



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	140600010006
School Name	PS 6 Buffalo Elementary School of Technology
School Address	414 South Division Street, Buffalo, NY 14204
District Name	Buffalo Public Schools
School Leader	Mrs. Sharon Brown
Dates of Review	December 3-5, 2013
School Accountability Status	Priority School
Type of Review	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet											
Grade Configuration	PK-8	Total Enrollment	599	SIG Recipient	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Title 1 Population	96%	Attendance Rate	89%		
Free Lunch	100%	Reduced Lunch	0%	Student Sustainability	87%	Limited English Proficient	36%	Students with Disabilities	17%		
Number of English Language Learner Classes											
#Transitional Bilingual	0		#Dual Language		206	#Self-Contained English as a Second Language			N/A		
Number of Special Education Classes											
#Special Classes	6		#Consultant Teaching		0	#Integrated Collaborative Teaching			8		
# Resource Room	0										
Number Special Classes											
#Visual Arts	1	#Music	1	#Drama	0	#Foreign Language	0.5	#Dance	0	#CTE	1.6
Racial/Ethnic Origin											
American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	Black or African American	55%	Hispanic or Latino	6%	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	28%	White	9%	Multi-racial	2%
Personnel											
Years Principal Assigned to School	2		# of Assistant Principals		2	# of Deans	0		# of Counselors / Social Workers		2
Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	0%		Teaching Out of Certification		0%	Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp.		4%	Average Teacher Absences		14
Credit Accumulation (High School Only) and Performance Rates											
% of 1 st yr. students who earned 10+ credits	NA		% of 2 nd yr. students who earned 10+ credits		NA	% of 3 rd yr. students who earned 10+ credits		NA	4 Year Graduation Rate		NA
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	5.5%		Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4		1.8%	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4		41%	6 Year Graduation Rate		NA
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA											
N/A	American Indian or Alaska Native				No	Black or African American					
N/A	Hispanic or Latino				Yes	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander					
Yes	White				N/A	Multi-racial					
No	Students with Disabilities				Yes	Limited English Proficient					
No	Economically Disadvantaged				No	All Students					
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Math											
N/A	American Indian or Alaska Native				No	Black or African American					
N/A	Hispanic or Latino				No	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander					
No	White				N/A	Multi-racial					
No	Students with Disabilities				No	Limited English Proficient					
No	Economically Disadvantaged				No	All Students					
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science											
N/A	American Indian or Alaska Native				Yes	Black or African American					
N/A	Hispanic or Latino				N/A	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander					
N/A	White				N/A	Multi-racial					
N/A	Students with Disabilities				Yes	Limited English Proficient					
Yes	Economically Disadvantaged				Yes	All Students					
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for Effective Annual Measurable Achievement Objective											
Yes	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:											
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Equitable educational services and instruction for ELLs and SWDs. Increased usage of CCLS in planning and instruction. Improved literacy for all students leading to greater comprehension and achievement in all content areas. Data driven dialogue to inform targeted instruction. 											

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	The school leader ensures that the school community shares the Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Results-oriented, and Timely (SMART) goals/mission, and long-term vision inclusive of core values that address the priorities outlined in the School Comprehensive Educational Plan (SCEP).			X	
2.3	Leaders make strategic decisions to organize programmatic, human, and fiscal capital resources.		X		
2.4	The school leader has a fully functional system in place aligned to the district's Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) to conduct targeted and frequent observation and track progress of teacher practices based on student data and feedback.			X	
2.5	Leaders effectively use evidence-based systems and structures to examine and improve critical individual and school-wide practices as defined in the SCEP (student achievement, curriculum and teacher practices; leadership development; community/family engagement; and student social and emotional developmental health).			X	
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 2:				D	

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

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
3.2	The school leader ensures and supports the quality implementation of a systematic plan of rigorous and coherent curricula appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) that is monitored and adapted to meet the needs of students.			X	
3.3	Teachers develop and ensure that unit and lesson plans used include data-driven instruction (DDI) protocols that are appropriately aligned to the CCLS and NYS content standards and address student achievement needs.			X	
3.4	The school leader and teachers have developed a comprehensive plan for teachers to partner within and across all grades and subjects to create interdisciplinary curricula targeting the arts, technology, and other enrichment opportunities.				X
3.5	Teachers implement a comprehensive system for using formative and summative assessments for strategic short and long-range curriculum			X	

	planning that involves student reflection, tracking of, and ownership of learning.				
	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	School and teacher leaders ensure that instructional practices and strategies are organized around annual, unit, and daily lesson plans that address all student goals and needs.			X	
4.3	Teachers provide coherent, and appropriately aligned Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)-based instruction that leads to multiple points of access for all students.			X	
4.4	Teachers and students work together to implement a program/plan to create a learning environment that is responsive to students' varied experiences and tailored to the strengths and needs of all students.			X	
4.5	Teachers inform planning and foster student participation in their own learning process by using a variety of summative and formative data sources (e.g., screening, interim measures, and progress monitoring).			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 leader establishes overarching systems and understandings of how to support and sustain student social and emotional developmental health and academic success.			X	
5.3	The school articulates and systematically promotes a vision for social and emotional developmental health that is aligned to a curriculum or program that provides learning experiences and a safe and healthy school environment for families, teachers, and students.			X	
5.4	All school stakeholders work together to develop a common understanding of the importance of their contributions in creating a school community that is safe, conducive to learning, and fostering of a sense of ownership for providing social and emotional developmental health supports tied to the school's vision.				X
5.5	The school leader and student support staff work together with teachers to establish structures to support the use of data to respond to student social and emotional developmental health needs.			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 leader ensures that regular communication with students and families fosters their high expectations for student academic achievement.			X	
6.3	The school engages in effective planning and reciprocal communication with family and community stakeholders so that student strength and needs are identified and used to augment learning.			X	
6.4	The school community partners with families and community agencies to promote and provide training across all areas (academic and social and emotional developmental health) to support student success.			X	
6.5	The school shares data in a way that promotes dialogue among parents, students, and school community members centered on student learning and success and encourages and empowers families to understand and use data to advocate for appropriate support services for their children.			X	
	OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 6:			D	

School Review Narrative:

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

The school leader is seeking to create a data-driven school community in an effort to ensure high academic outcomes for all students at the school. Data-Driven Instruction (DDI) Teams are developing a process to work together to analyze data from reading inventories and common formative assessments (CFAs) in order to select instructional strategies that will best address student needs. The formal mission and vision statements are being reviewed and revised in collaboration with the Educational Partner Organization (EPO). The expanded learning time (ELT) program is not yet fully operational, although plans are in place for a program that will support student social and emotional developmental health along with their academic achievement. However, because of the transitional phase the school is experiencing, its vision has not yet been achieved and programs and protocols are at an early stage of development. This adversely impacts on student academic, social and emotional outcomes.

Strengths:

2.3 **The school has received a rating of *Effective* for this Statement of Practice:** Leaders make strategic decisions to organize programmatic, human, and fiscal capital resources.

- School leaders make strategic decision to organize resources. The school leader shared with the review team that they, working with the Educational Partnership Organization (EPO) called Research to Practice (RTP) developed the required plan for Expanded Learning Time (ELT) to serve the needs of students. Using student data, tutors in the after school program customize academic support to increase student achievement. In a partnership with the Concerned Ecumenical Ministry (CEM), the school offers hands-on learning activities, including science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) projects, as well as programs in the arts, music, theatre, and health/wellness. The program especially targets the needs of English language learners (ELLs) and hopes to serve 300 students this year. Currently 250 students are enrolled in the program with expansion in 2014 to serve those students currently on the waiting list. To further serve the needs of students and families, a full-time social worker has been appointed to the staff this year. In addition, a behavior specialist has been hired to work with the “Say Yes to Education” facilitator to decrease discipline referrals and increase student attendance, two goals of the school this year. The school leader shared that both the EPO and the school leader made a conscious decision to focus on increasing the instructional capacity among the current staff rather than hiring different staff. The review team found evidence that the school leader plays an active and participatory roll in recruiting and hiring staff. As the EPO’s contract with the school will end in 2014-15, the school is making long-term fiscal plans to ensure that staffing levels remain at an appropriate level once this contract is over. In addition, the school leader shared with the review team the school’s long-range plans for the continued improvement of staff and student achievement. The school leader makes decisions to organize programmatic, human and fiscal capital resources that meet the on-going needs of the school community.

Areas for Improvement:

2.2 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader ensures that the school community shares the Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Results-oriented, and Timely (SMART)

goals/mission, and long-term vision inclusive of core values that address the priorities outlined in the School Comprehensive Educational Plan (SCEP).

- While the school leader is working to establish goals, limited involvement by all constituencies hinders a school-wide focus aligned to a common vision. The school leader shared with the review team that they provided, with the RTP, an opportunity for the school community to review the school's mission and goals in September 2013. However, parents and staff both shared with the review team that they did not have a role in helping to construct the vision or goals, which limited their knowledge of them. The goals shared for the 2013-14 school year include raising the number of students scoring at the proficiency level in English language arts (ELA) and math by targeting sub-groups including African-American students, ELLs, and students with disabilities (SWDs). Other goals include increasing the number of students in leadership positions and increasing attendance numbers while decreasing discipline referrals. Additionally, the school leader shared that a school-based management (SBM) team meets monthly to discuss these goals. While two parents reported to the review team that they were a part of the SBM team, they again reiterated that they did not have a role in helping to develop these goals, nor did any teachers. Staff shared with the review team that they were not sure what the vision of the school is or how it relates to improved student outcomes. Additionally, several staff shared that while they were aware that the mission and vision were undergoing revision, lack of staff involvement limited their ability to align their work to them. Goals that do not align to a common school-wide vision hinder the ability of the school community to address priorities, which impacts student academic achievement.

2.4 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader has a fully functional system in place aligned to the district's Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) to conduct targeted and frequent observation and track progress of teacher practices based on student data and feedback.

- The school leader is developing a system aligned to the district's APPR to conduct observations, track practice and to give feedback to teachers. The school leader shared that they use the Kim Marshall program for teacher evaluation and that they aim to give instant verbal feedback to teachers whenever possible. Additionally, coaches, while not in an evaluative capacity, observe classrooms and share their general observations with the school leaders to aid in targeting areas of concern. However, evidence from meetings and school documentation indicate that the structure for conducting observations and for giving feedback have not always been consistent or timely. Teachers shared with the review team that the school leaders did not conduct classroom observations until the last few weeks of school, with both the formal and the informal evaluations coming within the same week. Likewise, the student support team also shared they received feedback only in June last year. The school leader shared with the review team that they recognize this and are developing plans to ensure that they provide timely feedback in order to impact student achievement and learning. Teachers stated that while this process was becoming more consistent this year, they still needed feedback that was timelier in order to guide them in improving instructional practices. Discussions with school leaders and staff indicate that school leaders are working to provide a better connection between observations and professional development (PD) opportunities. Further, the school leader shared that they are working to evaluate how teachers are implementing instructional strategies from PD into classroom practice during classroom observations. The school does not consistently implement procedures and protocols relating to teacher evaluation and feedback in order to hold teachers or leaders accountable for continuous improvement, which hinders improvement to student academic achievement.

2.5 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** Leaders effectively use evidence-based systems and structures to examine and improve critical individual and school-wide practices as defined in the SCEP (student achievement, curriculum and teacher practices; leadership development; community/family engagement; and student social and emotional developmental health).

- The school leader is developing structures and evidence-based systems to examine and improve critical school-wide practices. The school leader shared with the review team that they recognize a need for prioritizing and delegating duties such as building management issues, phone calls and discipline referrals to other staff members as they are presently spending too much time on day-to-day managerial tasks in the building. Thus, in an effort to focus more time on instructional support, the school leader shared with the review team that she is using a “Time Tracker” to document how she spends her time each day. Additionally, the school leader shared that they are working with the EPO to draw up a plan to allocate more time for them to monitor individual and school wide practices in order to drive forward school improvement at a faster pace. While presently the school leader has established some procedures for observing instruction, analyzing data and implementing a cohesive curriculum, the review team did not find evidence that the school leader is implementing these procedures and protocols with fidelity or monitoring the impact of strategies on student achievement. Measureable progress toward critical school-wide goals as defined in the SCEP is limited by inconsistent use of structures, which hinders school improvement.

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

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement:

The school has begun to develop rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments that support the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) for all students. Currently, curricula and lesson plans are not consistently adapted to meet the needs of all sub-groups. Staff has begun to develop systems to collect and analyze data related to student achievement but implementation for using data to create unit and lesson plans that maximize teacher instructional practices and student outcomes is limited. Therefore, the school does not provide all students with rigorous curricula that ensure they will be college and career ready.

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 ensures and supports the quality implementation of a systematic plan of rigorous and coherent curricula appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) that is monitored and adapted to meet the needs of students.

- The school leader is developing a plan to ensure effective delivery of a cohesive and aligned curriculum that meets the needs of all students. The plan shared with the review team outlines the necessity for more support and PD for teachers and a rigorous approach to monitoring curriculum implementation. However, these systems are not currently in place, which affects adversely on student academic outcomes. The school leader shared with the review team that the school is part of the district-wide adoption of the reading series *Journeys* for Kindergarten through grade six, aligned to the CCLS and this serves as the curricula. Teachers shared that while the district provided PD on this new series for them, the PD was not of high quality and did not adequately prepare them for delivering the curricula material. Teachers in kindergarten through grade eight shared with the review team that they are using the New York State math modules aligned to the CCLS for their math curricula. The teachers shared that they were provided with website guidance on the modules to assist them; however, they also indicated to the review team that they do not feel confident in delivering the curriculum and would welcome additional PD. Discussion with teachers by the review team and an evaluation of planning and curricula documents show that science and social studies courses do not align to CCLS. Further evidence from student work, document review, and from lesson observations indicates that when students advance to higher grades they do not have necessary background knowledge or content vocabulary. The lack of rigorous and coherent curricula aligned to CCLS and understood by all teachers, results in the school not meeting the academic needs of all students and this hinders student academic growth and college readiness.

3.3 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** Teachers develop and ensure that unit and lesson plans used include data-driven instruction (DDI) protocols that are appropriately aligned to the CCLS and NYS content standards and address student achievement needs.

- Teachers are inconsistently developing unit and lesson plans that align to CCLS or use DDI protocols for to target individual student needs. Through a review of documentation and classroom observations, the review team found that teachers did not consistently plan or differentiate instruction based on data. While a grade seven and grade eight teacher meeting demonstrated the use of DDI protocols directly connected to student achievement, the review team did not observe DDI protocols consistently applied during classroom observations. The school has classes titled “differentiated instruction” on the master schedule; however, these classes are predominantly Academic Intervention Services (AIS) rather than opportunities for differentiated learning within the regular classroom. The result is that students are not consistently receiving targeted instruction based on data to drive their individual learning and this hinders student academic achievement.

3.4 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader and teachers have developed a comprehensive plan for teachers to partner within and across all grades and subjects to create interdisciplinary curricula targeting the arts, technology, and other enrichment opportunities.

- The school leader and teachers have not developed a comprehensive plan to promote and implement interdisciplinary curricula to enhance the quality of student learning. While during a grade level teacher meeting, teachers agreed on strategies they would utilize during classroom instruction, which included building stamina for readers and having students take part in the decision-making process about their learning in every subject. However, this was the only evidence of interdisciplinary planning or instruction observed by the review team. During twenty-nine classroom visits, reviewers saw no evidence of

interdisciplinary instruction. A document review yielded no evidence of interdisciplinary curricula targeting the arts and technology, although there are enrichment opportunities in these areas outside of the formal curriculum. Additionally, the review team found that there are no partnerships between school leaders and teachers to plan or implement an interdisciplinary curriculum in the future. Teachers shared with the review team that they very rarely collaborate or discuss ways to deliver interdisciplinary curricula within grades and subjects. However, in a small number of classrooms, teachers were observed informally using technology to enhance student learning and engagement. Therefore, opportunities for students to be academically successful through cross-curricula activities are not available across the school, which impacts student academic achievement.

3.5 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** Teachers implement a comprehensive system for using formative and summative assessments for strategic short and long-range curriculum planning that involves student reflection, tracking of, and ownership of learning.

- Teachers have access to assessment data from a range of sources including state, school and classroom assessments. However, evidence from observations and discussions with teachers suggests that analysis and use of this data is not consistent and therefore does not drive improvements. While during the review teachers in a grade seven and grade eight meeting demonstrated good practice focused on analyzing individual student scores on Common Formative Assessment (CFA) and making instructional and curriculum adjustments based on this analysis. Further evidence indicates however that this good practice is not commonplace. For example, classroom observations show that there is not a rigorous system in place for analyzing data in order to tailor instruction to meet the academic needs of individual students. In both the large student focus groups, students shared that teachers tend to tell them everything and that assignments, projects, and assessments are most often teacher directed. Observations of classrooms by the review team supported these statements. Students stated that teachers do not give them information on how they are doing on a consistent basis. Instead, both they and their parents rely on progress reports and report cards to monitor progress. A review of student work by the review team revealed that feedback that clearly identifies what students need to do to improve is not consistently evident. Additionally, there was little evidence in conversations with students, or during classroom observations, indicating that teachers were using data from formative or summative assessments to adjust their curriculum or to include students in decisions about or reflection on their own learning. While there are indications that teachers are beginning to take important steps in the use of data to drive instruction, these practices are not yet consistent across the school in order to improve student achievement.

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

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement:

While there is some evidence of implementation of the instructional shifts outlined in the CCLS, pedagogy to address the rigor of the CCLS is in the initial stages in the school-wide plan. Students are not consistently benefiting from robust curriculum implementation of the CCLS. Instructional routines that verify that students are learning during instruction have not been consistently implemented. There is little modification of lesson delivery based on student

responses and minimal planning time has been allocated to general and special education teachers to provide integrated co-teaching services. Specially designed and differentiated instruction is not collaboratively planned into the general education teacher plans. These weaknesses impact adversely how students learn and achieve.

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:** School and teacher leaders ensure that instructional practices and strategies are organized around annual, unit, and daily lesson plans that address all student goals and needs.

- Teachers are beginning to develop instructional practices around unit and lesson plans that address student needs, but such practices are at an early stage and inconsistent across the school. The school leader shared with the review team that teachers in grades K to six use the Journeys program adopted by district for reading, which is CCLS aligned and includes instructional calendars to guide daily lesson plans. Concurrently, the school leader shared that teachers are implementing the CCLS math modules from the New York State Education Department’s website, *EngageNY-www.engageny.org*. While coaches from RTP collaborate with teachers on aligning their instructional practices with CCLS in order to increase student achievement, the review team found little evidence that instructional practices and strategies organized around teacher developed unit and/or daily lesson plans effectively meet the academic needs of all students. The school leader stated that teachers are beginning to align the Tri-State Rubric with their plans in order to increase the rigor of their instruction, but evidence from classroom observations and a review of documentation indicates that this is at an early stage of development. When students in both focus groups were asked about goals they spoke only of long-range goals such as “get an education to get someplace in life” and “get out of eighth grade and into high school.” There was no evidence from their conversation or from document review that teachers develop individual, short-term academic goals with each student. Instead, there is a reliance on a one-size fits all approach and commercial or state-developed lessons and modules. Additionally, teachers shared with the review team that the school’s focus of learning and CCLS alignment is strictly focused ELA and mathematics, not science and social studies instruction. Limited modification for individual students within classrooms results in instruction that does not consistently address the goals and needs of all students, which affects academic achievement.

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

- Teachers do not consistently provide coherent and aligned CCLS based instruction that leads to multiple points of access for all students. The school leader shared with the review team that teachers use instructional materials from the Journeys program for ELA and the NYS Education Department modules from *EngageNY-www.engageny.org* for math. The Journeys program is aligned to the CCLS and provides supplemental materials for use in differentiating instruction to ensure multiple access points to the material. However, teachers in the focus group meeting stated that they feel ill equipped with the instructional skills to

use the materials in order to differentiate instruction for students during learning. Furthermore, out of 29 classrooms visited by the review team, only four demonstrated evidence of differentiated instructional strategies such as language frames, targeted direct instruction, and modified text to support SWDs and ELLs. Additionally, teachers in only two classes exhibited strategies for checking student understanding through the lesson, such as using Popsicle sticks with students' names to call on students randomly to come to the board to show their work. The review team further observed minimal use of higher-order questioning by teachers to challenge student thinking or to get them to think beyond the literal level. Likewise, the review team did not observe any peer-to-peer interaction during learning, although teachers in the focus group said that they have students informally turn to help each other. Students in the middle school focus group said if they do not understand something, teachers might re-teach a lesson more slowly the second time. Reviewers observed that there was a misconception among school staff about what constitutes differentiated instruction and how it provides access to content and skills for all students. The review team found that a factor that led to this confusion is the labeling of specific classes in the master schedule as "differentiated instruction", as opposed to acknowledging it as an embedded instructional practice. Teachers in the focus group explained to the review team that these classes are AIS during which students get extra help. The review team observed that some teachers re-teach when students do not understand material while others provide tutoring separate from in-class time. While helpful, these strategies are inadequate in providing the content and skills required for the CCLS for all students. The lack of targeted instruction in all classrooms prevents students from accessing high-level content and skills outlined in the CCLS and this hinders student academic success.

4.4 The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice: Teachers and students work together to implement a program/plan to create a learning environment that is responsive to students' varied experiences and tailored to the strengths and needs of all students.

- The school leader and teachers shared, as confirmed by a review of the district data sheet, that the school has a diverse population. While teachers spoke to the review team about the how the ESL teacher helps them to make accommodations for the large number of ELLs in their classrooms, they went on to share that they often are not sure how to provide the best instruction for ELLs. Additionally, the teachers stated that they feel the school needs additional PD to help support ELLs and SWDs. Students indicated in the focus group meetings that they knew the classroom rules. However, they went on to share that students who do not follow these rules interrupt instruction at times. One example given was in music class where they shared that the whole class stops because "people get up and run around." Further, while the review team found that many classrooms post rules, discussions with students indicate that these are teacher driven. There was little evidence that these rules were the result of consultation with the class or that they reflected the diversity of student values or perspectives. Students were aware of the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program in their school. They could recite the three principles: be responsible, be respectful, and be safe. Again, while the school offers rewards for good behavior, the review team found no indication that students were part of the decision-making to implement PBIS or around how to earn rewards. The after school program, ELT, does offer a varied menu of enrichment activities for students such as soccer, Girl Scouts, guitar lessons, drill team, dance squad as well as academic support. The program serves approximately 250 students and per the school leader will expand in 2014. While the after school program considers student interests, this program does not presently service all of the students in the school. As students do not participate in the planning and implementation of programs that recognize their varied

experiences, the resulting learning environment is not consistently responsive to their strengths and needs.

4.5 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** Teachers inform planning and foster student participation in their own learning process by using a variety of summative and formative data sources (e.g., screening, interim measures, and progress monitoring).

- Classrooms do not consistently reflect the school’s priority for providing data-driven instruction. The school leader informed the review team that teachers have access to ample school-wide assessment data including district created tests, common formative assessments (CFA), benchmark tests from the Journeys reading program, teacher-made assessments for math and state assessment results. In addition, elementary teachers use Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) and DIBELSNEXT to assess student reading. While the school leader shared that they expect teachers to use this data to inform instruction and to develop student goals, observations and a review of school documentation indicate that teachers are not using this information consistently to make instructional decisions. Similarly, the review team did not find evidence that teachers are sharing assessment results with students to help them set individual learning goals and monitor their own progress towards reaching those goals. One exception took place at a grade level focus group meeting, during which grade seven and eight teachers analyzed individual student assessment results on the first CFA. Subsequently, teachers agreed they would involve students in the decision-making process regarding what steps to take next to increase their own success based on this analysis. However, apart from this group, there was little evidence that students were involved in their own learning process across classrooms. In discussions with students in both the large and small student focus groups, the reviewers learned that instruction traditionally includes the use of packets of worksheets as well as low-level long-range projects such as learning the names of all the organs in the human body and coloring them in on posters. Teachers do not consistently use data-based instruction to ensure that all students are active participants in their own learning process, which limits their academic success.

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 leadership has not prioritized the development of systems and structures that support student social emotional developmental health. The school provides students on-site support services, which include physical examinations through the school-based health clinic, and counseling provided by the school social worker, as well as an afterschool program which provides student enrichment opportunities. While reviewers noted Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) posters in some classes and on hallway bulletin boards, PD for PBIS is limited, which results in classroom teachers not consistently applying PBIS strategies. The school is not collecting and analyzing social-emotional data as a part of the system that supports student learning. The lack of a system that considers social emotional data to meet student academic needs limits student opportunities for academic success.

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 leader establishes overarching systems and understandings of how to support and sustain student social and emotional developmental health and academic success.

- The school is developing overarching systems and understandings of how to support and sustain student social and emotional developmental health, but presently the work is inconsistent across classrooms. While the school uses PBIS as the basis for its system of behavior expectations, the review team found that teachers and students used these expectations in an uneven manner across the school. In many places around the school, the review team found bulletin boards that outline the principles of PBIS adopted by the school: be responsible, be respectful, and be safe. Additionally, students in the focus group were able to recite these principles. However, some students indicated to the review team that they did not always feel safe in hallways or during time on the playground. Reviewers observed that the halls were orderly while students transitioned to their various classes as bulletin board displays reminded students about the need to control the volume of their voices and footprint decals were visible on the hallway floors to encourage students to stay in line and focus on getting to classrooms. Grade seven and eight students have a combination breakfast/homeroom period each morning. However, there is no other time in their day designated for these students to meet individually or in a smaller group with a member of the staff as an advisory period. Students indicated to the review team that they feel that have an adult who knows them well and whom they can turn to if they have any problems. Teachers expressed to the review team that they are aware of the school's system of referral for students in need. The student support team (SST) told reviewers they would like to be invited to grade level meetings and staff meetings to talk with staff about the social emotional needs of the students, but have not been able to do so as of yet. Additionally, the SST informed the review team at they rely on teachers to provide them with data for students in need of interventions, as there is no consistent way for them to access student information. While the SST in formed the review team that they schedule counseling sessions for at risk students once during a six-day cycle, crisis situations often impede these sessions from happening, which hinders the meeting of student's needs. As the school is attempting to curtail absenteeism, the teachers stated that the frequency of student suspensions has decreased. The systems for addressing student social and emotional developmental health needs across the school are developing, but presently inconsistent, which limits student academic success.

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 aligned to a curriculum or program that provides learning experiences and a safe and healthy school environment for families, teachers, and students.

- The school is beginning to use PBIS as the basis for providing a safe and healthy learning environment; however, as the system is not embedded it results in inconsistent practice across the school. Although students in the focus group could easily recite the principles of PBIS, which include be responsible, be respectful, and be safe, they could not articulate what these tenets looked like in action. Thus, reviewers concluded that there was a lack of explicit instruction on what "responsible" or "respectful" behaviors mean. However, students did note that as part of the PBIS protocol, they receive tickets as rewards for good behavior, which they then redeem for prizes. Yet, when talking about being safe, students equated this PBIS fundamental with not getting hurt, but they did not include things such as feeling comfortable voicing a different opinion in class or admitting they did not understand learning material. The review team did not

find any evidence of lesson plans to teach social emotional health. Similarly, students were not able to articulate to the review team how or where they had learned the PBIS principles. While the school leader shared that PBIS is the overarching system for social emotional developmental health, teachers shared with the review team that the PBIS system was a last minute decision and although there is a team who will administer PD for supporting PBIS implementation with teachers, this has not happened yet. While several classrooms visited had rules displayed, they did not relate to PBIS and were instead classroom specific rules such as “sit in assigned seat” or “do not get out of your seat.” Additionally, more than half of the students in the grades six through eight focus group said there were no classroom rules displayed in their classrooms at all. The others stated that they used to have a list of rules, but the teacher took them down and never replaced them. The school leader shared that they plan to train the staff of the after school program in the fundamentals of PBIS so that they can reinforce the system in the extended school day program. Lack of a consistent system that promotes a vision for social emotional developmental health aligned to a vision impacts student’s ability to learn in a healthy and safe school environment.

5.4 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* for this Statement of Practice:** All school stakeholders work together to develop a common understanding of the importance of their contributions in creating a school community that is safe, conducive to learning, and fostering of a sense of ownership for providing social and emotional developmental health supports tied to the school’s vision.

- Presently, there are no specific protocols or processes in place that clearly identify the roles or expectations that different stakeholders are expected to play in meeting the social and emotional developmental health needs of all students. Discussions with teachers and students indicate that there is a lack of clarity concerning the school goals and mission relating to the social and emotional well-being of students. Similarly, interviews with the school leader, teachers and other staff indicate that the focus of the school has been on improving academic outcomes with little time directed toward addressing the social and emotional needs of the students. The review team found that while systems are in place to support students, they are not overarching or consistently applied by all adults. Parents and students informed the review team that the school has not informed them how they can each play a part in creating an environment that is conducive to safe and effective learning. Additionally, the review team found no evidence that the school leader has put systems in place to monitor how the school meets the social and emotional needs of students. Likewise, a lack of PD focused on the social and emotional developmental health of students currently leaves teachers unable to address the needs of students in this area. Thus, not all constituents are able to articulate how the school community is a safe learning environment that meets students’ social and emotional developmental health needs, which impacts student success.

5.5 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader and student support staff work together with teachers to establish structures to support the use of data to respond to student social and emotional developmental health needs.

- The SST provides support to the staff and students at the school, but this support tends to be reactive rather than based on a plan to identify and address the specific needs of individual students based on data. The school leader informed the review team that they recognize that a more coordinated approach to student social and emotional developmental health is necessary and is drawing up a plan to address the issue. A referral system is in place, which teachers informed the review team that they use to request additional support from the SST. The SST members stated to the review team that teachers have the data about

individual students and that the team then works with them to offer interventions when appropriate, including working closely with parents. The school leader shared that the staff has reviewed the school's discipline data and found that a large proportion of the referrals involved special education students. As a result, the school leader shared that specific staff have been targeted to provide more support, guidance and counseling for these students. While a referral system that uses individual student data is in place to address the social and emotional developmental health needs of students, the SST focus group members shared that every day a new student emerges who needs counseling. They informed the review team that they currently have about twenty students on their list who need services, but are not receiving them due to time constraints. While many students are receiving services, there is no long-term strategic plan implemented to ensure the school meets the needs of all students. Increasing student attendance is a school goal, which led the school leader to hire a Say Yes facilitator from a not-for-profit organization focused on raising the graduation rates of inner city students living in poverty, who will work in collaboration with the school leaders and the SST to keep students coming to and staying in school. Inconsistent protocols and procedures that use data to address the social emotional developmental health needs of all students limit 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
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Debriefing Statement:

The school is developing a family engagement plan to increase family participation to better promote student academic progress. Through the Educational Partner Organization (EPO), Research to Practice, the school has formed a partnership with parent and family engagement specialists, Every Person Influences Children (EPIC), to provide parent education workshops. In addition, the school has a relationship with Say Yes, a community-based organization that provides support for students to become college ready. The school has recently hired a parent to act as a liaison between the school and families. Although these supports are in place, they are not yet established and embedded to ensure that a strong and productive partnership between home and school enhances student academic and social and emotional outcomes

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 leader ensures that regular communication with students and families fosters their high expectations for student academic achievement.

- The school uses multiple forms of communication to share information about the events at the school with parents; however, these do not consistently foster high expectations for student achievement. The school

leader shared with the review team that they are in the process of forming several partnerships, such as EPIC and Say Yes, which focus on parent engagement. While the review team learned that the school has offered some workshops, these programs are not yet operational. Parents informed the review team during the interview that despite the school attempts at communication, very few parents actually take part in school activities or support the work of the school during the day. Furthermore, parents shared that they believe there is a lack of clarity about the school's vision and goals concerning the role of all stakeholders in fostering student academic achievement. Discussions with the school leader also reveal that the school does not review the quality and impact of the relationships between home and school. The school leader shared with the review team that they understand the importance of family involvement, and are therefore developing a plan to increase the level of parent participation. The school does not adequately communicate high expectations for student achievement with families, which results in the school and families having limited collective impact on contributing toward 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 student strengths and needs are identified and used to augment learning.

- The school engages in inconsistent planning and reciprocal communication with family and community stakeholders to identify student strengths and needs and to augment learning. The school leader shared that the school uses multiple forms of communication including monthly newsletters and flyers to share information about the events at school, which they translate into the major languages spoken in the school community: Karen, Burmese, Arabic, and Nepali. In addition, the school uses the district-wide Connect-Ed system for calls and recordings of important information, such as upcoming student testing as well as days off from school, including snow days or early dismissal. While the review team found that the general school website has links to the twenty-one subject area departments in the school, only five of those links have information for students and families, and of those, some of the information is outdated. The review team found evidence that while the school staff is attempting to communicate with families and stakeholders, the information is general and not student specific. In addition, the review team found that the school does not evaluate the quality of the information they send to parents nor how the parents receive it. This lack of reciprocal communication reduces the role families play in supporting their child's academic achievement and social emotional growth.

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

- The school presently partners with families and community agencies in a limited manner to provide training, which therefore has a limited impact on student success. The school leader shared with the review team that the school has a partnership with EPIC, which has trained parent and family engagement specialists who conduct workshops and parenting sessions for the school. These workshops focus on aspects such as CCLS, homework and strategies parents can use to support their child's learning at home. However, according to parents and staff, these sessions have had low parent attendance as they take place in the mornings when many parents are working. Additionally, the school leader shared that the school maintains a bulletin board in a main hallway for parents with information advertising sessions offered both at the school as well as around the community focused on parenting skills, local meetings, and continuing education opportunities.

However, according to the parent focus group, a limited number of parents take advantage of these opportunities as well. Both the school leader and staff shared with the review team that the school did not offer PD opportunities to staff to help them develop strategies for building and maintaining relationships with parents or community agencies. Low parental involvement that has not led to a change in the how the school communicates, in addition to a lack of professional development opportunities regarding staff understanding for how to build and maintain relationships with families and community agencies, limits the support all stakeholders provide to support student success.

6.5 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school shares data in a way that promotes dialogue among parents, students, and school community members centered on student learning and success and encourages and empowers families to understand and use data to advocate for appropriate support services for their children.

- The school shares data in a way that presently limits dialogue among parents, students, and school community members centered on student success. The school leader shared with the review team that parents are able to access student information via the district-wide portal, “Infinite Campus.” Additionally, the school leader shared that through this portal and the school’s website, parents are able to follow their child’s progress in school as well as view grades and test scores. However, during the parent focus group meeting, participants shared that although there is a parent portal, training on how to use the system is not available and that many have reached out to the school for information on how to access the system. While the school leader shared that families receive progress reports every five weeks and report cards every ten weeks, parents shared that these interim and final grades for the marking period, do not presently promote dialogue with the school on understanding their child’s progress, strengths, or needs. Additionally, parents shared that feel that there are limited opportunities for them to advocate for their child’s needs. Limited access to information and a lack of opportunities for families to dialogue with the school limits the ability of families to advocate for appropriate services for the child, which hinders student success.

Recommendations:

Tenet 2: School Leader Practices and Decisions

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

- 2.2: Ensure that the school goals are SMART goals, and that they are created and supported by a representative group of all stakeholders; all stakeholders should work together to achieve the goals and progress towards these goals should be regularly monitored and revised by school leaders as appropriate.
- 2.4: Ensure the implementation of the scheduled plan to provide frequent and actionable feedback on the quality of instruction to staff and that teachers and other school staff understand the established criteria, including the teaching rubric, as well as other agreed upon evaluation instruments and protocols.
- 2.5: Require all staff to use evidence based systems that address individual and school-wide practices and that school leaders spend sufficient time monitoring these practices and identify areas for improvement that lead directly to higher levels of student achievement.

Tenet 3: Curriculum Development and Support

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

- 3.2: Develop a systematic plan, which includes targeted goals and a schedule for PD, to implement rigorous curricula vertically and horizontally aligned to the CCLS; provide pedagogical support, materials, and ongoing PD on curriculum development and instructional shifts to teachers to ensure that all students achieve success. Develop and implement comprehensive and adaptive curricula aligned to the CCLS and NYS standards, across all subject areas that address the needs of all students including interventions, enrichment, and dual credit courses.
- 3.3: Ensure that teachers work collaboratively to develop unit and lesson plans aligned to the CCLS and use grade-level DDI protocols including formative and summative assessment results, rubrics, and student work to address the needs of all students in all grade levels and subject areas. Provide PD for teachers to address learning progression and scaffolding strategies, using complex materials aligned to CCLS, and ensure these are included in instruction for all students; review and revise curricula on a continual basis to ensure that instructional shifts and higher-order thinking skills are present in all planning units and lessons for all students.
- 3.4: Develop and implement a plan to form partnerships to create interdisciplinary curricula targeting the arts, technology, and other enrichment opportunities across all grades and subject areas and including all students; ensure that teachers have the opportunity to collaborate within grades and subjects to develop and use strategies to connect the arts, technology, and other enrichment opportunities with subject-specific curricula.
- 3.5: Ensure that all grade level and subject teachers are using data from pre-, post-, formative and summative assessments to guide curriculum decisions; develop a process and expectation that all teachers are using data to give feedback to students so that they may take ownership of their learning.

Tenet 4: Teacher Practices and Decisions

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

- 4.2: Ensure that plans used by teachers are informed by data from assessments, attendance, and Individual Education Plans (IEPs) so that the needs of all groups of students are met. Ensure that teachers use instructional strategies that are adaptive and aligned to the needs of all students, including those needing interventions to be successful, and that there is alignment between existing modules and that plans reflect needs of individual students.
- 4.3: Ensure teachers are using instructional practices aligned to CCLS and content based standards that reflect the CCLS shifts and allow for multiple points of access for all students; ensure that teachers are using instructional materials with high levels of text and content complexity that stimulate the thinking of all students.
- 4.4: Agree on a common understanding of what a classroom environment conducive to learning looks like; explicitly teach students behavioral expectations and how to achieve acceptable and safe behaviors; include students in the development of a classroom environment conducive to learning, taking into account the unique needs and perspectives of diverse groups.
- 4.5: Ensure that all teachers are using data, including formative and summative assessment data, to create targeted plans and adjust student groupings to maximize student success and that teachers are providing frequent feedback to students so that, working together, they can plan next steps to ensure student progress.

Tenet 5: Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health

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

- 5.2: Further improve the PBIS system and referrals for support for all students to better address their social and emotional developmental health needs and academic success and ensure that all staff are using data to make decisions about supporting all students' social and emotional developmental health as well as their academic success.
- 5.3: Ensure that PBIS is aligned with the school's vision for student social and emotional developmental health; provide PD for all staff on the skills and practices of PBIS; monitor the PD to ensure that all adults in the school community have the capacity to support student social and emotional developmental health.
- 5.4: Identify stakeholders' roles in contributing to student support and create a plan to share this information in the form of protocols and processes with the school staff. Revisit the school's vision pertaining to social and emotional developmental health and share how the entire school community can work together to achieve it; design and implement a system for supporting teachers as they address student social and emotional developmental health needs.
- 5.5: Establish a functional plan with timelines and resource allocations to use data to address student needs and ensure that the entire school community is implementing the plan to deliver services to students.

Tenet 6: Family and Community Engagement

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

- 6.2: Ensure that all students and families understand that high expectations are a school-wide priority and that all communications between home and school reflect this, and monitor the quality of relationships between home and school and make adjustments where strategies are not working.

- 6.3: Develop a plan to ensure that communication with parents is student specific particularly in relation to progress and achievement and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies used when communicating with parents and make adjustments when channels of communication are not working.
- 6.4: Develop a plan to ensure that classroom teachers and student support staff are able to create and sustain family engagement opportunities that will support student growth; provide PD for school staff on ways to engage family and community organizations, aligned with the plan, that will result in student success.
- 6.5: Use data to identify family needs and develop strategies to address them; implement a program to enable families to access data and understand how this data relates to their child's success. Identify and explain ways in which families can advocate for their child.