



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	131500010011
School	Poughkeepsie Middle School
School Address	55 College Avenue, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603
District	Poughkeepsie City School District
School Leader	Phee Simpson
Dates of Review	February 12-14, 2013
School Accountability	Priority
Type of Review	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet												
Grade Configuration	6 - 8	Total Enrollment	978	% Title 1 Population	10	% Attendance Rate	92.2					
% Free Lunch	86	% Reduced Lunch	NP	% Student Sustainability	99	% Limited English Proficient	4	% Students with Disabilities	15.1			
Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes												
# Transitional Bilingual	NP	# Dual Language	NP	# Self-Contained English as a Second Language								10
Types and Number of Special Education Classes												
# Special Classes	16	# Consultant Teaching	NP	# Integrated Collaborative Teaching								30
# Resource Room	8											
Types and Number Special Classes												
# Visual Arts	NP	# Music	10	# Drama	NP	# Foreign Language	28	# Dance	NP	# CTE	NP	
Racial/Ethnic Origin												
% American Indian or Alaska Native	.03	% Black or African American	60.1	% Hispanic or Latino	24.4	% Asian or Native Hawaiian /Other Pacific Islander	1.4	% White	12	% Multi-racial	1.7	
Personnel												
Years Principal Assigned to School	1	# of Assistant Principals	3	# of Deans		# of Counselors / Social Workers					3/1	
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	NP	% Teaching Out of Certification	NP	% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp.	7	Average Teacher Absences						NP
Overall State Accountability Status (Mark applicable box with an X)												
School in Good Standing		Priority School	X	Focus District		Focus School Identified by a Focus District		SIG Recipient (a)		SIG Recipient (g)		
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	26	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	25	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4		4 Year Graduation Rate (HS Only)						
Credit Accumulation (High School Only)												
% 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		6 Year Graduation Rate						

NP = Not Provided

Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA (Mark an "X" in the field(s) where school is identified for not meeting AYP.)			
	American Indian or Alaska Native	X	Black or African American
X	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
	White		Multi-racial
X	Students with Disabilities	X	Limited English Proficient
X	Economically Disadvantaged		
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics			
	American Indian or Alaska Native	X	Black or African American
X	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
	White		Multi-racial
X	Students with Disabilities	X	Limited English Proficient
X	Economically Disadvantaged		
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science			
	American Indian or Alaska Native	X	Black or African American
X	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
	White		Multi-racial
X	Students with Disabilities	X	Limited English Proficient
X	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. RTI (Interventions for the Tiers).
2. Reading Intervention Program (Corrective Reading).
3. Meeting the needs of ELLs.
4. Differentiation for students with disabilities and struggling students.
5. Curriculum aligned to CCLS.
6. Effective strategies for reading in the content area.

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

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

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

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

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

	achievement outcomes.				
	OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 3:				I
Tenet 4 - Teacher Practices and Decisions: Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students and pertinent subgroups experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.					
#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
4.2	Teachers use instructional practices and strategies organized around annual, unit and daily lesson plans to meet established student goals and promote high levels of student engagement and inquiry.				X
4.3	Teachers provide coherent, appropriately aligned Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)-based instruction that leads to multiple points of access for all students to achieve targeted goals.			X	
4.4	Teachers create a safe environment that is responsive to students' varied experiences, tailored to the strengths and needs of all students, and leads to high levels of student engagement and inquiry.				X
4.5	Teachers use a variety of data sources including screening, interim measures and progress monitoring to inform lesson planning, develop explicit teacher plans and foster student participation in their own learning process.				X
	OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 4:				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:					I

School Review Narrative:

Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions: Visionary leaders create a school community and culture that lead to success, well-being and high academic outcomes for all students via systems of continuous and sustainable school improvement.	Tenet Rating	I
<p><u>Debriefing Statement:</u> The school has not developed and implemented systems of continuous and sustainable school improvement based on school-wide goals, evidence-based monitoring, strategic decision-making and organization, best teaching practices, and professional development opportunities. The lack of systems to support a success-oriented culture limits the school’s ability to maximize high academic outcomes for all students.</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 leader reported that the school has a vision, the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) did not find evidence in interviews and documents reviewed of a vision that the school leader has clearly defined and widely shared among all school stakeholders. Various groups interviewed by the IIT, including teachers, parents, and students, had different understandings of what they believed the vision to be. Variations included passing the state tests, improving attendance rates, or preparing students for their jobs and careers in the future. These stakeholder groups were also unaware of the school goals, and the school did not provide evidence to the IIT of goals that are specific, measurable, ambitious, results-oriented and timely (SMART). Teachers and other school staff stated that the frequency of leadership turnover has been detrimental to the development and implementation of school goals and expectations because there is no consistency in articulating a vision with a shared sense of urgency. This lack of an articulated, consistent school vision and corresponding SMART goals severely limits the school’s ability to improve. <p>2.3 The <u>school has received a rating of <i>Ineffective</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-critical goals.</p>		

- Based on interviews and documents reviewed, the IIT concluded that the school leader has not established evidence-based systems to examine and improve individual and school-wide practices. For example, teachers interviewed by the IIT reported that the school leader expects them to use best practices, but they are not certain of what the specific expectations are or how to achieve them. The IIT found that the school has not defined best practices, provided necessary professional development (PD), established a system to implement best practices in all classrooms schoolwide, or developed a tracking system to monitor teacher progress. The lack of comprehensive evidence-based systems in all critical areas limits the school's ability to improve student outcomes.

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.

- Based on interviews and documents reviewed, the IIT found that the district plays a predominant role in allocating resources, and the school leader has not developed measurable school goals, conducted a comprehensive analysis to determine his particular school resource needs based on those goals, communicated these needs with urgency to the district, and implemented effective strategies to meet these needs. School staff interviewed by the IIT reported that over the past few years, the school budget and number of teachers have decreased, resulting in less time for available teachers to work with students. Students and teachers now depend upon after-school programs and tutoring provided by community agencies to supplement student learning. Teachers and the school leader also reported that there is frequently not sufficient money in the school budget to purchase instructional materials. The IIT found, however, that the school leader has not developed, with urgency, effective strategies to overcome resource obstacles. The lack of strategic decisions related to the use of resources in order to accomplish defined goals limits the school's ability to improve.

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

- Based on interviews, documents reviewed, and classroom observations, the IIT determined that the school does not have a formalized, comprehensive system in place to improve instruction. School staff indicated that the district has recently instituted a new performance review process, and it is providing PD related to implementation of the process. However, school leaders stated that they have not yet conducted formal observations or provided teachers with improvement plans. School leaders also reported that the attention required by frequent student disciplinary issues impedes the number of classroom walk-through observations they are able to complete. While academic coaches use an informal process to meet with school leaders to discuss the practice of some teachers and to develop strategies for how the coaches will work with these teachers, the IIT found that school leaders do not regularly meet with all teachers to provide feedback on observed teacher practices. Because the school does not have a fully functional system in place to improve

instruction, school leaders and staff are not being held accountable for continuous improvement.

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

Tenet Rating

I

Debriefing Statement: The school has not planned for, developed, and implemented a rigorous, coherent, and robust curriculum that supports the CCLS, stimulates higher order thinking in students, and provides targeted instruction to meet the needs of all students. This significantly impedes 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 school is in the process of implementing Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)-supported instruction. However, this is not a consistent practice schoolwide. For example, the IIT determined that academic coaches provide PD targeting the expectations of the CCLS to English language arts (ELA) and mathematics teachers. These teachers also receive follow-up supports during scheduled meetings with the coaches focused on curricula and instruction aligned with the CCLS. Teachers in other content areas, however, reported to the IIT that they do not have this same opportunity because the academic coaches are not available to work with them. Based on classroom observations, the IIT found that the CCLS instructional shifts are not implemented consistently schoolwide. These inconsistencies limit students' access to rigorous and coherent curricula and impede students' ability to be ready for college and careers.

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

- The school leaders and staff do not have a consistent approach to developing unit and lesson plans that support the CCLS and introduce complex materials. Based on interviews with the school leader and staff, school schedules reviewed, and observations of teacher meetings, the IIT determined that teachers meet by grade and content area and, when academic coaches are available to facilitate these meetings, the focus is on discussion, design, or development of CCLS-aligned unit or lesson plans. However, the school has not implemented a system where all teachers meet to engage in

this work independently, and not all content areas have access to the coaches. In a few classrooms observed by the IIT, teachers of the same grade level teaching the same subject were using common lesson plans that supported the CCLS and were appropriate for the grade and subject taught. However, in the majority of classes visited by the IIT, instruction was teacher-directed and included lower-order questioning. Because all teachers are not consistently planning and implementing instruction that supports the CCLS, not all students have access to complex materials that stimulate their higher order thinking or build deep understanding and knowledge around specific content.

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

- Teachers are not collaborating within and across grades to develop and implement a robust curriculum that incorporates the arts, technology and other enrichment opportunities. Some teachers reported to the IIT that although scheduled opportunities exist for teachers to meet, collaborative planning among teachers occurs most frequently when a teacher of students with targeted needs is included and facilitates the meeting. The focus is generally not on developing an enriched curriculum. Based on students interviewed and classrooms observed, the IIT found that, while some teachers use white boards to deliver instruction, the majority of students do not have access to technology in the classroom. The equipment available in the computer room is also not always functional. Students interviewed by the IIT also reported that their assignments are primarily pen and paper tasks that do not involve the use of the arts, technology, or other forms of enrichment. The IIT found isolated instances of student work incorporating the arts or technology; however, this was the exception. This lack of a robust curriculum limits the school's ability to develop well-rounded students who are college and career ready.

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

- While the school has not yet developed and implemented a data-driven culture, the staff is beginning to collect and analyze data from various sources. Teachers reported to the IIT that the academic coaches provide data to staff, and they teach staff how to analyze data to identify patterns in student learning. Some teachers also reported analyzing data during some department meetings in order to identify an area of student weakness and to collaborate on adjusting instruction in order to support that weakness. The Instruction Support Teams (IST) use data as well, to evaluate the learning needs of referred students and to make corresponding instructional recommendations. However, based on interviews and classroom observations, the IIT found limited evidence of teachers shifting their instructional practice, strategies, or decision-making in response to student data. Additionally, among the students interviewed by the IIT, only one reported that a classroom teacher shared individual academic progress focused on data with the students in her class. Other students interviewed stated that they are not aware of their academic progress unless their work is poor or until they get their report cards. This lack of a fully-realized data-driven culture that identifies and responds to student needs limits the school's ability to support all students and

to generate greater student achievement outcomes.

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

Tenet Rating

I

Debriefing Statement: The majority of instruction observed by the IIT was teacher directed and not focused on using performance data to develop and meet goals for targeted subgroups and individual students. Because teachers are not engaging in strategic practices and decision-making that address the gap between what students know and need to learn, all students are not consistently experiencing high levels of engagement, 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 *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.

- Based on classroom and grade-level team meeting observations, and on documents reviewed, the IIT found that most teachers do not develop data-based lesson plans and student goals to inform their instruction. Only one of three grade-level teams observed by the IIT referenced a data binder during the planning process, but this data was not evident in the teachers' lesson plans. In most classrooms observed by the IIT, teachers did not align their instructional practices and strategies to a plan, and teachers were not consistently implementing interventions, such as purposeful grouping, scaffolding of content and language, and wait time for response. Additionally, in only three of the eighteen classrooms of students with disabilities observed by the IIT did teachers provide accommodations for reading, writing and mathematics tasks. The majority of students interviewed reported that they are not aware of their academic goals or progress until they receive their report cards. One of three students in a small group interview reported that only one of her teachers reviews assessment data and conferences with students to identify academic learning goals for them. Some students and teachers interviewed by the IIT reported low student motivation and aspirations. This lack of data-based planning and goal-setting, as well as the lack of instructional accommodations to meet the needs of all students, impedes the school's ability to 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.

- While some teachers are beginning to implement strategies to support the CCLS in instruction, this is not a consistent practice schoolwide. Additionally, the IIT found that teachers generally do not provide multiple points of access for all students, and few students have targeted learning goals. In observations, the IIT found that some teachers refer to the CCLS during the day's lesson, but in most classes observed by the IIT, teachers were not implementing specific CCLS-supported instructional practices. The majority of classes visited by the IIT were teacher dominated, and there was no observable evidence of differentiation to meet the varied learning needs of all students. Because the school is not helping all students to develop targeted goals or providing instructional strategies based on the CCLS that enable students to achieve these goals, school improvement 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 a safe environment that is responsive to the strengths and needs of all students. In most classrooms observed by the IIT, teachers had posted class rules and behavioral expectations. In addition, the morning announcements during the review included the recitation of student behavioral expectations. However, students reported to the IIT that teachers discuss classroom rules, routines, and behavioral expectations at the beginning of the school year and then no one refers to them again. Students also stated that students inconsistently recognize class rules and behavioral expectations, and adults inconsistently enforce them. The IIT did not observe any teachers explicitly instructing or reviewing expected behaviors. Parents, students, and school staff interviewed by the IIT could not articulate a consistent set of behavioral expectations taught to students. While teachers interviewed reported that students engage in lessons and feel safe in classrooms, some parents and students interviewed stated that students are not instructionally safe in many classrooms. Some students interviewed reported that they sometimes choose not to participate in class because other students may "make fun" of them. Other students stated that when they do not understand the content of instruction and ask for help, teachers do not help them. Additionally in many classrooms visited, the IIT observed teachers rushing through the day's lesson and dismissing students' questions by stating, "We are not going to do that right now." Most of the classroom instruction observed by the IIT focused on the entire group of students with no specific strategies or sensitivities to the diverse learning needs of all students. In classrooms visited by the IIT, teachers asked low-level recall questions requiring one- or two-word answers. In only one of the classrooms visited by the IIT did students respond to higher-order questions that required skills such as problem solving, generalizing, or making inferences. The lack of a physically and instructionally safe environment that is sensitive to the range of diverse student learning needs significantly limits student engagement and achievement.

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.

- Most teachers are not consistently using data to guide the development of instructional plans. The school's DTSDE self-assessment document indicated that literacy and mathematics teachers discuss

data during meetings and when monitoring the progress of all students not achieving New York State (NYS) standards in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. However, the IIT found no evidence that this practice of data review and discussion is happening schoolwide in all content areas. While teachers in one grade level meeting observed by the IIT used data to inform their planning process, teachers in two other observed grade level meetings did not. Based on interviews with school staff and classroom observations, the IIT found that data binders containing results of NYS assessments, Measuring Academic Progress (MAP) subtest scores, and Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are available to staff. However, only three of nineteen teachers that IIT reviewers observed were using formative assessments, and only one teacher was observed using MAPs to differentiate instruction. In only one classroom observed did a teacher pre-arrange data-based and purposeful workstations, small group projects, or partner work. The IIT found that whole group instruction was prevalent schoolwide. The IIT also did not observe teachers providing data-based feedback to students, and students interviewed agreed that the primary indicator they use for monitoring their own academic progress is their report card. This lack of data use to inform planning and provide feedback to students impedes teachers' ability to foster students' participation in their own learning.

<p>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.</p>	<p>Tenet Rating</p>	<p>I</p>
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Debriefing Statement: The school has not articulated a vision or systemic plan to identify and address the social and emotional developmental health needs of all students. This deficit limits the school's ability to maximize academic achievement and personal growth for 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:

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

- The school has implemented some measures to support and sustain student social and emotional developmental health, but overarching systems and partnerships are not currently in place. In interviews with the IIT, school staff reported that a new system implemented this school year pairs guidance counselors with school leaders to monitor the progress of each student, and the appointed school guidance counselors chair Instructional Support Team (IST) meetings for this purpose. However, based on interviews with staff, the IIT found that meetings do not occur consistently and with fidelity. Additionally, while the school had established a Positive Behavior

Intervention System (PBIS) program during the 2010-11 school year, funding that supported the work of the PBIS team was cut from the school's 2011-12 budget. School staff reported to the IIT that this lack of a sustained effort to support PBIS has resulted in increased incident referrals this year for behaviors such as assaults, fighting, bullying and insubordination. School staff also reported to the IIT that an outdated technology infrastructure limits the capabilities of teams to collect, disaggregate, and analyze data in order to determine and support student social and emotional developmental health needs. This lack of overarching systems and partnerships impedes the school's ability to identify student needs and to support student well-being and success.

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.

- Based on interviews with parents, students, and school staff, the IIT found that the school has not developed and communicated a vision for student social and emotional developmental health. While the IIT observed print material promoting character building on display in the school, parents, students, and staff reported that the school has not implemented a specific program to nurture these character traits in students. The IIT also found that the school has not identified the specific skills and behaviors that demonstrate student social and emotional health, nor has it attempted to assist students in developing the skills and behaviors that will lead to student well-being and success. Parents and staff interviewed reported that many students appear to be angry, sad or apathetic. Parents and school staff indicated that there are not enough activities and positive programs for students, and the school does not offer recess or other opportunities for healthy physical outlets such as sports. The IIT also determined that the school does not specifically offer PD to enable staff to identify and support the social and emotional health of all students. The school leader and instructional staff report that the school currently focuses its PD on the implementation of the CCLS and the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR). The lack of a vision and corresponding systems promoting social and emotional developmental health that includes PD support hinders the school's ability to build a safe and healthy environment for all constituents.

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

- Based on interviews with parents, students, and school staff, the IIT found that the school has not created a safe environment that is conducive to learning. Students and staff interviewed by the IIT report that fights erupt in the auditorium, cafeteria, and hallways before, after, and during school hours. Students report that teachers inconsistently communicate and enforce rules and behavioral expectations, and peers are often not respectful of fellow students who participate in classroom instruction. Parents and students indicate that students feel safest walking to and from school in groups, and they believe that some students bring knives and alcohol to school. Many students interviewed shared their belief that teachers will leave the school to work elsewhere as soon as they have the opportunity to do so. Parents and students interviewed expressed that the elementary

buildings generate a more cohesive community and sense of ownership than the middle school. Because the school has not created a safe and secure community that is conducive to learning, student achievement outcomes are hindered.

5.5 The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* for this Statement of Practice: The school leader and student support staff work together to develop teachers' ability to use data to respond to students' social and emotional developmental health needs, so students can become academically and socially successful.

- The school has not established a comprehensive approach to reviewing data to respond to students' social and emotional health needs. Additionally, the school provides few opportunities for staff to collaborate for this purpose. In the school's DTSDE self-assessment document, the school leader expressed an expectation that teachers use the IST process for "student problems" and that referrals to the IST should be the result of teachers collecting and analyzing student data. However, none of the staff members interviewed by the IIT could articulate how to refer a student to the IST. Additionally, staff reported to the IIT that some ISTs had not met at all during the first half of the school year and that chairpersons have not received PD on academic or behavioral interventions so they can turnkey this information to their respective team members. The school 's DTSDE self-assessment also indicated that the application Datacation is used to collect data. However, the school staff indicated that data systems are unreliable or unable to provide helpful information regarding the social and emotional health of students. The lack of collaborative efforts by the school to use data to respond to students' social and emotional needs hinders students' academic and social 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

I

Debriefing Statement: The school lacks formal partnerships and communication protocols where families, community members, and school staff work together to support student academic progress and well-being. This lack of family and community engagement creates a gap between home and school, inhibits academic progress, and results in low student performance.

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 *Ineffective* 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 has not prioritized building relationships with families and the community, and families

often encounter obstacles when they attempt to engage with the school. Parents interviewed by the IIT indicate that staff often display “attitude problems” when interacting with family members. Parents also report that the school is not consistently welcoming and that the particular issue for discussion and consideration influences how the school deals with families. Parents and staff also reported that some family members attempt to volunteer or become involved and visible at the school, but the school staff does not always embrace these gestures. Other parents interviewed were unaware of volunteer opportunities within the school building. The school leader and staff indicated that it is sometimes difficult to communicate with families if English is not their primary language. Although the school contracts with an agency for translation, staff reported to the IIT that the attendance of translators at family meetings is unreliable. The limited ways for families to engage with the school hinders parental involvement to support their children’s education.

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

- The school does not systematically plan for and communicate with all families and community stakeholders. While school leaders reported to the IIT that they are aware of the diverse cultures and needs in the community, including families whose primary language is not English, translation services for these families are not consistently reliable. Some student support staff members interviewed by the IIT state that they assist in the translation of letters from pupil personnel services to families. Teachers reported that they attempt to use the online service Google Translate in order to communicate with families in writing. However, parents and staff reported to the IIT that although the district sometimes hires translators when requested, translator attendance at meetings is unreliable and inconsistent. The school also does not translate documents for families on a regular basis. Parents rely on family members, or bilingual students and staff, such as the ESL teacher or a security guard, for translations. Because the school does not consistently engage in planning and promote reciprocal communication with families, the school’s ability to identify student strengths and needs to augment learning is limited.

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

- Based on interviews and documents reviewed, the IIT found that while some school staff members seek relationships with community resources and create packets to share the information with families, this is not a systemic practice. Additionally, the school does not provide PD to staff on developing partnerships with families, the community, or other resources to support student learning. School staff interviewed by the IIT was unaware of any PD offered by the school or district that focuses on developing partnerships with family and community constituents. The lack of partnerships, and the absence of PD to enable staff to create partnerships, hinders the school’s ability to collaborate with families and community agencies in support of student success.

6.5 The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* for this Statement of Practice: The entire school shares

data in a way that empowers and encourages families to use and understand data to promote dialogue between parents, students and school constituents centered on learning and success.

- The school does not systematically share data with families. Parents and teachers interviewed by the IIT indicate that some school staff share data with families by email, but most staff do not provide data regularly throughout the school year, even when parents request it. Report cards and progress reports are the primary sources of student academic progress. Some student support staff interviewed by the IIT reported that they taught some parents how to log on to Datacation during the November Parent-Teacher night, but most parents indicated that they do not have access to grades electronically. Based on a review of the school's DTSDE self-assessment and interviews with school stakeholders, the IIT also found that the school does not provide learning opportunities for families to understand student data. Because the school has not enabled families to understand student data, families are not empowered to advocate on behalf of their children, which minimizes 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 IIT recommends the following:

- 2.2: Ensure that school stakeholders collaborate to create and widely communicate a shared vision that contains a sense of urgency concerning student achievement and well-being. Define the critical steps necessary to achieve the vision, and use student performance data to develop specific, measurable, ambitious, results-oriented and timely goals that reflect the school's priorities and support the vision.
- 2.3: Create and implement systems that lead to the collection of data in order to accomplish school goals and achieve the vision. Ensure that all staff members involved in instruction know how to analyze data. Require each staff member to develop his/her own professional annual goals based on analyzed data, and align these goals to the school goals and vision. Schedule more time for all instructional staff to meet with coaches in horizontal and vertical groups to share and align their individual goals with student and school goals. Monitor and support staff in their progress toward goal completion and provide frequent feedback. Define and establish systems to implement best practices in all classrooms schoolwide, and incorporate a tracking system to monitor teacher progress. Include formal and informal PD focusing on developing best practices and skills needed for strategic decision-making that will lead to the successful achievement of school, staff, and student goals.
- 2.4: Conduct a comprehensive analysis, based on data, to determine the school's specific resource needs. Communicate these needs with urgency to the district. Develop and implement effective strategies to meet these needs.
- 2.5: Develop and implement a fully functional system that includes regular observation of teacher practices, timely feedback, and targeted PD opportunities. Increase collaboration with district administrators to implement all facets of the teacher performance review process to ensure necessary improvements in instruction.

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 IIT recommends the following:

- 3.2: Provide consistent and systematic support to all teachers on implementing the CCLS. Update the school curriculum to coherently align with the CCLS instructional shifts across all subjects and grades, and focus on the implementation of the curriculum with rigor.
- 3.3: Provide leadership and facilitation in all grade- and subject-level teacher meetings so that each group is focused on deepening instructional alignment with the CCLS, including the introduction of complex materials. Ensure that all teachers are collaborating, including teachers of students with targeted needs, in the development of CCLS-aligned unit and lesson plans that promote higher-order thinking skills and student analysis of information. Ensure that all teachers across grades and subjects are using collaboratively created plans to guide their instruction.

- 3.4: Ensure that teachers are collaborating during grade- and subject-level meetings to develop a plan for providing students with greater access to the arts, technology, and other enrichment areas. Ensure that the plan is implemented in all classrooms schoolwide.
- 3.5: Develop a data-driven culture within the school. Establish structured meetings between school leaders and staff where sharing and analyzing various sources of data is a focus. Facilitate data-based discussions addressing school effectiveness and student needs. Ensure that coaches help all teachers to use data to identify student learning patterns and levels of achievement. Provide the necessary supports to ensure that teachers know how to use strategies and make instructional decisions based on individual student and class performance data. Guide teachers in the creation and implementation of instructional plans that provide clear and timely paths for student progress and growth.

Tenet 4: Teacher Practices and Decisions

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

- 4.2: Use student and class data, as well as grade-level benchmarks, to establish short- and long-term goals for individual and groups of students. Develop annual, unit, and daily instructional plans, informed by data and grade-level goals, for all groups of students. Align instructional practices with plans and include accommodations and interventions so all students receive targeted instruction.
- 4.3: Use curriculum maps to align all instruction to the CCLS. Provide PD opportunities specifically targeting instructional strategies and decision-making that enable all teachers to provide multiple points of access for all students to engage in learning.
- 4.4: Establish clear expectations of appropriate and safe behavior. Widely communicate behavioral expectations to all school stakeholders. Explicitly teach expectations to students, and enforce them with diligence and equity schoolwide. Provide PD for teachers regarding the establishment of a classroom culture that demands an instructionally safe environment for all students. Review and analyze data with a particular focus on the diversity of student needs. Stimulate student thinking by introducing complex instructional materials and asking questions that require contemplation and a deep understanding of the content.
- 4.5: Provide PD and establish mentor partnerships so that teachers who use data sources to inform their instructional strategies, decision-making, and student grouping have opportunities to share their knowledge and skills with those who are not yet using data for effective planning and instruction. Require teachers to create targeted plans based on data that include the provision of frequent feedback to students. Ensure that students know the next steps that will lead them to academic 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 IIT recommends the following:

- 5.2: Provide PD to IST chairpersons to ensure they are able to assist their teams in implementing academic and behavioral interventions for students. Develop a structured schedule where ISTs meet regularly to engage in the work of supporting student social and emotional developmental health. Develop a system to ensure that each

student has an adult designated to address his/her social and emotional developmental health needs. Provide comprehensive PD for school staff regarding the connection between student social and emotional health and academic success. Broaden constituent awareness of student social and emotional developmental health needs beyond disciplinary issues or inappropriate behavior. Develop partnerships with community agencies and organizations to assist in supporting student social service needs.

- 5.3: Develop a representative group of school community constituents, including partners and agencies, to discuss and articulate the prerequisite skills and behaviors that demonstrate social and emotional developmental health connected to academic success. Create a school vision that promotes student social and emotional developmental health. Implement a curriculum that teaches, supports, and measures the social and emotional developmental health of all students. Identify and assign staff members to assist in building the school's adult capacity to support, coordinate, and facilitate the vision, overarching systems, and social and emotional developmental health of all students.
- 5.4: After creating the school vision of social and emotional developmental health, collaborate with teachers to identify and clearly articulate their role in achieving the vision. Similarly, collaborate with other school and district leaders, parents, partner organizations, agency liaisons, and other school community constituent groups to identify and clearly articulate the role that each group or individual has in achieving the vision.
- 5.5: Install or upgrade data collection systems so that staff members can reliably report information and have access to accurate and timely data. Ensure that school staff has access to the secure data required for them to achieve their role in implementing the school vision. Provide PD opportunities for constituents to learn how to access and use available data to address students' social and emotional developmental health needs. Require staff to use data to develop student goals that address student needs.

Tenet 6: Family and Community Engagement

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

- 6.2: Prioritize relationship building with families and the community. Design an open-door policy to welcome families and community members and provide access to school leaders and staff. Develop volunteer and other opportunities focused on student learning and development so that families engage with the school. Develop a specific plan for encouraging relationships with diverse families and community stakeholders.
- 6.3: Engage in effective planning targeting reciprocal communication with family and community stakeholders that recognizes the cultural diversity of families and community members. Establish ongoing communication with families and the community, and collaboratively identify and address student strengths and needs.
- 6.4: Implement a plan to improve collaboration and partnerships among the school, families, and community agencies centered on student learning and growth. Provide PD to staff to assist them in seeking and sustaining healthy partnerships with families.
- 6.5: Develop a collaborative plan with community partners to provide a wide range of opportunities for families to increase their understanding of student data as it relates to student learning needs. Encourage families to use data to advocate for necessary student supports.