



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	14-06-00-01-0037
School Name	Marva J. Daniel Futures Preparatory School #37
School Address	295 Carleton Street, Buffalo, New York 14204
District Name	Buffalo Public Schools
School Leader	Dr. Tonja Williams
Dates of Review	November 5-6, 2014
School Accountability Status	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Priority School
Type of Review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet

School Configuration (2014-15 data)					
Grade Configuration	PK - 8	Total Enrollment	552	SIG Recipient	N/A
Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes (2014-15)					
# Transitional Bilingual	N/A	# Dual Language	N/A	# Self-Contained English as a Second Language	N/A
Types and Number of Special Education Classes (2014-15)					
# Special Classes	5	# SETSS	N/A	# Integrated Collaborative Teaching	N/A
Types and Number of Special Classes (2014-15)					
# Visual Arts	27	# Music	27	# Drama	0
# Foreign Language	4	# Dance	0	# CTE	16
School Composition (most recent data)					
% Title I Population	87%	% Attendance Rate	91%		
% Free Lunch	86%	% Reduced Lunch	1%		
% Limited English Proficient	0.7%	% Students with Disabilities	22%		
Racial/Ethnic Origin (most recent data)					
% American Indian or Alaska Native	1%	% Black or African American	79%		
% Hispanic or Latino	9%	% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1%		
% White	6%	% Multi-Racial	5%		
Personnel (most recent data)					
Years Principal Assigned to School	3.1	# of Assistant Principals	2		
# of Deans	1	# of Counselors/Social Workers	4		
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	0%	% Teaching Out of Certification	0%		
% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Years of Experience	7%	Average Teacher Absences	11%		
Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools (2013-14)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	0.6%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	0%		
Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (4th Grade)	36%	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (8th Grade)	4%		
Student Performance for High Schools (2013-14)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	N/A	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	N/A		
Credit Accumulation High Schools Only(2013-14)					
% of 1st year students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	% of 2nd year students who earned 10+ credits	N/A		
% of 3rd year students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	4 Year Graduation Rate	N/A		
6 Year Graduation Rate	N/A				
Overall NYSED Accountability Status (2013-14)					
Reward		Recognition			
In Good Standing		Local Assistance Plan			
Focus District		Focus School Identified by a Focus District			
Priority School	X				
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	No		
Hispanic or Latino	N/A	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	N/A		
White	N/A	Multi-Racial	N/A		
Students with Disabilities	No	Limited English Proficient	N/A		
Economically Disadvantaged	No				
Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics (2012-13)					
American Indian or Alaska Native	N/A	Black or African American	No		
Hispanic or Latino	N/A	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	N/A		
White	N/A	Multi-Racial	N/A		
Students with Disabilities	No	Limited English Proficient	N/A		
Economically Disadvantaged	No				
Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science (2012-13)					
American Indian or Alaska Native	No	Black or African American	No		
Hispanic or Latino	N/A	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	N/A		
White	N/A	Multi-Racial	N/A		
Students with Disabilities	No	Limited English Proficient	N/A		
Economically Disadvantaged	No				

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

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS WRITTEN BY THE SCHOOL:

- 1: Teacher practices will demonstrate consistent, documented improvements through triangulated DDI and SIG initiatives, as well as the implementation of 2013 DTSDE recommendations by June 1, 2015, as a result of regular walkthroughs with timely feedback and support.
- 2: By May 2015, 100% of ELA and Mathematics instruction (PK-8) will be aligned to the curriculum (which is CCLS aligned) and to the rigor of annual summative assessments.
- 3: By June 2015, ALL educators will effectively plan and implement best practice instructional techniques, as a result of professional development, time built into the Master Schedule for embedded professional development, common planning time and vertical teacher meeting time (grades 6-8) as well as by creating a culture of teachers demonstrating effective best practice instructional techniques with their colleagues.
- 4: To increase parent and partner engagement in the school by June 2015, as a result of well publicized, more frequent communication and program initiatives.

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. The team also included a district representative.
- The review team visited a total of 42 classrooms 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.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 2:					I

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

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
3.2	The school leader 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 3:					I

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

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
4.2	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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 4:					I

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

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
5.2	The school 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 6:					I

Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions: Visionary leaders create a school community and culture that lead to success, well-being, and high academic outcomes for all students via systems of continuous and sustainable school improvement.	Tenet Rating	I
<p>The school has received a rating of <i>ineffective</i> for Tenet 2 – School Leader Practices and Decisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school leader reported that she worked with her turnaround team, which included staff members and parents who were responsible for writing the school improvement grant (SIG), to develop a school vision around the Triple A Motto: Academics, Attendance and Achievement. She indicated that the vision involves the school’s “Four Big Rocks,” which include triangulation of data; alignment of instruction to assessments; use of best practices; and engagement of parents and partners. The school leader also noted that staff, parents, and students have the opportunity to share their beliefs and to inform ongoing planning during updates of the vision. However, during interviews with the review team, teachers, parents, and students were not able to articulate a uniform academic direction or to describe specific, measurable student achievement goals. • While the school leader shared that she has allocated resources to support students’ social and emotional developmental health needs, such as counselors, coaches, and a dean of students through SIG funding, the review team found limited evidence of the impact of these decisions on student achievement. Although the school leader stated that she identified a group of students close to achieving proficiency levels, there was no evidence that the school leader has developed a plan to allocate resources strategically to remedy the school’s low achievement levels and to evaluate the impact of initiatives on school improvement. The school leader noted she secured consultants to advise on the programming for single sex academies and to support increasing staff and student expectations for academic achievement. However, the review team observed low expectations for student work in most classes and lessons that were not reflective of the instructional shifts and expectations of the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). • The review team did not find evidence of a consistent system for monitoring the quality of teaching. In addition to informal walk-throughs, the school leader and assistant school leaders each observe a minimum of six classes per week, and the dean visits classrooms to evaluate how students’ social and emotional developmental health are being met. The feedback from informal and formal observations examined by the review team lacked consistency in actionable next steps or specificity in terms of recommended strategies. For example, one feedback document for a teacher who has classes with students with multiple needs indicated that the teacher should modify her lessons in accordance with the students’ knowledge and interests but did not provide specific guidance on improving instructional practices to differentiate instruction. While the school’s handbook includes a list of instructional expectations, during classroom visitations the review team found that most teachers concentrated on the list of items identified as “Don’ts,” rather than the items indicating what they should do. The school leader reported that she has asked staff to increase the level of rigor in their classrooms, but acknowledged that a definition of rigor for the school has not been developed to offer guidance and support. • The school leader has identified students who are close to achieving proficiency and has named them “Bubble Students.” Although the attendance, academics and attitude of the “Bubble Students” are charted monthly, the review team did not find evidence of a specific plan to provide these students 		

with additional or targeted academic support or how this effort will result in overall school improvement. The school leader stated that she used the recommendations from the last DTSDE review to track school initiatives and student progress. She indicated that she developed a GANTT chart with all of the school's programs and initiatives, updates it monthly, posts it in the school's "data war room," and shares it with teachers on a regular basis. While the school has realized some progress in improving attendance and decreasing suspensions from 424 in 2013 to 91 in 2014, neither has not appeared to have an effect on overall student academic performance, which has not improved and remains very low.

Recommendation:

- The school leader must establish a school-wide definition of academic rigor and schedule the instructional team to conduct two hours of walk-throughs daily to support and monitor student participation in rigorous school-wide learning activities and to check that the "Do's" noted in the handbook, rather than the "Don'ts," are being incorporated into instruction.
- A suggested definition of rigor is to engage students in learning activities that engage students in multiple ways of thinking aligned to Bloom's Taxonomy.

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

I

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

- The school leader reported that she encourages the use of the CCLS, and some teachers are using CCLS materials; however, the curriculum is not implemented consistently across classrooms. During interviews, the school leader expressed the need to focus on academics and rigor and teachers articulated this sentiment. The school leader explained that she and the assistant school leaders provide feedback to teachers on the need to increase rigor but they have not defined this term for teachers or provided specific feedback to teachers on how to support student engagement with rigorous thinking, writing and student work tasks. Teachers have participated in CCLS training, but teachers and the school leader expressed that they now have to work on implementing the practices they have learned.
- The school administers school-wide assessments each Wednesday composed of questions from previous New York State (NYS) examinations. During a weekly grade level meeting observed by the review team, one of the prompts on the protocol used by the meeting facilitator asked teachers to describe changes they would make to the curriculum, given students' incorrect answers on the Wednesday assessment. One teacher shared that she had not yet taught the material on the test, and other teachers indicated they would need to reteach the content or provide additional time to practice. They did not report the need for determining a new strategy or for grouping students strategically to support targeted instruction. There are approximately seven "Bubble Students" identified on each grade level who are on the cusp of proficiency. Only one teacher in the teacher focus group shared how they supported the learning of these students. The teacher explained that the

grade six student followed the curriculum for grade seven, without providing a rationale as to how this could support a student who was on the cusp of proficiency. The Wednesday assessments and other student data are not being used to align the curriculum to the CCLS expectations, and therefore the individual needs of students are not being addressed in the classroom.

- The majority of the lesson and unit plans examined by the review team did not reference student groupings or student data. Only one plan examined by the review team had a notation regarding the use of small group instruction and re-teaching on it, but there was no indication for which specific students these notes applied or that it included the use of pertinent data. The school leader and teachers indicated that the strategies of reteach and practice were the main responses to the use of data. The school leader referenced the use of three student groupings: intensive (high need), strategic (on the cusp), and benchmark (on target). However, the review team did not observe evidence of teachers using these groupings to support differentiated work or the formation of groups in classrooms.
- Although the review team found evidence of a focus on vocabulary across content areas and teachers made word walls in many classrooms, there was no evidence of interdisciplinary instruction to promote increased relevance or engagement for student learning. The review team observed some teachers and students using SMARTBoards, but they were primarily used as whiteboards and not to enhance instruction. Students were observed working on a computer in only two classrooms.
- Teachers stated they are beginning to use assessments in classes, but the review team did not find evidence of teachers providing explicit feedback to students to support their improvement. Select student work was posted in classrooms but all of the work had perfect scores, and there were no comments on the samples that were displayed. During the small student group review of student work, only one student was able to share an example of an explicit comment from a teacher with clear feedback.

Recommendation:

- The school leader should insist that the curriculum is implemented with fidelity according to the district’s instructional and curriculum guides. The school leader should assign members of her instructional team to work with each teacher team during each common planning period to review the curriculum-pacing guide and build capacity on any aspect of the curriculum that needs clarification or modification.
- The school leader should develop a schedule for the instructional team to visit classrooms daily to:
 - monitor teachers’ adherence to the instructional and curriculum guides and the existing school’s instructional expectations;
 - monitor the posting of the learning target from the curriculum in each classroom so that students know what they will be responsible for learning; and
 - provide actionable feedback to teachers to promote teacher implementation of the curriculum with fidelity.

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	I
---------------------	----------

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

- The school leader reported that she expects the use of data to guide teaching during common planning time meetings to support teacher access to, and collaboration around data. However, the review team did not find evidence that the school leader and teacher leaders are ensuring that this is occurring in the classrooms. According to the school leader, coaches attend common planning time sessions, but the sign-in sheets indicated that often coaches are not present at the meetings. Common-planning notes reference action planning but the review team did not find evidence of action plans. During the common-planning meeting observed by the review team, the facilitator indicated that the group would engage in planning for twenty minutes; however, this did not occur. Teachers note that coaches are available to support instructional planning, and there is a “data war room” where select student data and school-wide data are posted. Student data is also posted in each classroom; however, none of these efforts has resulted in strategic classroom teaching and learning based on the analysis of data.
- Teachers are not providing engaging CCLS lessons that are reflective of the instructional shifts. In only seven out of 42 classes observed by the review team was there any evidence of the expected instructional shifts. The review team observed text-based questions in only six classrooms. In the majority of classrooms, questions were posed at the lowest level of Bloom’s Taxonomy although there were a few classes where higher order questions were posed. In the majority of classes, the review team observed low-level expectations for student work. In one upper grade class, the assignment was to answer two questions. One student shared his written work, which was one incomplete sentence, and the teacher noted it was good work.
- Students appeared compliant during the review team’s observation of lessons but were not actively engaged in intellectually rigorous learning opportunities. In the small student focus group, most participants shared that the majority of their work was easy. Some teachers reported that they are now realizing that students need to be challenged academically and attributed this realization to some of the conversations and the professional development (PD) related to high expectations that some teachers participated in during the summer.
- Goal setting is not a part of the work of the students. During the small student focus group, one of the “Bubble Students” did not indicate taking Wednesday assessments, was not aware of any test scores, and did not work with any teachers to set academic or social and emotional developmental health goals. The review team did not observe students consistently asking questions or having the opportunity to express their own ideas. Teachers often answered questions prior to students having the time to respond. Most students shared that they felt safe in the classrooms although three students noted some incidents of students’ fighting and saying hurtful things.

Recommendation:

- Teachers should implement the following classroom strategies, and the instructional team should visit classrooms daily to support and monitor effective implementation of these strategies:
 - the daily development, posting, and posing of at least two higher order questions, aligned to Bloom’s Taxonomy, to engage students in the development of their thinking;
 - through student participation in daily questioning strategies, such as “Think Write Pair Share,” and “Turn and Talk,” all students will discuss the questions;
 - the use of wait time and struggle time for each questioning activity; and

- one short or one extended constructed response-writing piece aligned to the New York State EngageNY 2-point and 4-point writing per week in every class.

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.

- The school leader reported she has prioritized addressing students’ social and emotional developmental health through staffing, partnerships, and supports and through the goal of all students being well known by at least one adult in the school. The school leader indicated she has established partnerships with local colleges and corporations to provide internships, and mentoring opportunities to boys, and partners with the neighborhood Fruit Belt Block Association, whose members have deep roots in the school community. The school leader used SIG grant funds and staffing resources to secure a dean of students and additional guidance counselors to support the implementation of a female and a male academy for the upper grades. She has developed a “check-in, check-out system” to support approximately 60 students in need of additional support; a staff member identified as a first responder, checks in with the student at the beginning and end of each day for approximately six weeks. The school support staff review the “check-in, check-out” data and subsequently decide if the student should remain in this daily program and/or if the student should be referred to the student academic intervention group for ongoing group support around personal development and conflict resolution. The school leader has developed a focus room to serve as an alternative to suspension that serves between four and 15 students a day. While these strategies have supported improvement in student behavior for some students, the school’s strategies and resources have not been leveraged to ensure that all students receive social and emotional developmental health support so that they can succeed academically.
- The school collects data on targeted students’ social and emotional developmental health and staff are beginning to check the accuracy of the data. However, the school does not have a system to track social and emotional developmental health data for all students. The attendance teacher noted she is reviewing the data that has been collected to make sure that if a student is late, the student has not been marked as absent. The school leader reported that she requires members of the school support staff to conduct home visits for students who have attendance or other challenges. The school support team, teachers, and the school leader attribute the ten percent decrease in suspensions between this time last year and this year and an overall decrease in suspensions from 424 in 2013 to 94 in 2014 to the social and emotional developmental health strategies in place.
- School support staff reported they collaborate with teachers to support a safe learning environment. One staff member noted that the division of the school into smaller learning communities, which includes the lower school and the male and female academies for the upper grades, enables her to consult with teachers every day and to work closely with students. Another staff member stated that the “check-in and check-out” system, including having the parents sign off on the daily progress report,

is helpful in addressing student needs. The school support staff explained their work with teachers in class and during grade-level meetings, indicating they assist teachers in identifying students' social and emotional developmental health needs and in modifying classroom practice. Some staff members stated that this results in a de-escalation of student negative behavior and students remaining in class, with minimal loss of learning time. However, the review team found no evidence that this work has resulted in increased academic achievement.

- School support staff shared that they participated in PD during the summer focused on the pedagogy of confidence, The Skillful Teacher, and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) system. Staff members indicated that they are seeing the results of their learning in the reduced student suspension numbers.

Recommendation:

- The dean of students, in collaboration with the school support staff, should implement the Triple A Motto by assigning each student a Triple A mentor/staff member who will schedule a monthly check-in meeting with each student to support their social, emotional and developmental health and academic development. Together they will set and monitor:
 - student attendance or lateness goals as needed;
 - student academic learning goals for the month; and
 - student attitude and social and emotional developmental health goals for the month, including personal development, conflict resolution, health and wellness, attitude, and confidence.
- The dean should develop the capacity of the all staff assigned to work with each student.

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

Tenet Rating	I
---------------------	----------

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

- The school leader has used limited strategies to communicate with parents. She has communicated with parents about school's Triple A Motto through the newsletter. The school leader reported she has also combined special events with parent conferences, sponsored a high school jamboree that was open to parents of students in grades six through eight, and initiated home visits by teachers. The school leader shared that she was hosting an English language arts (ELA) and mathematics night in November 2014 to help parents learn about strategies they can use to support their children's success. She also reported she provides opportunities for parents to develop their own skills and/or to get support through offering information on how to pay one's heating bill and General Education Diploma (GED) preparation. She stated she is working with the parent coordinator to survey parents on their needs and is beginning to plan events at different times and locations to increase parent participation, including an information night on mathematics and ELA and how parents can help at home. However, staff stated that parent participation is uneven and low overall although some staff felt parent participation is increasing.
- Some parents noted the higher expectations and demands associated with the CCLS and the work of

the school leader to secure resources to support school improvement. During the parent focus group, some participants indicated that they receive calls from their child's teacher, but did not note any other way information or data about student achievement was shared with them. Some parents felt their child was doing well despite the fact that student achievement across the school is low. One parent noted the changes and challenges at the school over the past several years and indicated that the establishment of the boy's academy was a positive development. Some parents pointed to the need for less teacher turnover so that home school partnerships could be sustained, and they emphasized that the high expectations needed for their children would benefit from stable, well-prepared staff with high expectations for their students. One parent indicated that parents were welcome in the school and that one of his child's teachers reserved a special desk for him in the classroom because he frequently visited the school. However, other parents reported that many parents were not able to come to the school during the day and that more parents need to be involved so that they could learn about the work in progress.

- The school has a small but growing Latino student population but has not yet begun to translate school-home communication. The school leader noted in her DTSDE self-assessment and in interviews with the ITT team, that one of her next steps is translating documents into Spanish. The parent coordinator speaks Spanish and indicates that she often fills the role of a translator for Spanish speaking parents.

Recommendation:

- The school leader should assign the three guidance counselors, the dean of students, the instructional coaches, and the social worker to hold a student data conference with each parent/guardian and student to provide a personalized approach to communicating with families about how to support student progress.
- The data conference should include a discussion of the student's strengths and learning gaps, and a plan of action to support the student's positive achievement.
- These conferences can occur at the school, during home visits, or on days/evenings with other school events.