



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code/DBN	41-23-00-01-00-0011
School	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School
School Address	211 Square Street, Utica, NY 13501
District	Utica City School District
School Leader	Mark DeSalvo
Dates of Review	May 21 – 23, 2013
School Accountability	Priority
Type of Review	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet											
Grade Configuration	K-6	Total Enrollment	346	% Title 1 Population	70%	% Attendance Rate	92.60%				
% Free Lunch	96.5%	% Reduced Lunch	2.0%	% Student Sustainability	86%	% Limited English Proficient	17.8%	% Students with Disabilities	22%		
Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes											
# Transitional Bilingual	0	# Dual Language	0	# Self-Contained English as a Second Language		0					
Types and Number of Special Education Classes											
# Special Classes	2	# Consultant Teaching	0	# Integrated Collaborative Teaching		0					
# Resource Room	1										
Types and Number Special Classes											
# Visual Arts	.5	# Music	.6	# Drama	0	# Foreign Language	0	# Dance	0	# CTE	0
Racial/Ethnic Origin											
% American Indian or Alaska Native	0.6%	% Black or African American	45%	% Hispanic or Latino	21%	% Asian or Native Hawaiian /Other Islander	21%	% White	8%	% Multi-racial	4%
Personnel											
Years Principal Assigned to School	5	# of Assistant Principals	0	# of Deans	0	# of Counselors / Social Workers		.3			
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	0	% Teaching Out of Certification	0	% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp.	19%	Average Teacher Absences		8.4%			
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 (b)	X
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	19%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	28%	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	46%	4 Year Graduation Rate (HS Only)		N/A			
Credit Accumulation (High School Only)											
% of 1 st yr. students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	% of 2 nd yr. students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	% of 3 rd yr. students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	6 Year Graduation Rate		N/A			

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

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

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS DESCRIBED BY THE SCHOOL:

- 1. Data Analysis should drill down to look at individual students—fully implement *Driven by Data***
- 2. Staff will integrate research-based instructional strategies beyond SF and ERI (See SQR II.2, P.3)**
- 3. Increase students scoring at levels 3 and 4 on the Grades 3-6 NYS ELA Assessments by $\geq 2\%$.**
- 4. Increase students scoring at levels 3 and 4 on the Grade 3-6 NYS Math Assessments by $\geq 2\%$.**

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			X	

	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.				
3.5	The school leader and teachers develop a data-driven culture based on student needs, assessments and analysis, which leads to strategic action-planning that informs instruction and results in greater student achievement outcomes.			X	
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 3:				D	

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

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

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

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
5.2	The school cultivates the development of overarching systems and partnerships that support and sustain social and emotional developmental health			X	
5.3	The school articulates and systematically promotes a vision for social and emotional developmental health that is connected to learning experiences and results in building a			X	

	safer and healthier environment for families, teachers and students.				
5.4	All school constituents are able to articulate how the school community is safe, conducive to learning and fosters a sense of ownership that leads to greater student outcomes.			X	
5.5	The school leader and student support staff work together to develop teachers' ability to use data to respond to students' social and emotional developmental health needs, so students can become academically and socially successful.				X
	OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 5:			D	

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

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

I

Debriefing Statement: While there is an articulated vision that is widely seen and generally known, the school culture lacks the cohesiveness necessary for a shared sense of urgency about achieving school-wide goals. This impedes continuous improvement efforts.

Strengths:

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

Areas for Improvement:

2.2 **The school has received a rating of *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 Education Plan (SCEP).

- The school’s vision states that the school is “An educational institution promoting learning for the academic, physical, emotional, and social well-being of all students. We instruct using research-based best practices, a continuous growth model, an embedded and integrated use of 1:1 technology, and by cultivating partnerships with parents and community. Our success can be measured in the quality of life our students and community show for the school.” This vision is widely seen and generally known by staff; however, parents and the school community do not have a full knowledge and understanding of the vision or school goals. Interviews with the school leader and teachers and a review of documents by the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT or "the review team") indicated collaborative creation of the school goals. The IIT observed posters in classrooms and school hallways that state the school vision. The school leader reported sharing the school vision with families in school flyers and publications. However, parents stated that most parents do not have a good understanding of the school vision. Additionally, when interviewed by the IIT, not all staff could articulate the vision. Documents reviewed by the IIT indicated that the school is working on goals as part of the School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP). However, the documents that the IIT reviewed do not show what strategies have been created to meet the goals or a clear timeline for achieving them. While the vision is articulated and shared, goals aligned with this vision are missing the necessary strategies for implementation, which results in a lack of shared urgency regarding the achievement of goals.

2.3 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* for this Statement of Practice:** Leaders effectively use evidence-based systems to examine and improve individual and school-wide practices in the critical areas (student achievement; curriculum and teacher practices; leadership development; community/family engagement; and student social and emotional developmental health) that make progress toward mission-critical goals.

- The school leader expects staff to use best practices but does not provide support or follow-up to enable staff to effectively implement best practices. Staff reported that the leader disseminates articles on best practices and talks about best practices during faculty meetings. Additionally, staff reported that the school leader has articulated expectations related to using data to inform best practices, but is inconsistent in supporting these expectations. Teachers indicated there is no modeling of best practices, and some teachers reported there is no follow-through on how to implement best practices. Staff described the leader as a “big picture” person who expects staff to implement best practices but does not have a clear understanding of how to support teacher use of best practices. Lack of a systematic approach, which includes clear communication and feedback loops, impedes progress towards meeting mission-critical goals.

2.4 The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* for this Statement of Practice: Leaders make strategic decisions to organize resources concerning human, programmatic and fiscal capital so that school improvement and student goals are achieved.

- The school leader is not maximizing school program and fiscal resources for all student subgroups and teachers. Staff stated that the current scheduling practice of pulling-out students from the classroom for support services (e.g., Academic Intervention Services (AIS), English as a second language (ESL), resource room, and reading) has a negative impact on classroom instruction. Additionally, teachers indicated that there are many shared staff (teachers split between buildings), which limits scheduling options. The school leader stated he has very little control over recruitment and hiring of school personnel and further indicated that his discretionary spending is limited to \$11,000 designated for school supplies. The leader made no mention of the school’s allocation of Title I Priority School Funds or of School Improvement Grant (SIG) 1003(a) funds. While the school leader does not have control over the allocation of all resources, he is not leveraging resources within his control in a way that promotes the achievement of school-wide goals.

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

- The school leader is visible and conducts walk-throughs. Teachers reported that the school leader conducts frequent informal observations of their classrooms and provides relevant feedback. The school leader stated, “There are five teachers who have still not had their second Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) classroom observation, and one teacher who has not had any APPR classroom observation.” The school leader does not track progress of teacher practices based on student data. In reviewing APPR documents, IIT reviewers noted very few suggestions for instructional improvement. The school leader reported that no teacher improvement plans were in place. Teachers reported during interviews with the IIT that the Utica City School District makes PD workshops available to teachers, but documents reviewed at the school level show no evidence of a school PD plan. A district administrator who supervises a subgroup population indicated in an interview with the IIT that the school leader does not check-in on a regular basis to access PD opportunities. The school leader does not track progress of teacher practices based on student

data. Because the school leader has not established a system for regular and frequent communication and feedback with staff and district personnel, teachers are not getting the support necessary for continuous improvement.

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

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: Curriculum and assessments for English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics, with appropriate alignment to the Common Core Learning Standards, are in the beginning stages of development. However, school-wide implementation of rigorous CCLS units and lessons, with accommodations and a continuous system for monitoring and assessing student progress, is not in place. This negatively impacts teachers’ ability to maximize instruction to support student learning and subgroup achievement.

Strengths:

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

Areas for Improvement:

3.2 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader and staff support and facilitate the quality implementation of rigorous and coherent curricula appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) in Pre K-12.

- The school is in the early stages of Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) aligned curriculum development and implementation. While there has been some school-based CCLS support provided mainly through the School-Based Intervention Team (SBIT), school leaders have not closely monitored implementation. The school leader reported he does not collect lesson plans. Teachers reported in interviews with the IIT that the SBIT and the District provide opportunities to learn about the CCLS. One staff member reported, “The SBIT has done a good job of making (CCLS) workshops available to staff. We have had Saturday workshops where we had in-depth training on the CCLS.” The IIT noted that the curriculum maps that the IIT reviewed were limited in scope, and some were outdated. During classroom visitations, the review team observed evidence of the CCLS shifts in some, but not all, classrooms. Consequently, not all students, including subgroups, are experiencing the academic rigor necessary for high levels of student achievement.

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 IIT's review of lessons and of unit plans indicated that some teachers’ lessons plans support the CCLS. During classroom visitations, IIT members noted that some teachers have developed unit

plans aligned with District CCLS pacing calendars. Teachers do not have systemic opportunities to create curriculum units and review such units created by others"? Teachers reported that they participate in Superintendents Conference meetings where they receive training on the CCLS. Staff reported in interviews that they participate in grade level meetings once a month. Reviewers observed teachers participating in a grade-level meeting to collaboratively create and examine assessment data. The reviewers did not see consistent evidence of appropriately aligned CCLS pacing calendars in use during the grade level meeting or in reviewed unit and lesson plans. Evidence of the teaching of higher order thinking skills (chunked material, close reads, academic vocabulary inferential questioning) was observed by the IIT in some, but not all, classrooms. Because teacher practice does not consistently incorporate content complexity, not all students are able to build deep conceptual understanding and knowledge.

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.

- Students attend regularly scheduled art and music classes. One IIT reviewer observed a music lesson that was aligned with the ELA classroom lesson. However, any collaboration between art/music teachers and grade-level teachers occurs informally and sporadically. Staff reported that they are frustrated that they lack opportunities to collaborate with enrichment-area teachers. There are opportunities for grade-level teachers to meet, however. Classroom teachers formally participate in grade level meetings monthly. During the grade level meeting observed by the review team, teachers examined assessment data but did not discuss the curriculum. Teachers indicated that the SBIT provides them with CCLS support during workshops. Teachers also reported in interviews with the IIT that the school leader emphasizes vertical alignment. "He has pushed us to work together," one teacher added. The review team noted that technology is available in all classrooms. The IIT observed Smart Boards in all classrooms, and teachers were using them in about half of the classrooms visited. In addition, the self-assessment document indicated that the technology in the building does not work consistently. Because of inconsistent opportunities among classroom teachers and enrichment area teachers to collaborate, students are not fully benefiting from exposure to a robust curriculum that consistently and strategically incorporates the arts, technology, and other enrichment areas.

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.

- Some teachers are beginning to use data to assess student learning and to inform instruction. IIT reviewers noted during the grade level meeting observation that teachers were reviewing scores from ELA and mathematics. IIT reviewers observed that the teachers' discussion centered around speculation as to the probable causes of the noticeable "gaps" and "jumps" on student iReady scores and did not include a discussion about student needs or targeted plans to meet the needs. Staff indicated that they look at data monthly, both benchmark assessment data and iReady data. Staff reported in interviews with the IIT that iReady data is used to put students into groups where re-teaching occurs for students who need it. Staff also reported they administer quarterly

benchmarks for mathematics and Scott Foresman benchmarks by unit for ELA. The school leader and staff indicated they would no longer be using Scott Foresman assessments because they found that the assessments did not meet their needs with the transition to the CCLS. The school has the goal of increasing state ELA and mathematics exam results by two percentage points. Staff reported there are no assessments currently being used to assess if the school is making progress toward achieving this goal. Student support staff reported that students in kindergarten are screened using the Battelle Screener to assess readiness and identify needs. During classroom visitations, the IIT noted that instructional adaption and groupings based on student needs as identified through formative assessment and iReady data was present but not consistently observed. Because the school leader and teachers review limited assessment data that is aligned to school goals and do not consistently analyze data to create strategic action plans to inform instruction, student achievement is negatively affected.

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

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: Some teachers engage in practices that are appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and promote varying levels of student learning. While not consistent throughout the building, there is some evidence of student engagement and inquiry. However, there were limited examples of instructional decision-making informed by data that included specific accommodations for students with disabilities and English language learners. The result is that not all students are provided with opportunities to engage in learning to meet their needs.

Strengths:

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

Areas for Improvement:

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

- Teachers use instructional practices and strategies that are aligned to their lesson plans. However, during classroom visitations, the IIT reviewers did not observe targeted interventions for specific subgroups. Some teachers have lesson plans. However, upon review of the plans, IIT reviewers did not see how plans were aligned or adapted based on data, especially for students with disabilities. On three of the four lesson plans examined by the IIT reviewers, there was no particular data noted for English language learners (ELLs). One lesson plan indicated “accommodations as needed” and “adjustments as needed.” Short- and long-term goals are not clearly identified for groups of students. During the grade level meeting observed by the IIT, teachers discussed some progress monitoring of particular students. For example, teachers speculated about the possible reasons why

there were “gaps” and “jumps” in iReady scores. Further, no clear plan for follow-up was established except for one student for whom it was determined that his parents would need to have him screened outside of school. Lack of targeted interventions and strategies for specific subgroups is negatively impacting student engagement and inquiry. Because all students are not aware of their long- and short-term goals, students’ involvement in their own learning is reduced.

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.

- Many teachers recognize they are responsible for all students’ achievement, and are beginning to implement CCLS supported instruction. However, teachers are not consistently adapting instruction to meet the needs of all students. Students interviewed by the IIT reported that they just started working on a CCLS unit on EngageNY based on the book *Esperanza Rising*. In eight out of nine classrooms visited, IIT reviewers noted the use of “I Can” statements to support the CCLS. Several teachers commented during interviews with the IIT that they have concerns about the level of language proficiency of ELLs in their classrooms. In most classrooms observed by the IIT, the needs of subgroups were not addressed. IIT reviewers noted that specially designed instruction for students with disabilities was not occurring. With the exception of the ESL classroom, IIT reviewers observed only one classroom where the teacher provided a differentiated strategy for ELLs, which was to separate them and to have them practice their pronunciation apart from the rest of the class. There was limited differentiation of instruction seen by IIT reviewers during classroom visits. Some teachers used instructional groups, stations, and cooperative learning as well as whole class instruction. However, most classes were taught using whole group instruction, with all students working from the same text and being asked to respond to the same questions. While CCLS supported units and practices are evident in some classrooms, the lack of targeted interventions and strategies for specific subgroups and the inconsistent use of differentiated instruction for all students are reducing students’ ability to access learning to achieve targeted goals.

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

- The school promotes multicultural awareness. All classrooms visited by the IIT had some evidence of sensitivity to the cultural and linguistic diversity at the school, including signs and posters with multiple languages and pictures representing various cultures on display in hallways and in classrooms. Instruction that required application, evaluation, synthesizing, or analytical reasoning was not continuously incorporated into the lessons the IIT reviewers observed. During classroom visitations, IIT reviewers saw inconsistent use of higher-order thinking questions related to instructional materials that contain high levels of text and content complexity. Teachers have created environments where students feel comfortable taking learning risks. Students stated in interviews with the IIT that they would not feel “dumb” or “different” if they asked their teachers to explain something not understood. Students also reported that they feel safe when they give an incorrect answer to the teacher’s question. One student stated “if I get something wrong, there are kids who laugh at you, your friends say ‘don’t laugh.’ I feel safe saying that to my friends.” IIT

reviewers noted evidence of sensitivity to the cultural and linguistic diversity at the school including signs and posters with multiple languages, hallways and walls with pictures representing varied cultures. During classroom visitations, IIT reviewers noted that teachers consistently praised students, acknowledging their effort or work done but there was limited differentiation of instruction or specially designed instruction for students with disabilities, and inconsistent use of higher-order thinking questions to promote high levels of engagement. While teachers provide an environment where students feel intellectually and emotionally safe, they do not consistently tailor instruction to student strengths and needs, which limits students' active participation and inquiry.

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

- Teachers use some data sources (iReady, Scott Foresman benchmarks) to inform instructional decision-making. Some teachers interviewed by the IIT reported using iReady data for grouping students who needed re-teaching in deficit skill areas. Some students had their own i-Ready data in their student portfolios. Student support staff reported that students in kindergarten are screened using the Battelle Screener, which assesses readiness and identifies needs. During classroom visitations, the IIT noted that instructional adaptation and groupings based on student needs as identified through formative assessment and iReady data were present but not consistently implemented. Because teacher use of data to inform their lesson planning and to foster student participation in their learning is inconsistent, some students are not highly engaged.

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

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: The school has a system for identifying and supporting student social emotional well-being, and most members of the school community report feeling safe. However, the lack of a fully aligned vision regarding social emotional support procedures is undermining a safe environment for all.

Strengths:

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

Areas for Improvement:

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

- While there is not a system that allows each child to be known by a designated adult who coordinates services, the school does have a referral system. Staff reported that the referral system

involves teachers submitting referrals to the Instructional Support Team (IST). Staff reported in interviews that the IST meets weekly. Parents and teachers are invited to attend IST meetings. The student support staff reported they work with parents, teachers, and students to put a plan in place. One student support staff member stated, "We do progress monitoring, and if necessary, refer to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) or to outside agencies." Another student support staff member added, "We work in a multi-disciplinary fashion and have developed a comprehensive approach. We support each other." Staff stated in interviews with the IIT that they reach out to the Refugee Center to get interpreters when needed to communicate with parents. There is a part-time social worker and a part-time psychologist for the school. Staff reported that there have been occasions when the social worker or psychologist was out of the building, and procedures developed by these professionals regarding students who had been referred to them were not being followed. This was a cause for concern among individual staff members. While there are overarching systems and partnerships that support social and emotional needs of students, the systems do not always function as intended, resulting in inconsistent support for student well-being.

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

- The school's vision for student social emotional health is reflected in the school's promotion of character attributes. However, not all school constituents referred to this program when asked by the IIT about the school's vision. Further, parents interviewed by the IIT were not able to articulate the school's vision for student social and emotional developmental health. The school leader reported that the school adopted a modified version of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS). The leader expressed that the school did away with the PBIS practice of providing incentives for positive student behavior. The staff replaced that practice with the identification of one positive character attribute per month toward which all school constituents are expected to work. There is a voluntary PBIS committee that organizes school assemblies (King Characteristics Assembly) to recognize students whose behavior best epitomized the character attribute of the month. Student support staff reported that while teachers have had district-provided training in the Response to Intervention (RtI) process, the required steps in the process are difficult for teachers to implement. One student support staff member stated, "Teachers need additional training." While the school promotes social and emotional developmental health through some school-wide practices, PD to support faculty and staff is insufficient, limiting the school's ability to create a consistently safe and healthy environment for families, teachers, and students.

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

- Most school constituents feel safe. The two parents who were interviewed by the IIT reported that they believed the school was safe, and students reported in interviews with the IIT that they generally feel safe with their teacher and in the hallway. While two parents were able to articulate

their belief that the school was safe, they also stated that a large number of parents are not involved with the school and do not have a sense of ownership in ensuring that the school community is safe and conducive to learning. Students reported feeling uncomfortable not knowing what was going on when the school went into lockdown, which according to them happens when a stranger is trying to enter the building. In another student group interviewed by the IIT, students agreed that many of the students acted inappropriately during lockdowns, saying that students are loud and that they kick the doors in the classrooms during these events. Staff reported that they generally feel safe in the school. One staff member shared that things have improved since the school made sure that there was only one entrance into the building. As part of the school-wide approach to ensure that the school meets the needs of its students, students in kindergarten through grade three are screened for deficits in behavioral areas, such as peer social skills, assertiveness and task orientation, using the Associated Child Rating Scale (ARCS). Those students who score in the 15th to 30th percentile are referred to the Primary Project. Student support staff reported that some students, including many who are English language learners (ELLs), receive support through the District-supported program called the Primary Project. One student support staff member referred to the Primary Project as a “pre-intervention,” stating that “it helps kids get familiar with the school environment. Many times it’s a language or culture barrier or because the kids don’t know how to interact with the school environment.” While most, but not all, school constituents are able to articulate how the school is safe and conducive to learning, high numbers of uninvolved parents represent a constituency that does not share a sense of ownership with the school, which is limiting 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.

- The school expects teachers to collect student data by following Response to Intervention (RtI) established procedures. Student support staff expressed that while the District prepared for RtI and provided PD on the process, RtI is not working as well as they felt it could. Student support staff reported that although they help teachers gather data and develop a comprehensive plan to address behavior, more teacher training and more time to meet with teachers is needed. The Instructional Support Team (IST) meets weekly to look at data and tracks it from year to year. Student support staff reported that all kindergarten students are screened using The BATELLE Screener to determine student needs and to provide estimates of pre-cognitive and readiness skills. Students in kindergarten through grade three are progress monitored using the Associated Child Rating Scale (ARCS) to determine if interventions are necessary. While the school provides some support to develop teachers’ ability to use data to respond to students’ social and emotional developmental health needs, the support is insufficient, limiting teachers’ ability to foster student 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

D

Debriefing Statement: The school is a welcoming space and has an open-door policy that ensures access to the school leader and staff for those parents who seek it. Efforts are made to inform parents of their children's progress, and translations are provided upon request. The school staff is aware of the diversity of its students' cultures and languages and of the need for more consistent efforts to reach out to families who do not speak English. Because many parents remain disconnected, they are not able to partner with the school in support of their children's education, which limits student success.

Strengths:

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

Areas for Improvement:

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

- According to the parents the IIT interviewed, the school is a welcoming place for parents. While a core group of parents is very involved with the school, many parents are not engaged in school activities or in collaborating with the school to support their child's education. Two parents were available to speak with review team members on the day of the review. The parents interviewed stated that although there are many flyers that are sent home to inform parents and invite them to school events, most parents do not feel comfortable attending school events. The parents interviewed by the IIT, both of whom are Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) members, reported that only three parents consistently attend PTA meetings. The parents reported that they send out flyers to families to invite their participation in PTA meetings, but they are not able to translate the flyers into all the multiple languages spoken by families in the school community. The Parent Liaison reported that she tries "to lure parents in with food, but it doesn't work." She stated that many parents think, "School is school. Let teachers handle it." One staff member reported that turnout is better with events associated with holidays, such as Thanksgiving and Christmas, than it is for other events at the school. The school community encourages relationships with families and community stakeholders who are consistently visible at the school, but relies on the PTA to promote greater family involvement such as volunteer opportunities at the school. The trusting atmosphere expressed by some parents fosters a sense of belonging; however, the lack of clear communication and the low parental involvement have a significant effect on the school community, which impedes progress toward increased student success.

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

- Parents and staff reported that Multicultural Day is celebrated in each classroom. Staff indicated in interviews with the IIT that the school is sensitive to the various cultures represented in the school. During the student support staff group interview, a staff member expressed that it would be helpful to have more training for staff regarding cultural awareness and how to engage families from different cultures. Another staff member added, "The district offered some nice workshops on culture.

However, it needs to be on-going.” Parents reported that the PTA sends out flyers in English to families. There has been the same parent liaison in the building for the past 12 years. Staff reported that the parent liaison calls parents to explain the Committee on Special Education (CSE) process to parents. The parent liaison is also used as an interpreter for Spanish speaking parents when the staff conferences with a parent whose primary language is Spanish. The parent liaison reported, “I’ve been really good at being a detective to track people down to make sure that the parent feels comfortable and understands the (CSE) process.” Another student support staff member explained that they have to be very careful and sensitive when explaining the referral process to parents of ELLs stating, “Sometimes the words in our work don’t exist in that language so parents sometimes don’t understand the different stages of the referral process.” One student support staff member stated that they have reached out to the refugee center for help with translators. Staff indicated that the building has access to three interpreters that are used throughout the district. While staff reported that it is sometimes difficult to get parents to come to the school, the staff stated that there was a very good turn-out for their Books and Breakfasts event, which approximately 60 parents attended. As a result of having only a small number of parents consistently involved in the school, in particular parents of ELLs, the school has limited opportunities for reciprocal communication. This impedes the staff’s ability to identify student strengths and needs to support student learning.

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

- While the school has taken steps to make the environment welcoming to families of different cultures, many staff members have a limited understanding of how to partner with parents. IIT reviewers noted that most classrooms visited had some evidence of sensitivity to the cultural and linguistic diversity at the school, including signs and posters with different languages and pictures representing various cultures on display in the building. In addition, the school has a Multicultural Day each year. Staff reported that while they have had successful activities devoted to recognizing different cultures in the past, it would be helpful for staff to be trained in cultural sensitivity. One staff member added “It should be on-going, not just once-in-a-while trainings.” Another staff member agreed and said, “The District offered some nice workshops on culture; however, it needs to be ongoing.” Student support staff interviewed by the IIT acknowledged that there has not been PD provided to staff on how to engage with parents, and the support staff interviewed agreed that the staff would benefit from such training. One student support staff member said, “Sometimes the teachers are afraid to contact parents, so the parent liaison will help with the language.” Staff acknowledged that the parent liaison does make an effort to locate parents to make sure that the parent feels comfortable and understands the process for engaging with the school. The school leader reported that the school partners with 41 outside organizations, such as Perinatal; Mohawk Community Action; Rustic Green; Rotary; Boy Scouts; Mohawk Valley Frontiers; and Utica College, which provides reading tutors as part a breakfast program every Tuesday. There was no evidence that these organizations coordinate their efforts or that they partner with the school to provide PD for staff. Because PD on cultural diversity and how to engage parents and the community is not provided to staff, the entire school community is not working together to help 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 learning and success.

- The school sends report cards home to parents quarterly to provide information on student performance. During an interview with the IIT, parents indicated that they have not heard of any school events focused on understanding student data. Teachers reported about 50 to 60 parents came for a “Books and Breakfasts” activity where families read with their child. Staff indicated that although they put in a proposal for a “Math and Muffins” event so parents could learn about Common Core mathematics, the event never took place due to budget cuts, according to staff. Updates on student progress are inconsistently conveyed to parents. According to parents interviewed by the IIT, some teachers send progress notes home and others do not. Parents reported that they might talk with teachers about their child’s progress when they drop-off or pick-up their children. Because the school does not share information in a way that helps families understand it, parents are not engaging in an ongoing dialogue with school constituents to promote student learning and success.

Recommendations:

Tenet 2: School Leader Practices and Decisions

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

- 2.2: Clearly articulate the school’s vision and goals to all of school’s constituents.
- 2.3: Revise the SCEP to include goals, action steps, and responsibilities of staff and the school leader. Provide a professional development plan and resources that target the recommendations from the DTDSE. Ensure that the implementation of this plan is monitored carefully for its impact on improving student achievement.
- 2.4: Manage the school’s organization, operations, and resources to resolve identified weaknesses in creating an effective learning environment. Ensure increased accountability by all staff for improvement.
- 2.5: Implement a classroom observation schedule to monitor more closely the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Increase written feedback to teachers, including clear targets for improvement, based on formal, informal and walkthrough observations. Schedule follow-up observations to check on progress.

Tenet 3: Curriculum Development and Support

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

- 3.2: Ensure the development of curriculum maps and unit plans that align with CCLS. Schedule regular informal walkthroughs, as well as lesson plan reviews by the school leader, to ensure that teachers are following the suggested plans and pacing charts and incorporating the CCLS.

- 3.3: Ensure that the rigor of daily and unit lessons is increased, so that a wide variety of instructional strategies can be used to promote students' higher level thinking, problem solving, and research skills in all content areas.
- 3.4: Provide training in how to incorporate the CCLS into all content areas, including art, music, PE, technology and other enrichment areas, and frequently review unit and lesson plans for evidence of implementation.
- 3.5: Review and revise the current data system so that staff is using data to drive instruction. Use assessment data as the focal point for meetings at every level, including both horizontal and vertical team meetings. Involve ESL and special education teachers in these meetings.

Tenet 4: Teacher Practices and Decisions

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

- 4.2: Ensure teacher use of student performance data, both summative and formative, to create instructional groups: design skill- based activities for small groups of students of similar needs with a special focus on at risk students and identified subgroups.
- 4.3: Monitor regularly teachers' planning and instructional practices to check that differentiated activities are in place in all classrooms, with the primary focus on identified subgroups.
- 4.4: Provide support to teachers to enable them to move from posing questions that require simple recall and comprehension to questions that require students to support answers by citing text, elaborating on the answers of other students, and by analyzing and summarizing information.
- 4.5: Conduct a thorough item analysis and subgroups analysis to determine the causes of student underperformance, and use the information to adjust student groupings and adapt instruction.

Tenet 5: Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health

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

- 5.2: Ensure that the school leader and staff use the District Response to Intervention [RTI] protocols to determine specific skills and strategies for each student. Ensure that staff uses the RTI and Instructional Support Team (IST) procedures in a consistent manner.
- 5.3: Develop and implement a curriculum/program that teaches the social and emotional competencies that lead to academic and social/emotional growth.
- 5.4: Revise the school's vision for behavioral and academic expectations with input from all school constituents. Ensure that these expectations are a central part of all school activities and are linked to actions that focus on high expectations and academic success.
- 5.5: Develop and implement a strategic plan using a wide variety of data to address student's social and emotional developmental health needs that align to academic and social success.

Tenet 6: Family and Community Engagement

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

- 6.2: Work closely with the parent liaison to regularly canvas parents so that the school can better meet the needs of all students and their families.
- 6.3: Ensure that all parents have the opportunity to participate in the life of the school and support their own children's learning and that all documents sent to families are translated into all appropriate languages. Develop programs to encourage more involvement among parents of ELLs.
- 6.4: Provide professional development for all staff focusing on strengthening partnerships with community agencies and families, including training on working with families of ELLs.
- 6.5: Develop and implement a plan to involve more parents in the processes that impact their children's education, including, but not limited to, understanding student data, social emotional development and ways to support learning at home.