure that goals are timely, transparent and widely available to all stakeholders.
- 2.5: Create a system to track observation findings and student data. Use this system to provide relevant and timely feedback and create and monitor improvement plans for all teachers. Provide professional development that is aligned to the needs of teachers based on their individual plans.

Tenet 3: Curriculum Development and Support

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

- 3.2: Ensure that school leaders provide teachers across grades and subjects the necessary resources—professional development, materials, and collaboration time—to develop and implement curricula supporting the CCLS. Ensure, through monitoring and professional development, that staff use clear, descriptive units of study that support the standards and consider what students need to know.
- 3.3: Ensure that the schedule provides meeting time for teachers to collaboratively create and examine curriculum unit plans supporting the CCLS. Ensure, through professional development and monitoring, that teachers use pacing calendars and unit plans that support the CCLS and expose students to a progression of sequenced complex materials. Ensure, through professional development and monitoring, that teachers use lesson plans that promote higher-order thinking skills and help students analyze information.
- 3.4: Create a schedule that allows all staff to participate in relevant meetings and engage in collaboration. Build connection for the arts and technology into core curriculum and unit plans.
- 3.5: Develop a comprehensive system to collect, analyze, and use timely data. Ensure, through professional development and monitoring, that instructional staff uses the system to assess instructional effectiveness, identify student needs, identify patterns of student learning, and adapt instruction.

Tenet 4: Teacher Practices and Decisions

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

- 4.2: Ensure, through professional development and monitoring, that teachers develop and use plans that are informed by data and provide accommodations for students with disabilities and ELLs. Ensure that teachers set grade-level goals for all groups of students and create short- and long-term goals based on the grade-level goals. Ensure that teachers implement instructional interventions that activate student participation in their own learning experience.
- 4.3: Ensure, through professional development and monitoring, that teachers provide CCLS-based instruction with multiple points of access for all students to achieve targeted goals.
- 4.4: Explicitly teach and reinforce behavioral expectations throughout the school. Ensure, through professional development and monitoring, that teachers use strategies that are sensitive to the needs of diverse student groups. Ensure, through professional development and monitoring, that teacher use instructional materials that contain high levels of text and content complexity and ask questions related to that content.
- 4.5: Ensure, through professional development 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 and encourage them to actively participate in, and take ownership of, their own learning process.

Tenet 5: Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health

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

- 5.2: Create a system to identify, refer, and support students with needs related to social and emotional developmental health. Explore designating a specific adult to coordinate addressing the social and emotional developmental health needs of each student.
- 5.3: Develop, with selected stakeholders, a vision for students' social and emotional developmental health. Inform and educate all stakeholders about the school vision for student social and emotional developmental health and how it connects to academic success. Implement a rigorous curriculum to teach and measure student skills and behaviors that build social and emotional health. Provide professional development and training for all stakeholders to build adult capacity to support students' social and emotional health.
- 5.4: Develop an evidence-based plan for responding to students' needs, improving behavior, and creating a safer environment. Share this plan with families and community stakeholders and explain how it links to the social and emotional developmental health of children and positive student outcomes.
- 5.5: Develop a system to provide school leaders and staff professional development and support in using data to respond to students' social and emotional health needs.

Tenet 6: Family and Community Engagement

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

- 6.2: Involve all stakeholders in the school community in developing a family and community engagement plan that define roles and responsibilities of school staff, families, and community stakeholders related to volunteerism, participation in parent organizations, and opportunities to participate in school improvement initiatives.

- 6.3: Foster more family involvement in children's educational experience through more teacher-initiated contact with parents and more frequent progress reporting to parents on their child's academic and social emotional health needs.
- 6.4: Continue to develop connections between families and community organizations. Provide professional development for staff members on how to seek and sustain healthy partnerships with families and community organizations.
- 6.5: Provide professional development to staff on understanding and communicating school and individual student data. Develop strategies to share school and individual data with parents in a way that enables families to understand student learning needs and successes.