



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	530600010014
School Name	Pleasant Valley School
School Address	1027 Forest Avenue, Schenectady, NY 12303
District Name	Schenectady City School District
School Leader	Sean Inglee
Dates of Review	December 9-11, 2014
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	Pre-K through 6	Total Enrollment	513	SIG Recipient
Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes (2014-15)				
# Transitional Bilingual		# Dual Language		# Self-Contained English as a Second Language
Types and Number of Special Education Classes (2014-15)				
# Special Classes		# SETSS		# Integrated Collaborative Teaching
Types and Number of Special Classes (2014-15)				
# Visual Arts	1	# Music	1	# Drama
# Foreign Language		# Dance		# CTE
School Composition (most recent data)				
% Title I Population		86%	% Attendance Rate	94%
% Free Lunch		79%	% Reduced Lunch	7%
% Limited English Proficient		7.6%	% Students with Disabilities	13.5%
Racial/Ethnic Origin (most recent data)				
% American Indian or Alaska Native		0%	% Black or African American	28.7%
% Hispanic or Latino		20.1%	% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	27.9%
% White		19.1%	% Multi-Racial	4.3%
Personnel (most recent data)				
Years Principal Assigned to School		3	# of Assistant Principals	0
# of Deans		0	# of Counselors/Social Workers	1
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate		0	% Teaching Out of Certification	0
% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Years of Experience		5	Average Teacher Absences	8
Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools (2013-14)				
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4		9.3%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	3.3%
Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (4th Grade)		83.3%	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (8th Grade)	N/A
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	X
Priority School				

Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA (2012-13)				
American Indian or Alaska Native		X	Black or African American	
Hispanic or Latino		X	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	
White			Multi-Racial	X
Students with Disabilities		X	Limited English Proficient	X
Economically Disadvantaged				
Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics (2012-13)				
American Indian or Alaska Native		X	Black or African American	
Hispanic or Latino			Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	
White			Multi-Racial	X
Students with Disabilities		X	Limited English Proficient	X
Economically Disadvantaged				
Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science (2012-13)				
American Indian or Alaska Native			Black or African American	
Hispanic or Latino			Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	
White			Multi-Racial	
Students with Disabilities			Limited English Proficient	
Economically Disadvantaged				

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS WRITTEN BY THE SCHOOL:

1. Teacher professional development to ensure instructional growth
2. Decreasing the gap in what students know and what they need to know
3. Creating a healthy, safe, and respectful learning environment
4. Use of data to inform instruction
5. Foster parent engagement

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 and a Special Education School Improvement Specialist (SEIS) representative.
- The review team visited a total of 29 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.
- Winter weather disrupted the schedule of the visit. On Day 2, the Student Support Team focus group was scheduled to meet after school; however, on both Day 1 and Day 2 all after-school activities were cancelled so staff was excused. The focus group was re-scheduled for Day 3, the reconvening day; however, the district was closed due to snow and ice that day. The reconvening day was moved to Day 4 and the focus group met with the review team on that day. Some team members had other obligations since the team was scheduled to have their work completed the previous day. This resulted in some team members not being available for the entire debriefing session with school staff. In addition, the holiday concerts were scheduled for Day 2 and Day 3. This limited the classroom visitation schedule as students in chorus were released for rehearsals on Day 1 and for the concert on Day 2.

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

#	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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 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 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 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 in collaboration with the Building Leadership Team (BLT) developed goals for the School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP). Although the goals and mission statement are posted throughout the school, on the school’s website, and on the school’s letterhead, none of the parents interviewed in the focus group could share the school’s vision or mission with the review team. The SCEP, including progress towards the goals, is reviewed with the BLT at their meetings, which occur four to five times each year. Teachers and support staff were able to articulate the ways in which the school and the school leader are working to address the vision. Professional development (PD) opportunities, as well as some school practices, such as collection of data on individual students are underway in some classes and with some teachers, but in reality, the vision is not translating into a strategic plan for sustained school improvement as student achievement remains low.
- The school leader has reviewed student achievement data and has decided to assign reading specialists and intervention specialists to support kindergarten through grade two teachers at the beginning of the school year. This additional support is intended to help students develop a foundation in literacy skills, as student achievement throughout the building is low. As these initiatives have recently been introduced and are at an early stage of implementation, data is not available to indicate the success of these implemented strategies and resource decisions.
- The teachers shared with the review team that the school leader is frequently in classrooms, both on a formal and informal basis, and completes the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) observations according to the required schedule. In interviews, teachers stated that they welcomed feedback and it provided them with opportunities to learn about and try new instructional strategies. Using the information gleaned during classroom visits, the school leader works collaboratively with the reading specialists, intervention specialists, and curriculum coaches to identify areas of strength and areas where teachers may need further support. However, the review team found limited evidence of how these actions are impacting classroom instruction. During classroom visits, the review team found little evidence of effective strategies in place to promote higher order thinking, probing questioning, or robust problem solving among the students. Further, data demonstrates that there is limited evidence that the targeted feedback is resulting in improvements in instructional practices that could lead to increased student achievement.
- There are some systems in place to monitor school-wide practices. However, a comprehensive system that addresses the interdependence of practices is not fully operational. There are systems in place to monitor student progress, such as data walls to follow the progress of individual students in English language arts (ELA), but there few systems to track student math achievement. The School Based Support Team (SBST) has a system in place to monitor student attendance and behavior. The SBST explained to the review team that the school leader also keeps a spreadsheet of information on individual students, such as discipline incidents and contacts with parents. These data are used to

trigger the referral process. However, the review team found that these structures are not organized by the school leader to systematically provide school constituents with a rigorous analysis of school priorities for improvement or to help develop strategies to tackle identified weaknesses, particularly in relation to instruction and student achievement.

Recommendation:

The school leader should develop and implement a systemic process for monitoring progress toward explicit instruction, student engagement, and higher-order thinking as outlined in the school’s mission by:

- having the school community agree on an operational definition for explicit instruction, student engagement, and higher-order thinking;
- determining how evidence of explicit instruction, student engagement, and higher-order thinking will be measured;
- communicating the mission and vision of the school to all parents including what is meant by explicit instruction, student engagement, and higher-order thinking;
- creating benchmarks to monitor progress toward goals; and
- meeting more frequently with the BLT to monitor progress toward improved student achievement.

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.

- The school leader monitors implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) through meetings with curriculum and instruction coaches, reading and intervention specialists, and classroom visits, but these monitoring procedures are not resulting in the consistent implementation of an effective curriculum across classrooms. When the review team visited classrooms, there was evidence of curriculum alignment in the use of informational texts, but higher-order questioning, as outlined in the curriculum planning, was inconsistent. Although teachers have had PD through the Institute for Learning (IFL) on planning for and using accountable talk to encourage students to think more deeply and to respond to higher-order questions, the review team found limited evidence of accountable talk in classroom visits.
- Teachers have common planning time three times per week, as well as Professional Learning Community (PLC) time each day for 20 minutes after school. During this time, and in grade-level data meetings, teachers review data from a number of sources and work to adjust instruction and curriculum planning accordingly. Despite these regular opportunities to meet and discuss curriculum issues, an increase in academic performance is not realized for most-students because efforts to use data to inform curricular decisions are not consistently reflected in classroom practices and strategies, where too often tasks are too difficult or too easy for the majority of students.

- Evidence indicates that there are some efforts to connect the curriculum across different subjects, but these do not form part of a coherent and cohesive plan introduced by the school leader to ensure that all students consistently benefit from cross curricula learning opportunities. Art and music teachers work together with classroom teachers to connect the curriculum across subjects. Curricula planning indicates that math is sometimes supported in music and art through counting out beats and learning about two- and three-dimensional figures. However, during classroom visits by the review team there was little evidence of a curriculum that supported students engaged in interdisciplinary projects.
- A minority of teachers use formal and informal assessments to make short-term adjustments to their pacing guides. At the direction of the school leader, teachers have created a data wall to chart the progress of individual students in ELA. However, these initiatives are at an early stage and practices to routinely discuss and inform curricular decision are not embedded in practice. In terms of particular groups of students, such as students with disabilities, co-teachers meet formally once per month. The infrequency of these meetings offers limited opportunities to provide feedback to students to help them improve their academic performance. Students also revealed a lack of awareness on how to use rubrics to gain an insight into the next steps in learning. These shortcomings restrict students' ability to take ownership of their own learning.

Recommendation:

The school leader should increase opportunities for teachers to plan together. These opportunities should include, but not be limited to:

- planning time for co-teachers to adjust curricula to meet immediate and long-term needs of students;
- planning for vertical alignment of the curriculum; and
- adjusting curriculum to include accountable talk.

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.

- The school leader provides opportunities for teachers to access data to inform their lesson plans. Lesson plans, reviewed by the review team, contained sections that the school leader requires in accordance with the APPR guidelines. Classroom visits and further discussions with the school leader and teacher groups indicated that teachers have access to data from AimsWeb, Performance Plus, Fountas and Pinnell, and the Foundations program to assess student progress. Although not always evident in lesson plans, in practice some teachers were found to be differentiating their instruction through small group work, learning centers, and independent work for students. This practice is not consistent across the school. During a grade-level data meeting, the review team found some teachers monitoring student progress by reviewing individual student sight-word acquisition and the results of other assessment information. Through this analysis, literacy coaches, reading teachers, and

intervention specialists developed a six-week plan to monitor each student. This close progress monitoring of individual students has been a focus this school year, but efforts have not yet resulted in long term or sustained improvements in student achievement. Although teachers provide feedback to students, most of the feedback observed by the review team was not specific to a student's work, but rather generic in nature. Although rubrics were often used or posted on classroom walls, the team saw limited opportunities for students to become involved in evaluating their own work.

- The district curriculum that teachers use has been developed to align with the CCLS and includes the instructional shifts. During classroom visits, the review team found that instruction was generally aligned to the CCLS. However, opportunities for students to develop higher-order thinking were not consistent across classrooms or grades. Teacher practices varied in co-teaching classrooms. In some classes, both teachers were teaching the lesson; in others, the general education teacher taught and the special education teacher circulated and helped students one on one. While teachers shared that student Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals are available to teachers, the review team found that accommodations were not consistently used during classroom instruction.
- In general, the majority of students in the classes visited by the review team were well behaved, but many were not actively engaged during teacher-directed lessons. Often teachers called on the same few attentive students and opportunities were not always provided for students to engage in group discussions or to share their views and opinions. When asked if they felt safe at school, students in the focus group said they did and that they felt comfortable going to their teacher for help with any concerns. Students in the focus group said they thought that if they needed help, the adults in the school would help them. When asked what they would do if they did not understand something in class, they agreed that they could just raise their hand and ask a question.
- Some teachers monitor student progress in ELA and differentiate instruction through student groupings. The school leader has provided extensive classroom libraries, which enable the teachers to match students with a variety of books targeted to their reading levels. In one classroom visited, the teacher had identified some particular math concepts that were not understood by a few students. The teacher worked with those four students to remind them of their prior learning and to help them understand the new content. In another class working on poetry, co-teachers spontaneously adjusted the pairing of students to match those with stronger language skills with those students who had weaker vocabularies.

Recommendation

The school leaders should monitor lesson plans and instruction to ensure all students are actively engaged in learning. Include the following areas in monitoring:

- higher order thinking opportunities for all students;
- incorporation of IEP goals and accommodations;
- explicit feedback to students so they understand their strengths and challenges and how to increase their success; and
- opportunities for students to reflect on their work and take ownership of their learning.

<p>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.</p>	<p>Tenet Rating</p>	<p>D</p>
<p>The school has received a rating of Developing for Tenet 5 – Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school leader has some systems in place to address the social and emotional developmental health needs of students. He meets weekly with the SBST to monitor the formal process in place, which teachers use to gather data about individual students. Teachers identify both academic and social challenges their students may have, including disciplinary incidents, excessive absences, and situations they may be aware of in the student’s home. Information is shared with the SBST, who creates an intervention plan as needed. However, protocols are not in place to ensure that the effectiveness of these strategies is evaluated to ensure that the needs of all students are consistently met. The school leader maintains a database, accessible to all school staff, which contains information about individual students, including discipline referrals and parent contact, but this information is not consistently analyzed to ensure that resources and actions are targeted to meet student needs. Due to budget restrictions, the school has lost a social worker. In addition, a community mental health agency, which previously had an office in the school, no longer has staff on site. To ameliorate these losses, the school leader arranged to have the district’s behavior specialist push into classrooms to help support both the teachers and the students. Teachers say this has helped them address student needs. However, they explained that they need additional resources and expertise in order to meet all student social and emotional developmental health needs. • There are several programs in place to address student social-emotional development. These include Second Step, where students learn empathy, emotion management, and problem solving skills, and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). PBIS tenets, like respect and responsibility, were posted in the classrooms visited. Caught Being Good is a feature of PBIS. Students shared with the review team that they look forward to receiving this recognition and to being part of the Caught Being Good rewards each month. However, strategies are not embedded to monitor and evaluate these programs. While some staff shared with the review team the importance of meeting the social and emotional needs of students, the review team found that staff members need additional PD in order to ensure all stakeholders are clear on their roles in meeting student needs. School staff shared examples of anecdotal data as evidence of the positive strides they are making to support student social and emotional developmental health needs. However, they are just at the beginning stages of establishing a systematic way of collecting and using data in a comprehensive way to ensure that every student becomes academically and socially successful. <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>The school leader, SBST, and intervention specialists should review programs and services currently offered for</p>		

students. Areas to focus on should include:

- Goals and objectives of each program;
- numbers of students being served, including which students are not being served;
- methods of assessing/evaluating success of programs;
- collection and analysis of data; and
- creation of a systemic plan for supporting social and emotional developmental health needs.

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

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

- The school leader communicates high expectations for student achievement to the staff as well as the school community. There are regular communications sent to parents including newsletters, phone calls, emails, text messages, classroom newsletters, and behavior logs. In addition, events are held throughout the school year during which parents have the opportunity to learn about the school programs and expectations for student achievement. However, the review team found that the school does not formally evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies it uses for building relationships with families, and parent turnout for events remains low.
- Newsletters and the parent portal, which has options for translation into several languages, provide general information about the activities at the school to families. In their respective focus groups, parents and teachers both talked about the opportunities for communication about individual students and their successes and challenges. Parents said most teachers were responsive to their calls and emails. A small group of teachers explained how they use the ClassDojo app to share with parents how students are progressing and what homework is assigned. However, parents shared that not all families have internet access, which hinders reciprocal communication.
- Throughout the school year, there are opportunities for parents to learn ways in which they can support their children’s learning and growth. For example, at back to school night the school leader explained to parents his vision and high expectations. Teachers held a Common Core curriculum night during which they explained the CCLS and the instructional shifts. There was also a literacy night where teachers talked about ELA standards and the emphasis on reading informational texts and evidence-based writing. Teachers told the review team that some parents were having a difficult time trying to help their children with math homework. The parents in the focus group concurred. In response to this, teachers offered a parent workshop to explain the shifts in the math CCLS. However, few parents attended these workshops. Teachers stated they received limited PD on ways to strengthen partnerships with parents and families.
- The school leader, the SBST, and intervention specialists collect and share school data with teachers about individual students. Based on this information, members of the SBST stated they work with parents to identify community agencies, to help address student and family needs. However, student support staff shared that the school needs to improve providing all students and families with access to

appropriate support based on data.

Recommendation:

In order to develop more robust relationships with parents and families the school leader, SBST, and intervention specialists should:

- review the ways in which they communicate high expectations for students to staff and parents and determine the success of that communication;
- collect data on ways in which teachers communicate with parents, evaluate the success, and establish a systemic method for communicating with all parents; and
- work with already involved parents to develop a successful method to increase and maintain training opportunities for all parents to support an increase in their child's achievement.