



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	050100010004
School Name	Genesee Street Elementary School
School Address	244 Genesee Street, Auburn, New York 13021
District Name	Auburn Enlarged City School District
School Leader	Stacey Cummings
Dates of Review	March 10-11, 2015
School Accountability Status	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus School
Type of Review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet

School Configuration (2014-15 data)			
Grade Configuration	K-6	Total Enrollment	393
		SIG Recipient	YES
Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes (2014-15)			
# Transitional Bilingual	0	# Dual Language	0
		# Self-Contained English as a Second Language	0
Types and Number of Special Education Classes (2014-15)			
# Special Classes	0	# SETSS	
		# Integrated Collaborative Teaching	10
Types and Number of Special Classes (2014-15)			
# Visual Arts	0	# Music	0
# Foreign Language	0	# Dance	0
		# CTE	0
School Composition (most recent data)			
% Title I Population	77.5	% Attendance Rate	94.37
% Free Lunch	73.7	% Reduced Lunch	3.8
% Limited English Proficient	0	% Students with Disabilities	16.2
Racial/Ethnic Origin (most recent data)			
% American Indian or Alaska Native	0	% Black or African American	6.8
% Hispanic or Latino	6.8	% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0
% White	67.4	% Multi-Racial	18
Personnel (most recent data)			
Years Principal Assigned to School	1	# of Assistant Principals	.4
# of Deans	0	# of Counselors/Social Workers	.5
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	0	% Teaching Out of Certification	0
% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Years of Experience	0	Average Teacher Absences	12.2
Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools (2013-14)			
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	10%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	25%
Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (4th Grade)	96%	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (8th Grade)	N/A
Student Performance for High Schools (2013-14)			
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4		Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	
Credit Accumulation High Schools Only (2013-14)			
% of 1st year students who earned 10+ credits		% of 2nd year students who earned 10+ credits	
% of 3rd year students who earned 10+ credits		4 Year Graduation Rate	
6 Year Graduation Rate			
Overall NYSED Accountability Status (2013-14)			
Reward		Recognition	
In Good Standing		Local Assistance Plan	
Focus District	X	Focus School Identified by a Focus District	X
Priority School			

Accountability Status – Elementary and Middle Schools

Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA (2012-13)			
American Indian or Alaska Native	N/A	Black or African American	N/A
Hispanic or Latino	N/A	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	N/A
White	NO	Multi-Racial	N/A
Students with Disabilities	NO	Limited English Proficient	N/A
Economically Disadvantaged	Yes		
Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics (2012-13)			
American Indian or Alaska Native	N/A	Black or African American	N/A
Hispanic or Latino	N/A	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	N/A
White	NO	Multi-Racial	N/A
Students with Disabilities	NO	Limited English Proficient	N/A
Economically Disadvantaged	Yes		
Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science (2012-13)			
American Indian or Alaska Native	N/A	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	N/A	Limited English Proficient	N/A
Economically Disadvantaged	Yes		
SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS WRITTEN BY THE SCHOOL:			
See SCEP			

Information about the review

- The review was co-led by an Outside Educational Expert (OEE) and a representative from the New York State Education Department (NYSED). The team also included a district representative, and a Special Education School Improvement Specialist (SEIS) representative.
- The review team visited a total of 51 classes during the two-day review.
- Reviewers conducted focus groups with students, staff, and parents.
- Reviewers examined documents provided by the school, including curriculum maps, lesson plans, school-wide data, teacher feedback, and student work.
- The school provided results of a student survey that 103 students (76 percent) completed.
- The school provided results of a staff survey that 32 staff members (73 percent) completed.
- The school did not provide results of a parent survey.

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.

#	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).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.3	Leaders make strategic decisions to organize programmatic, human, and fiscal capital resources.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 6:				D	

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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The school has received a rating of **Developing** for Tenet 2 – School Leader Practices and Decisions.

- The school leader reported that the school has not developed a data-driven mission or Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Results-oriented, and Timely (SMART) goals to guide school improvement. The leader also stated there are no formal, systems for monitoring many school-wide practices involving the quality of instruction, curricular and instructional adjustments, student academic progress, the social-emotional developmental health needs of all students, and family engagement. Discussions confirmed that the school leader does not have a secure grasp of how well students are performing academically or the strategies most needed to drive an agenda of sustained school improvement. In a school survey carried out in December 2014, 94 percent of teachers responded that school leaders and teachers have a shared vision for the school and 77 percent replied that they are aware of the school's improvement plan. However, from interviews and document review, the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) learned that teachers, support staff, parents, and students do not have a common understanding of school goals, the plan for improvement, or priorities for growth in student achievement.
- Discussions with the school leader revealed that she has implemented the required procedures of the district's Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) agreement and the school leader reported making frequent classroom visits as part of this process; however, reviewers found little evidence of written actionable feedback by school leaders to hold teachers accountable for implementing any informal feedback provided. Collaborative classroom visits with the IIT showed that the school leader accurately identifies teaching practices in need of improvement in the areas of student engagement, higher order questioning, and Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) alignment. However, a document review of written formal and informal observations carried out by school leaders showed that ratings for a number of criteria are not justified by the written evidence recorded by school leaders. Teachers confirmed that the school leader provides frequent professional development (PD) at faculty meetings and team meetings, but documentary evidence showed that topics do not consistently address significant areas of weakness in teacher practice and student performance observed in classrooms. In addition, the school leader confirmed that teachers are not held accountable for implementing improvement strategies presented during PD and as a result, professional growth is minimal.
- The school leader reported the school's high levels of student need require additional human resources, which she advocates for with district leaders. However, a lack of targeted school goals and no systematic plans for allocating available resources has led to reactive deployments of staff by the school leader; for example, reviewers found that without a school-wide proactive behavior model, the social worker, assistant principal, and school leader regularly respond to student behaviors and crises, rather than other support staff. Since school leaders have not explicitly defined the roles and responsibilities of key positions, such as the assistant principal, school nurse, and school psychologist, an inefficient duplication of efforts and missed opportunities to meet some immediate needs of the school community result. Reviewers also noted an overreliance on the use of informal anecdotal data for monitoring intervention efforts, which contributes to imprecise adjustments to staff practices meant to increase student achievement.

Recommendation:

- The school leader, in collaboration with key members of the school community, should immediately facilitate the development of three SMART targets for student academic achievement and social emotional developmental health across the school. The school’s shared decision-making team should communicate these targets to all students, staff, and families and monitor progress at least bi-weekly.

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

The school has received a rating of **Developing** for Tenet 3 – Curriculum Development and Support.

- School and district leaders provide limited oversight, PD, and support for teachers as they implement district-wide curricula; this includes compensation for some teachers participating in common planning meetings with grade- and subject-level colleagues. Teachers confirmed that the school leader provides some CCLS-focused PD at faculty meetings; however, classroom observations showed this practice is not positively impacting on raising student achievement. The school leader stated there is no formal plan with targeted goals or expectations to ensure coherent alignment and thorough implementation of the CCLS to address the needs of individual and groups of students. The school leader reported there is also no formal expectation that teachers will plan or deliver interdisciplinary curricula. Documentation review showed no plan to introduce an interdisciplinary approach to learning in the near future and no examples of an integrated approach to learning were planned for or implemented during any of the classroom visits carried out by the review team.
- Teachers reported that they use several commercial programs and assorted materials to address the CCLS, such as the Superkids Reading Program, McGraw-Hill’s My Math program, and Glencoe curricula. However, based on interviews with teachers and school leaders and a review of plans available during class visits, the IIT determined that most teachers do not develop unique unit, lesson, or daily plans, and therefore do not fully unpack the CCLS. Many teachers simply copy plans from EngageNY modules or the commercial programs available to them, but do not make explicit adjustments to attend to the specific needs of students in their classes. Although the commercial programs and EngageNY modules prescribe options for the use of complex materials and text, the IIT did not find these elements in most daily plans or in use during class visits. Reviewers noted that most teachers used prompts and activities reflecting low levels of cognitive processing, such as recall and understand, and plans for specially designed instruction were rarely evident.
- Through document review and teacher interview, the IIT discovered that teachers and staff have access to formative and benchmark assessments, such as RightPath Assessments, and content-based assessments across most subjects and grades. However, in the self-assessment document and interview, the school leader stated there is misalignment between the administered assessments, the curricula, and learning standards, which results in inconclusive performance data that is not reliable for teachers to use in making timely curricular decisions or adaptations. District literacy coaches provide data from benchmark assessments to teachers at bi-monthly meetings, which the school leader

reported has resulted in increased awareness and many informal conversations around data usage. However, the school leader and teachers also reported there are no formal procedures, protocols, or routines in place to use the information gained from assessments to fully implement and adjust curricula for the needs of all students. Discussions with students revealed that few teachers provide feedback from tests and other assessments to help students gain an accurate picture of what aspects of their learning they need to improve to achieve at a higher level. Reviewers found this weakness also results in students taking little ownership or responsibility for their own learning and academic success.

Recommendation:

- The school leader should immediately convene a meeting of all school and district staff supporting curricular development and implementation to confirm a formal written plan with timelines, roles and responsibilities, activities, and monitoring procedures for ensuring that the CCLS are fully unwrapped, taught, and assessed at each grade level.

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

The school has received a rating of **Developing** for Tenet 4 – Teacher Practices and Decisions.

- School staff stated that although school and teacher leaders outline and emphasize CCLS strategies to teachers in team and faculty meetings, the school leader does not ensure that teachers set goals for students, or that instructional practices are adaptive and reflective of student needs and learning styles. Although the school leader makes expectations clear that teaching practices should be differentiated based on student needs, evidence confirmed that school and teacher leaders do not explicitly review, monitor, or continually reinforce this expectation. Although students and teachers described classroom-grouping decisions based on random selection, student choice, and at times, reading levels, teachers could not describe any data sets, specific purpose, or precise student needs targeted in any of these groupings. The school leader confirmed that explicit data protocols or procedures for implementing flexible grouping schemas are not in place, making it difficult for teachers to make an accurate match between instructional strategies and the individual needs of their students.
- Teacher’s instructional practices are only beginning to demonstrate evidence of some pedagogical shifts required by the CCLS. Reviewers found that literacy shifts involving the incorporation of text-based answers and academic vocabulary in instruction were the most prevalent and observed in more than half of the classrooms visited; however, reviewers also found that few students were asked to read complex texts and teachers presented students with few opportunities to think creatively or engage in writing activities. The December 2014 school survey showed only 24 percent of students reporting that the work assigned to them was demanding; students interviewed during the review confirmed that much of the work lacks challenge. The school leader stated that the use of CCLS-aligned writing strategies is a current weakness across the school.

- Teachers reported that they use formative checks for understanding such as thumbs up/thumbs down, stoplight, and exit tickets. However, implementation of these strategies was rarely seen during classroom visits by the IIT. Teachers and school leaders reported that commercial programs and EngageNY modules provide many formative strategies for assessing and monitoring student progress; however, reviewer observations showed that teachers inconsistently use these resources. Reviewers noted some posted student work that showed evidence of rubric use for grading purposes, and included criteria-based feedback. However, students stated that their teachers seldom produce actionable and helpful feedback that provides specific guidance on how they can improve their work. This was confirmed by reviewers who found that teacher feedback to students was variable in quality and inconsistent in regularity, both during instruction and on reviewed student work.
- Teachers and staff presented little evidence that the varied perspectives of students are regularly recognized, and the school leader stated that research-based strategies for schools with similar demographics, such as those described in *Teaching with Poverty in Mind* and *Explicit Instruction*, have not been fully implemented. Although students reported that they feel physically safe in their classes, which parents confirmed, some school staff expressed attitudes projecting low expectations for student abilities and potential achievement. Some students also stated that they do not always feel comfortable asking or answering questions in class because, at times, such actions are ridiculed by classmates.

Recommendation:

- The school leader should convene a planning meeting with the appropriate school, district, and teacher leaders, and student support staff, within the next month. At this meeting, the team should adopt a formal data protocol, with routines for analyzing available student data and formal action steps to adjust explicit and differentiated instructional practices to meet the needs of all students. The school leader should rigorously monitor the implementation of actions resulting from these meetings, and evaluate and adjust to make sure they are leading to improvements in instruction and student achievement.

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

The school has received a rating of **Developing** for Tenet 5 – Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health.

- A school-wide attendance committee re-launched in September 2014 and implemented an action plan consisting of frequent phone calls, home visits, and parent meetings to improve the average attendance rate of 91 percent. Although the support staff reported improved relationships and small improvements in attendance, school data confirmed that tardiness and attendance challenges persist across all grades. Beyond attendance, the school leader and student support staff reported that indicators of social-emotional developmental health have not yet been identified; and therefore, data

is not collected or analyzed to identify student needs for instruction, support, or intervention. Teachers, support staff, and school leaders reported the lack of a comprehensive vision or explicit priorities for supporting the social-emotional health needs of students, and that teachers have not received PD to build their capacity and equip them with the skills to meet the social and emotional needs of all students. Without a vision or priorities to focus school efforts, the leader has not formally developed a proactive plan or put in place a program or curriculum to promote and support the teaching of student social and emotional developmental health. Although the school leader stated that a grant-funded positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) program will launch in Spring 2015, staff have not yet identified goals or targeted outcomes for this program.

- The school leader hosts regular meetings for student support services staff at which interventions are assigned for targeted students, such as academic intervention services (AIS), de-escalation, counseling, and behavior modification planning. However, the school leader, teachers, and support staff reported that these interventions focus primarily on students at an intensive or crisis level of need and that few resources are directed to students who do not yet exhibit symptoms of maladjustment. The staff reported that there is no regularly used process to assess the effectiveness of most interventions and reviewers learned that despite the fact that teachers are managing more challenging, behavioral incidents in the classroom themselves, incident referral rates continue to escalate.
- Reviewer discussions with staff and students showed that they generally feel that they work and learn in a safe environment. Students stated that although there is no formalized system, they can always approach an adult member of staff if they have worries or concerns. However, further discussions revealed that staff, students, and parents do not have a common understanding of their contributions, roles or responsibilities in supporting and meeting students' social-emotional developmental health needs. Several members of the staff, including the assistant principal, school nurse, school psychologist, and paraprofessionals, do not yet have clearly defined roles and responsibilities for supporting a proactive system of identification and data collection. The support team for academic challenges, known as the response to intervention (RtI) team, meets separately from the student support services team, with only the school psychologist and school leader as common members. Although reviewers learned that many community partners support targeted student needs, such as Cayuga Counseling Services and the Children's Crisis Services Initiative (CCSI), these partners do not regularly meet with school intervention teams to align intervention planning and review student progress. The staff reported that these teams do not have common targets, procedures, or communication systems for sharing strategies, student data, or action plans, which results in a duplication of efforts, and disconnected approaches for supporting student needs.

Recommendation:

- The school leader should convene a planning meeting with the same team assembled in Tenet 4 of the appropriate school, district, and teacher leaders, and student support staff by April 30, 2015. This group will pinpoint critical data points for proactive identification of the social-emotional developmental health needs of all students, the routines for timely collection, and protocols for analysis of this data. The school leader should rigorously monitor the implementation of actions resulting from these meetings, and evaluate and adjust to make sure they are leading to social and academic success for all students.

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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The school has received a rating of **Developing** for Tenet 6 – Family and Community Engagement.

- Although the school leader regularly communicates with families, students, and school staff to communicate an expectation that students will succeed, reviewers learned that a formal plan for systematically communicating these expectations is not yet in place. From document review and conversations with parents and staff, reviewers learned that the school leader uses newsletters, letters home, and formal meetings to emphasize the importance of family engagement. Anecdotally, the school leader reported that these efforts have resulted in more parents engaging with the school and improved student attendance; however, no hard statistical data was presented to support this assertion. Discussions with teachers and the school leader revealed that a limited number of staff members regularly practice communication strategies for building home school partnerships that include email contact, phone calls, parent-teacher meetings, and newsletters. However, the school leader reported that an evaluation of school-wide strategies for communicating with parents has not yet been carried out.
- The school leader and some staff reported they are in the process of developing more activities and strategies to teach parents relevant ways to support student learning and academic growth. However, parents stated that they would welcome greater guidance on how to support their children’s learning at home. The school calendar showed that school staff hosted an open house, parent conferences, and curriculum nights for each grade level to demonstrate to parents the demands of the CCLS and provide strategies and tips so that parents can gain confidence in supporting their children’s academic growth. Reviewers noted that parents who reported attending these events described positive experiences. However, due to low parental attendance rates, these efforts do not fully support the needs of all families and students. The school leader has not yet evaluated the effectiveness of the school’s strategies for increasing parental involvement and engagement, so no adjustments have been made to try to increase attendance rates at differing events. Additionally, parents reported few opportunities to collaborate with school and teacher leaders to engage in planning for school improvement.
- All students in this school are native English speakers, but teachers and staff reported that they have not received PD to help them fully understand and meet the diverse social and emotional needs of students that attend this school. Staff also stated that they have not benefited from PD to equip them with the skills and strategies needed to build strong, sustainable partnerships between school and home.
- Reviewers found that school leaders and staff have not prioritized the integration of data systems to support student academic needs, social-emotional well-being, and parent engagement. Parents and students reported that they get report cards quarterly with grades and several comments relating to students’ academic progress. However, some parents reported that several parts of the report card are confusing and difficult to understand.

Recommendation:

- As soon as possible, the school leader should schedule sessions of direct instruction, professional dialogue, and embedded coaching for all teachers and staff, led by expert professionals that focus on increasing understanding and implementing best practices for nurturing collaborative partnerships with the specific families served by this school.