



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	280201030010
School Name	Alverta B Gray Schultz Middle School
School Address	70 Greenwich Street, Hempstead, NY
District Name	Hempstead United Free School District
School Leader	Henry Williams
Dates of Review	December 10- December 12 2013
School Accountability Status	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Priority School
Type of Review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet											
Grade Configuration	6-8	Total Enrollment	140 6	SIG Recipient	<input type="checkbox"/>	Title 1 Population	77%	Attendance Rate	21.8 %		
Free Lunch	77%	Reduced Lunch	%	Student Sustainability	%	Limited English Proficient	33%	Students with Disabilities	16%		
Number of English Language Learner Classes											
#Transitional Bilingual	3	#Dual Language	3	#Self-Contained English as a Second Language				9			
Number of Special Education Classes											
#Special Classes	24	#Consultant Teaching	N/A	#Integrated Collaborative Teaching				8			
# Resource Room	24										
Number Special Classes											
#Visual Arts	19	#Music	20	#Drama		#Foreign Language	65	#Dance	N/A	#CTE	11
Racial/Ethnic Origin											
American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	Black or African American	34%	Hispanic or Latino	65%	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	%	White	%	Multi-racial	1%
Personnel											
Years Principal Assigned to School	3	# of Assistant Principals	3	# of Deans	1	# of Counselors / Social Workers		4			
Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	%	Teaching Out of Certification	%	Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp.		12%	Average Teacher Absences		7-10%		
Credit Accumulation (High School Only) and Performance Rates											
% of 1 st yr. students who earned 10+ credits		% of 2 nd yr. students who earned 10+ credits		% of 3 rd yr. students who earned 10+ credits			4 Year Graduation Rate				
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	78%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	88%	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4		56%	6 Year Graduation Rate				

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

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS DESCRIBED BY THE SCHOOL:

1. Increase by at least 5 per cent the number of students scoring level 3 and 4 on the NYS assessment in both ELA and math.
2. Reduce student tardiness and absenteeism.
3. Increase the use of data to drive instruction and teach to the needs of the learner.
4. Increase parent and community Involvement.

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 planning that involves student reflection, tracking of, and ownership of learning.			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	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			X	

	social and emotional developmental health needs.				
	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 has created a school community and culture based on a shared vision grounded in student well-being where students are beginning to make progress and gradually improve academic performance as measured by New York State (NYS) assessments in both English language arts (ELA) and math. However, there is still work to be done to ensure student achievement is consistently at a high level.

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.

- The school leader makes strategic decisions in organizing and utilizing resources to meet the needs of the school community. The school leader and student support teachers, stated in interviews with the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT or “review team”), that the school collaborates with staff to create opportunities and time for expanded learning. The school organizes a Saturday academy in math and ELA for students who require additional support. Funding for this initiative is from the Title I budget. Progress and achievement are regularly monitored for the approximately 100 students that attend the academy every week. Additionally there is after school instruction twice a week through the Instructional Support Team (IST). Furthermore, a peer support group explained that teachers offered targeted one-to-one support for individuals or small groups of students during lunchtime and after school. The school leader explained that the district advertises for all positions and collects resumes. The school then has a thorough system for vetting prospective candidates, which includes an interview by a panel of leaders, teachers, student support staff and parents. The school then makes a recommendation to the district, which usually accepts the recommendation in the case of teacher appointments. In the case of senior appointments, there is occasionally a divergence of views between the school and the district, because of differing interpretation of priorities. However, these divergences are usually resolved through discussion. The school leader is actively involved in fiscal decision making that help to ensure that spending closely matches the achievement of school goals. For example, in a meeting with the school leader during the review, he stated that after reviewing absenteeism rates of security staff, he had recently reduced the number of school guards in order to hire a new Assistant Principal (AP), whose role is to concentrate on increasing math achievement and improving instructional practices. The organization of available resources and the strategies for spending available funds to meet the schools goals and vision reflect the school leader’s commitment to addressing the needs of the school and its stakeholders.

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).

- The school mission was developed two years ago by district staff with school leaders from all the schools within the district. The schools' Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Results-oriented, and Timely (SMART) goals, mission and guidelines for success were drawn up by groups within the school community and address many of the priorities in the School Comprehensive Educational Plan (SCEP). The vision, mission and behavioral "Guidelines for Success" were displayed in all classrooms and hallways and the "Guidelines for Success" are recited every morning over the loudspeaker. During a grade six self-contained ELA class, students recited the "Guidelines for Success" and then held a brief discussion about what it means to be successful. The vision and mission are also in the school agenda, which is issued to each student and it is on the school website in Spanish and English. They are also occasionally discussed at Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) meetings. This results in the vision being shared with the whole school community. However, it was noted in the small student interview, that some students did not know the "Guidelines for Success." In the reviewers' meeting with parents the vision and mission statement were known by some, but not all and this was in general rather than specific terms. The goals and core values that are articulated in the SCEP may be shared with members of the school community, but they do not always translate into practice. For example, despite the positive stance advocated by the school leader with regard to behavior, several grade six and seven students reported that the behavior of some students was threatening, especially in and around the temporary classrooms. While there is an emphasis on teachers being encouraged to do regular formative assessments and core subject areas do tests that show a breakdown of skills for school leaders and teachers to compare data and regularly monitor student progress, the targets that are set for student growth across the school are too low. This and the fact that all goals are not readily translated into practice results in improvements in academic, social, and personal outcomes for students not being fast enough.

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 monitoring of teaching and learning is at an early stage and is not yet an established enough across the school to drive forward improvements in instruction at a fast pace. The school leader has just developed a plan aligned to the district's Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) plan for formally observing all teachers before the end of the current term. The school leader and two APs each have an allocated number of teachers to monitor and evaluate. The plan is aligned to the school vision and the need to improve instructional practices. In an interview with teachers, they confirmed that they had recently received instructional walk-throughs, but not by full APPR observations. The school leader stated that he and the APs conduct informal, collaborative instructional walkthroughs (CIW) to collect instructional data and provide immediate feedback to staff. Per a document review, the walk-through tool aligns with the district's APPR model. The focus of the walk-through is to provide instructional support, supervision and feedback to guide improvements. However, discussions with teachers indicate that the feedback is not always useful and that it is brief, limited and areas for improvement not specifically identified. School leaders and staff are starting to be accountable for

improvement in instructional practices, but strategies that have been implemented are not yet embedded to have a strong enough impact on improving student achievement and learning at a rapid rate.

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).

- There are some systems and structures in place intended to improve school-wide practices, but they are not monitored and evaluated rigorously enough to gauge the impact on improving the school and in particular student achievement. During the Student Support Staff interview, it was stated that the social workers and Instructional Support Staff conduct parent workshops during the same time as Saturday Academy in order to promote conversations with parents related to student achievement. The effectiveness of these workshops on improving student learning has not been evaluated. Some topics in the workshops, which began in October 2013, address understanding the rights of parents of a child with a disability, preparing a child for the state assessments and study skills. Additionally, the interviewees stated the Instructional Support Team (IST) and the voluntary Peer Support Team (PST) often collaborate to provide instructional and behavioral support to teachers, students and families both during school time and after school. The systems and interventions are, however, inconsistently modified based on the analysis of school-wide practices and the social emotional context of the student/family. During the Student Support Staff interview, it was reported that the school leader attends and participates in the PST meetings to ensure current instructional and behavioral practices align with the SCEP, but observations indicate that this is not uniformly the case. The overall picture that emerges is that evidence-based systems are in place, but are not consistently analyzed for their effectiveness on improving instructional and other practices across the school and as a result, progress towards key school-wide goals is being impeded.

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: Current curricula and assessments are beginning to be aligned to the CCLS for core areas and a start has been made to modify them for sub groups in order to change teacher instructional practices and student outcomes. However, the existing curriculum is not sufficiently rigorous or coherent and data-driven instruction protocols are not established to drive improvements in student learning and achievement.

All ratings for this Tenet are **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.

- There is a plan of scheduled professional development (PD) to support teachers in implementing CCLS curricula and all teachers have had some CCLS training. However, this plan has not yet been fully implemented and this impacts negatively on the quality of instruction and learning opportunities for students. In the SCEP, and confirmed by a review of evidence, it is indicated that all ELA/ESL, math, science and social studies curricula and pacing guides are in the process of being aligned with CCLS, but this is at an early stage and not yet embedded. Discussions with teachers and observation of classes indicate that teachers are not yet fully confident in teaching a curricula aligned to CCLS and adapting it where and when necessary to meet the needs of students. As one teacher expressed in a meeting and echoed by the comments of other teachers, " The PD, so far, has been a one shot deal." Teachers stated that more development is necessary before they can internalize all the implications of CCLS and apply them with confidence in their classes. Planning time is scheduled, as shared by the school leader, for teachers to meet in subject teams. Staff members are encouraged to use appropriate pedagogical support from Engage New York www.engageny.org and to find other materials on line and share them with colleagues. Evidence of these initiatives was not observed in meetings or in classrooms. As a result of the instructional data collected by the Special Education School Improvement Specialist on specially designed instructional practices for special education students, the school leader and the Assistant Superintendent of Special Education have identified priority areas for PD, to be implemented and aligned with the literacy component of the CCLS. This PD has not yet taken place. Evidence indicates that overall CCLS alignment and implementation are at the beginning stages and not yet fully embedded, so their impact on ensuring rigor and increasing student achievement is limited.

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.

- As reported by the school leader and confirmed by teachers, a common planning period is provided weekly in which all content area teachers have the opportunity to plan instruction for developing unit and lesson plans based on the NYS CCLS Modules using data-driven instruction (DDI) protocols that are appropriately aligned to the CCLS and NYS content standards. However, in one common planning meeting that was observed by the IIT, teachers were engaged in general discussions and did not develop challenging lesson plans to meet the diverse needs of students or to ensure that DDI is uniform in all classes. Although a data inquiry team meets weekly to discuss student achievement and growth there is little evidence from classroom observations and evaluation of teachers' planning that data are used to drive differentiated learning and instruction. The school has adopted the NYS CCLS modules as the core curriculum in ELA and math. Although teachers have a variety of complex materials appropriately aligned with the CCLS, they are not consistently utilized during instruction, as observed by the review team. From observations, all special education teachers use units and lesson

plans across all grades, content areas, and classes that incorporate a progression of sequenced and scaffolded skills. ELL teachers are also beginning to incorporate CCLS curricula. As reported in the Integrated co-teaching interview, conducted after an special education classroom visit, teachers are in the process of being trained in the development of protocols to monitor and adjust curricula to support the CCLS instructional shifts. As evidenced from most of the classroom visits in the core subject areas, ESL and special education classes, teachers demonstrate an awareness of the shifts. However, the full impact of CCLS is not currently evident, because teachers are not completely confident with all its components and are not consistently implementing it with fidelity in all classrooms.

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

- As evidenced from discussions with the school leader and other staff, there is no overall plan to ensure a consistent approach to interdisciplinary curricula. There are no scheduled vertical meetings and no planned meetings to promote interdisciplinary collaboration. However, in certain instances, teachers indicate that they do collaborate informally. During the Student Support Staff Meeting, for example, the team members reported that the social studies teachers provide law related education enrichment activities such as the mock trial competition, in which students participate. Similarly, the Entrepreneurs Club was observed preparing and selling breakfast to the staff of the school: students take orders, prepare, package and label orders, as well as serving as cashiers. The school's home and careers teacher supervises the program and special education students participate in these activities. In the PST meeting, members reported a cross-curricular project involving all core areas and art and technology. As reported by special education teachers, in an informal interview, there is a calendar to collaborate and discuss ways to deliver and reflect on interdisciplinary curricula that incorporates the arts and technology. However, the lack of a formal plan, formal collaboration activities and a reliance on an informal approach to developing an interdisciplinary curriculum means students do not have multiple opportunities to engage in thoughtful cross-curricular activities that could enhance their achievement and lead to greater engagement in learning.

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.

- Evidence from discussions with teachers and evaluations of planning and other documents indicate that teachers are in the process of developing multiple types of assessments to ensure better alignment of assessments to the curricula. However, this is at the planning stage and classroom observations indicate that the planning has not translated into instructional practice to improve student achievement. The exception to this was in special education settings where in four out of the eight lessons observed teachers implemented a comprehensive system of research-based explicit instructional strategies that included formative assessment for strategic short-range curriculum planning, such as exit cards, collecting independent work, self-check or peer check of work. This practice remains the exception rather than the norm. Students in the large group interview corroborated this by stating that some teachers provide verbal feedback during lessons based on their

performance. However, according to the students, teachers do not consistently implement a process of providing specific feedback on how students can improve or set individual goals in order to better engage and help them take responsibility for their own learning and hence measure their academic growth. The current weak alignment between the curriculum and assessment diminishes improvement in student achievement and reduces the opportunities for students to take more responsibility for their own learning.

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: Teachers are beginning to engage in instructional practices aligned to CCLS, however, high levels of student engagement are not always evident. Furthermore, students do not often demonstrate high-order thinking skills and high levels of achievement.

All ratings for this Tenet are **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.

- The school leaders have recently provided common planning time for subject areas so that teachers can start to base their unit and lesson plans on student data, which is made available by the school leaders. Some teachers have also been introduced, through PD, to the Tri-state Rubric by an AP. All teachers except math and several science teachers attended. During the PD, they had an opportunity to develop and analyze lesson plans according to the Tri-state rubric. Although school leaders state that they monitor the quality and compliance of lesson plans, only in about a quarter of the approximately fifty lessons observed, were instructional practices based on plans informed by data and demonstrated strategies to meet the needs of different groups of students. There were, however, a few lessons in which the needs of different groups were met. For example in a grade seven ELA lesson, students worked collaboratively in groups with designated group leaders, who were charged with the task of ensuring that all students participated fully and work was provided at the right level for students of differing ability. During the classroom visits of special education classrooms (Resource Room, Self-Contained, Life Skills and Integrated Co-teaching) it was also observed that teachers were using students' IEP goals to address individual needs. However, alignment of instruction with the CCLS was not directly observed. Document review indicated that some lesson plans, particularly those in special education classrooms, are organized by unit and theme of study and identify adjustments and modifications, such as, assigning supplemental tasks in class in order to reinforce what was learned. However, most core classrooms visited did not indicate such precise planning and there was little evidence to indicate that all teachers regularly establish long or short-term academic goals for

students. The school's instructional practices in general, do not yet promote high levels of student engagement and achievement or challenging goal setting and this reduces students' opportunities to be academically successful.

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.

- While the school distributed the learning modules in ELA and math this September and while teachers have received some brief training on developing lessons appropriately aligned to CCLS, most teachers across the school do not consistently employ content complexity, higher order thinking questions or high levels of text complexity within their instructional delivery. Multiple points of access, differentiation and implementation of the instructional shifts required by the CCLS were not evident in most lessons. During many classroom visits, teachers wrote the CCLS standard numbers on the board or on lesson plans. However, posting the CCLS numbers did not connect to observable instructional shifts connected to high-level questioning, which lead to deeper understanding. Levels of student engagement were variable ranging from focused collaborative group work in a few lessons to disengagement and time off-task in many lessons. In some special education classes, lesson plans were appropriately aligned to the CCLS. Some instructional practices in special education classes, such as, questioning to gain a deeper understanding, and identifying evidence from text to support opinions, persuade the reader, and convey the author's purposes were implemented during instruction. In some enrichment classes, such as the arts, lessons reflected strategies for adjusting and modifying lessons for ELLs, and special education students. These exemplars of effective practice are not consistent or uniform across the school and this lack of consistency and rigor prevent student engagement and achievement being at a higher level.

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 has behavioral guidelines for success, which indicate acceptable student expectations school-wide. The guidelines focus on creating a positive learning environment; however, this is not always achieved. Discussions with students indicate that their views and opinions are not always valued. In many classrooms visited, students were not always attentive or prepared and did not always complete assignments on time. In a grade seven math class, for example, over half the students did not hand in their homework. In the large student interview, several students, especially in grade six, said that they felt intimidated about asking questions or making personal statements or expressing personal opinions during class. Grade six students and teachers made many negative comments about the temporary classroom accommodations. They claimed these accommodations were not a safe environment, because it was not an integral part of the school and that classrooms were too small for the class sizes, which impeded the ability of teachers to circulate freely. The school implemented a PBIS behavioral program in 2011 and students expectations are positively stated and displayed throughout the classrooms, but students do not always strictly adhere to these expectations. Parents

reported that the school respected cultural diversity and treated all students fairly. However, not all students indicate that the learning environment is both physically and intellectually safe, especially in the temporary accommodation for grade six, and thus, academic progress is hindered.

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).

- While discussions with ESL and special education teachers, during the review, indicated that teachers are beginning to use data from the NWEA benchmark reports to adjust student grouping and instructional strategies, this was not observed in all general education and other classrooms, where the limited use of formative and summative assessments to inform instructional decision-making was observed. Limited use of data based instructional protocols in core subject areas also diminishes student achievement levels. The position in special education classes differs from this. Special education teachers are using the results from the NWEA results to consult with the Resource Room (RR) teachers in an effort to provide additional support in deficient skills. During the classroom visits, it was observed that some RR teachers had a folder for each student addressing strategies and skills to be reinforced. Evidence from classroom observations and discussions with students indicate that feedback to students based on assessment data is not in place in enough classrooms. Many students are not provided with feedback and guidance to identify the next steps in their learning or what improvements are needed to accelerate their academic growth. The weaknesses in data driven instruction and feedback to students reduce students' chances of being college- or career- ready.

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: While there are several informal avenues that promote and support social and emotional developmental health, coherent and aligned systems that promote this area are at an early stage of development and this impacts negatively on the effectiveness of school support in this area.

All ratings for this Tenet are **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.

- While the school does not yet have an overarching system to support and sustain student social and emotional developmental health and academic success, there are teams such as the PST and IST, which provide some support in this area. The school leader regularly attends meetings of the voluntary PST in

order to ensure that its actions and approaches are in line with some school-wide goals. This involvement of the school leader lends greater credibility to the informal support, but is no substitute for a full school-wide formalized system specifically tailored to identify and meet the needs of students. Students and parents unanimously reported that all students knew at least one adult who they felt they could approach to discuss a personal problem relating to schoolwork or their life outside school. Discussions are taking place to implement an advisory program to consolidate efforts in this area. The lack of a formal, school-wide system to support and sustain student social and emotional developmental health impacts negatively on students' academic achievement.

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 follows a PBIS program to support students' social and emotional developmental health. The IST provides support to students and families during times of crisis, and student needs supplemented by members of the voluntary PST. Partnerships exist with several organizations, including the Hispanic Counseling Center, The Hempstead Boys and Girls Club and the Hands Foundation, which at the time of the review, was conducting a holiday toy drive to deliver toys to students in need. The review evidence indicates that these organizations have limited access to the school's data on students' social and emotional developmental health and this results in the impact of their efforts to support the school being limited. There is no formal system, which provides PD to all stakeholders to build adult capacity to support student social and emotional developmental health. The cumulative impact is that support for students and their families in this area is limited.

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

- Although the school is developing protocols to make clear the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in ensuring the social and emotional needs of students are met, no formal processes are securely in place. A number of grade six and seven students commented about feeling unsafe at times, especially in the temporary classroom accommodation. The school's student council is involved in advocating the school's vision, addressing student social and emotional developmental health through discussion and debate at its meetings. The school leader has identified the necessity to develop a more formal and coordinated system to ensure that student social and emotional developmental health needs are fully met and that the school goals relating to safety and student well-being are consistently achieved in practice. This work is in progress. Consequently, not all students feel safe; the learning environment is not fully conducive to meeting student social, and emotional developmental health needs.

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 school leader and support staff are at the early stages of collecting, understanding and using data to respond to student social and emotional developmental health needs. The PST meetings do provide some opportunities for sharing data and planning some interventions or support. During the SST interview, staff stated that they use a variety of data in relation to students such as rate or referral, student participation, teacher requests for interventions, student report cards, and student counseling as valuable indicators of success when monitoring and responding to student social and emotional developmental health needs. However, further discussions with staff and school leaders indicate that PD and protocols are not yet securely in place to ensure that all teachers are able to make best use of the collected data on students to assess and evaluate the impact it is having on student achievement. Furthermore, not all staff is confident in developing strategies to improve student behavior and emotional needs so that it impacts positively on their learning. School leaders are in the process of planning appropriate PD to address the issue, but at present the issue remains from whichever source the school collects data, it is not being used in an effective manner to fully support students or to increase their opportunities to become academically successful.

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

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: The school strives hard to develop a culture of partnership where families, community members and school staff members work together to promote student academic progress and growth. However, the impact is limited because of low levels of parental engagement and the school does not regularly monitor and adjust its strategies for promoting strong and effective partnerships with parents.

All ratings for this Tenet are **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.

- While most staff members are knowledgeable about the expectation for student academic achievement, information on college and post-secondary career and technical education programs were not evident. The vision statement states, however, that students need to develop the skills necessary to excel in high school and beyond. From interviews with the school leader, teachers and the student support group, it is evident that some staff members have conversations with students and

families regarding academic expectations. Low levels of parent engagement, in spite of the efforts by the school, result in the messages from the school not reaching the total target audience. The school leader reported, and a review of documents confirmed, that these efforts include letters sent home to all parents whose children are on a grade average of 70 or below in order to express concern and offer advice. Other congratulatory letters are sent to all parents of students on the honors list. The school does not currently review and assess how parents respond to its strategies for building strong relationships between families and the school. This prevents the school from making adjustments and revisions to implemented strategies, which are not proving effective in increasing parental involvement centered on students' academic achievement.

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 strength and needs are identified and used to augment learning.

- The school makes a concerted effort to communicate with parents in both Spanish and English. Documents are also provided in these languages, so that student progress and needs are communicated. Several staff members are bilingual and some always attend parent meetings. Attempts are made to give all families information to support their child's schooling and to raise awareness of any student issues or concerns about academic achievement. The parental portal is another effective tool for communication together with the school website, which is in English and Spanish. Some members of the student support staff expressed the wish to have PD on learning Spanish in order to be able to communicate more effectively with parents. As reported by the special education teachers, all school correspondence to parents with students with disabilities, including the IEP, is provided and communicated in the families' most prevalent languages. During the parent interview, and informal teacher interviews participants reiterated the school uses multiple points of communications such as phone calls, memos, letters home, translating, for parents and students in Spanish and Haitian Creole. Despite these successes, the school has not begun to monitor the effectiveness of its communications in all languages and so it is not able to respond to family feedback, issues, and concerns that arise. This reduces the potential impact of the school and families working more closely together in improving student academic and social development.

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 review team found limited evidence of a PD plan for teachers on how to develop partnerships with families or the community. Members of the SST, the PST, and parents stated to the review team that the school partners with a number of local community organizations including the Hispanic Council, the Hempstead Boys and Girls Club, The Hands Foundation, and the Hempstead Mental Health Services. While these partnerships have the potential to make a more significant impact on student success, a lack of strategic planning to strengthen the home-school partnership limits student academic achievement.

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 recognizes that there is a need to better integrate data systems to identify family needs and to ensure that all parents understand assessment data, so that they can play a greater role in supporting their child's learning. Some data is made available on the parent portal; however, the number of users is not tracked, nor are evaluations made as to how well parents understand the data. In the SCEP, it is reported that NYSED scores were mailed to parents, data was also discussed in a Parent-Teacher Conference and at Saturday Academy parent Workshops. The SCEP also points out that data was referred to during PTA and SEPTA (Special Education PTA) meetings. During the parent interview, parents expressed awareness of the parent portal on the school website, which provides information regarding district and school initiatives, as well as resources for parents and families, such as promotion and retention requirements, graduation requirements, special education services, textbooks, health requirements and immunizations, central registration, parent/teacher associations, home instruction, SEPTA and transportation. While it is clear that some data is shared with parents, the extent to which all families fully understand the data and are therefore empowered to take action to support student learning is limited.

Recommendations:

Tenet 2: School Leader Practices and Decisions

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

2.2 Set higher and more challenging targets for student growth and achievement. The school leaders should ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the targets and closely monitor and evaluate progress towards them.

2.4 Implement the school's observation plan fully and rigorously in order to provide on-going, actionable feedback to staff and plan appropriate PD. School leaders should ensure that teachers implement the feedback that is given and that the feedback and PD lead to improvements in the quality of instruction and student outcomes.

2.5 Ensure that school-wide goals are achieved by constantly using evidence-based systems that address weaknesses and highlight strengths in individual and school-wide practices. Progress towards the school-wide goals should be monitored by school leaders.

Tenet 3: Curriculum Development and Support

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

3.2: Ensure that teachers receive guidance on understanding the CCLS and the instructional shifts and ensure that they implement them consistently in order to meet the needs of students and raise achievement.

3.3: Rigorously monitor that all teachers meet the demands of grade level DDI protocols and address student achievement and needs in all grades and subject areas. The impact of these actions should be evaluated closely and ensure that they directly lead to improvements in student learning.

3.4: Create a plan to address interdisciplinary curricula incorporating the art, technology and other enrichment opportunities. The plan should be consistently implemented across the school and monitored for improvements in student engagement and achievement.

3.5: Develop and consistently implement multiple types of assessment to ensure that the curriculum and assessment are aligned in order to improve student achievement.

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 all teachers develop a consistent form of planning that pays full attention to the use of data to inform and guide instruction so that the varying academic needs of all students are fully met. School leaders should ensure that these practices are evident and effective in all classrooms.

4.3 Monitor instructional practices, to ensure that teachers provide CCLS instruction with multiple points of access that lead to high levels of student engagement and achievement.

4.4 Create a safer learning environment across the school, paying particular attention to the temporary classroom accommodation the modular accommodation, to ensure an intellectually and physically safe environment for all students.

4.5 Monitor instructional practices to ensure that all teachers use data to inform planning, drive differentiated instruction and foster student participation in their own learning process by using a variety of summative and formative data sources in order to lead to higher levels of achievement.

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 Establish a school-wide system to support and sustain student social and emotional developmental health and academic success, by integrating fully the several effective informal approaches, which already exist in the school. The school leaders should monitor the impact of the system and evaluate its impact on improving students' social and emotional well-being.

5.3 Create and implement a plan that ensures that all adults in the school are equipped with skills and knowledge that builds their capacity as a team to support student social and emotional developmental health.

5.4 Develop and implement processes which ensure that all stakeholders are aware of and play their part in creating and sustaining safe learning environment for all students.

5.5 Develop a school-wide plan to ensure that all staff members understand and use data effectively to respond to student social and emotional developmental health needs.

Tenet 6: Family and Community Engagement

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

6.2 Ensure that all students and their families are fully aware of the academic expectations that the school sets, including the grade averages required for entrance to the high school and that the school's strategies for establishing strong relationships with families are assessed and evaluated on a regular basis and adjustments and revisions made when attempted strategies prove ineffective.

6.3 Monitor the effectiveness of the communication to parents in different languages and consider other ways of communicating, for example, student-led presentations at PTSA meetings. School leaders should respond appropriately to any family feedback and address any concerns.

6.4 Develop a strategic plan for developing school/home connections which make best use of community partnerships to help parents better support their child's education and organize high quality PD for staff members to help them promote stronger and effective links with families.

6.5 Develop strategies to identify family needs and target strategies to meet them. School leaders should also ensure that all student data is accessible to parents, is shared in such a way that it can be easily understood and in doing so enables parents to play a more proactive role in supporting their child's learning.