



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	050100010008
School Name	William H. Seward Elementary School
School Address	52 Metcalf Drive, Auburn, NY 13021
District Name	Auburn City School District
School Leader	Robert Montgomery
Dates of Review	November 17-18, 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 for William H. Seward Elementary School

School Configuration (2015-16 data)					
Grade Configuration	K-6	Total Enrollment	507	SIG Recipient	Yes
Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes (2015-16)					
# Transitional Bilingual	0	# Dual Language	0	# Self-Contained English as a Second Language	0
Types and Number of Special Education Classes (2015-16)					
# Special Classes	4	# SETSS	5	# Integrated Collaborative Teaching	14
Types and Number of Special Classes (2015-16)					
# Visual Arts	1	# Music	1	# Drama	n/a
# Foreign Language	n/a	# Dance	n/a	# CTE	n/a
School Composition (most recent data)					
% Title I Population	49.71	% Attendance Rate	94.74		
% Free Lunch	41.14	% Reduced Lunch	5.71		
% Limited English Proficient	2.66	% Students with Disabilities	13.52		
Racial/Ethnic Origin (most recent data)					
% American Indian or Alaska Native	.19	% Black or African American	4.95		
% Hispanic or Latino	4.76	% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	2.1		
% White	80.0	% Multi-Racial	8.0		
Personnel (most recent data)					
Years Principal Assigned to School	3	# of Assistant Principals	0		
% 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	19.95		
Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools (2014-15)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	25.46	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	34.96		
Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (4th Grade)	91.90	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (8th Grade)	n/a		
Student Performance for High Schools (2014-15)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	n/a	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	n/a		
Global History Performance at levels 3 & 4	n/a	US History Performance at levels 3&4	n/a		
4 Year Graduation Rate	n/a	6 Year Graduation Rate	n/a		
Regents Diploma w/ Advanced Designation	n/a	% ELA/Math Aspirational Performance Measures	n/a		
Overall NYSED Accountability Status (2014-15)					
Reward		Recognition			
In Good Standing		Local Assistance Plan			
Focus District	X	Focus School Identified by a Focus District	X		
Priority School					

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

DID NOT MEET Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA (2013-14)			
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	yes	Limited English Proficient	n/a
Economically Disadvantaged	yes	ALL STUDENTS	
DID NOT MEET Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics (2013-14)			
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	yes	Multi-Racial	n/a
Students with Disabilities	yes	Limited English Proficient	n/a
Economically Disadvantaged	yes	ALL STUDENTS	
DID NOT MEET Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science (2013-14)			
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	yes	Multi-Racial	n/a
Students with Disabilities	n/a	Limited English Proficient	n/a
Economically Disadvantaged	n/a	ALL STUDENTS	

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS WRITTEN BY THE SCHOOL:

1. Creation and implementation of a monitoring and evaluation tool in regards to instructional programs
2. Use of and reflection on curriculum pacing calendars, instructional programs, and curriculum development collaborations
3. Data Inquiry Team Meetings (DIT)
4. Extended Learning Time (ELT)
5. Community Café/Family 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 (NYSED). The team also included a district representative, a district-selected OEE, and a Special Education School Improvement Specialist (SESIS) representative.
- The review team visited a total of 37 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, schoolwide data, teacher feedback, and student work.
- The school provided results of a student survey that 192 students (38 percent) completed.
- The school provided results of a staff survey that 48 staff members (80 percent) completed.
- The school provided results of a parent survey that 89 parents (8.8 percent) completed.

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	Stage 4	Stage 3	Stage 2	Stage 1
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 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 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"/>
TENET 2 OVERALL STAGE :					1

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	Stage 4	Stage 3	Stage 2	Stage 1
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 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,	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

	technology, and other enrichment opportunities.				
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"/>
TENET 3 OVERALL STAGE :				2	

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	Stage 4	Stage 3	Stage 2	Stage 1
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"/>
TENET 4 OVERALL STAGE :				2	

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	Stage 4	Stage 3	Stage 2	Stage 1
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 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"/>
TENET 5 OVERALL STAGE :				2	

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	Stage 4	Stage 3	Stage 2	Stage 1
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 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 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"/>
TENET 6 OVERALL STAGE :				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.	Tenet Stage	1
---	--------------------	----------

The school is at **Stage One** for Tenet 2 – School Leader Practices and Decisions.

- The school leader has not established and shared a vision or mission with all community stakeholders that allows them to contribute to school improvement; and schoolwide goals included in the School Comprehensive Educational Plan (SCEP) are not specific, measurable, ambitious, results-oriented, and timely (SMART). Interviewed families were unclear about the school goals, vision, and ways they could provide support for school staff and students to meet schoolwide objectives. Although teachers reported having grade-level goals, no interviewed teacher could clearly define specific goals except to say they are to improve academic achievement. The lack of a clear vision, mission, and goals limits the school leader’s ability to define success or determine if actions are moving the school forward.
- Although the school leader has been in place for over two years, initiatives have yet to result in improved student achievement. For example, the school leader has implemented extended learning time in which teachers use assessment data to group students according to their achievement levels; however, the review team found that teachers do not effectively differentiate the majority of instruction planned for these classes and, as a result, this resource is not producing the intended outcome. School results on the state English language arts (ELA) and mathematics assessments declined between 2014 and 2015. The school leader stated that because the school lacks specific goals and systems to monitor progress, it is difficult to ascertain if strategic decisions are having the desired impact.
- The school leader has not provided regular and targeted written feedback to staff that has resulted in high quality instruction in all classrooms. The school leader stated that thus far this school year he has provided written feedback to only six of the school’s 35 teachers, and of seven teachers interviewed by the review team only one had received written feedback from the school leader. The school leader shared that supervisory time for teachers is limited as he sometimes spends up to three hours a day supporting students with social-emotional needs. As a result, the school leader conducts limited classroom visits and provides little formative and targeted feedback to teachers about improving their instructional practices. Additionally, the school leader does not use a feedback loop to follow up with teachers after he has delivered initial feedback.
- The school leader has not implemented systems to monitor the effectiveness of school practices and initiatives, such as the SpringBoard writing program or school math program, to determine their impact on student outcomes. For example, interviewed teachers were unable to state whether the math program and resources have contributed to student improvement, as there is no progress monitoring protocol. The school leader informally reviews student achievement data, but has not developed ways to determine the impact of particular programs or practices on student achievement.

Recommendation:

By December 1, 2015, the school leader should develop one system to monitor the progress of one school initiative to ensure that this initiative is having the desired impact. This process should include the

development of a SMART goal related to the initiative. The school leader should:

- identify a school academic initiative implemented to improve student learning and achievement;
- identify data to be used to determine if the initiative is having a positive impact on student learning/achievement;
- monitor these data bi-monthly with members of the school’s leadership team;
- determine if the initiative is moving the school closer to the attainment of the SMART goal;
- determine why the initiative may or may not be resulting in an appropriate rate of progress; and
- make strategic decisions as a result of this monitoring process that inform professional development, classroom walkthroughs, teacher feedback, and adjustments to curricular and instructional practices.

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 Stage	2
--------------------	----------

The school is at **Stage Two** for Tenet 3 – Curriculum Development and Support.

- The school leaders have not ensured that staff develop and provide rigorous, differentiated curricula aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) to meet the needs of all learners. Although the school leader and interviewed teachers stated that all teachers are aware that data-driven instruction (DDI) leading to differentiation is a critical piece of the school’s vision for curriculum, the review team examined lesson plans and found they did not include data teachers use to differentiate curricula. Additionally, interviewed teachers stated that they are sometimes unsure about when to implement curricular programs, such as the New York State (NYS) curriculum modules and Superkids, which the school uses to supplement its ELA curriculum, with fidelity and when they can modify the programs to customize curricula. As a result, the school leader’s vision for curriculum is not being carried out.
- The review team found that teachers do not typically plan lessons that include DDI protocols. The school leader and the school data team shared that teachers are still learning how to use assessment data to plan differentiated lessons. Reviewers noted in their examination of lesson plans that the majority did not take into account student data that would lead to individualized instruction; and in only one instance was a lesson designed using data-based student groupings. The school leader and most interviewed teachers reported that although they have made progress in the area of data, teachers still lack confidence when using data individually and within teams to plan lessons. The school leader stated that some grade-level teams are more advanced than others in the DDI process, which makes practice inconsistent across the school. Reviewers also found that lesson plans typically did not include higher-order and open-ended questions and typically required students to perform low-level tasks related to factual recall and comprehension, limiting the levels of student thinking.
- Teachers do not meet to plan interdisciplinary curricula nor do teachers regularly connect lesson plans across subject areas. Both the school leader and interviewed teachers stated that classroom teachers do not plan interdisciplinary lessons with the art, music, or physical education teachers, as the schedule

does not accommodate common planning with these teachers. The review team found little cross-curricular planning in examined lesson plans, although reviewers noted a few instances of teachers connecting writing and social studies in lessons.

- Teachers use summative assessment data to determine if students have learned the material taught, but do not regularly use assessment data to inform scaffolded lessons or differentiation to reach all learners. The school leader stated that teachers use summative assessment data in lesson planning to homogeneously group students at all grade levels for the extended learning time program. However, the school leader conceded that few teachers use formative assessment data daily to plan lessons accounting for the individualized instructional needs of students. In addition, reviewers did not observe teachers using any data-based feedback practices that encourage student ownership of learning.

Recommendation:

By December 1, 2015, the school leader should ensure that all teachers include a minimum of two open-ended questions in their lesson plans for each lesson they teach. The questions should:

- be aligned to the instructional objective(s);
- promote increased student engagement in the class; and
- provide opportunities for varied responses from student to student.

The school leader, administrative intern, director of instruction and/or instructional coaches should review a minimum of ten lesson plans every week to ensure that teachers implement this practice as prescribed. Each teacher should have his or her lesson plans checked each month by one of these personnel to ensure that this practice has been implemented with fidelity.

<p>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.</p>	<p>Tenet Stage</p>	<p>2</p>
--	---------------------------	-----------------

The school is at **Stage Two** for Tenet 4 – Teacher Practices and Decisions.

- Although the school leader has set a vision for instructional practice that includes data-driven and differentiated instruction, the review team did not find these practices in place in the majority of classrooms visited. All interviewed teachers stated that they understood the school leader’s vision for instruction, but noted that the school is still at the beginning phase of this process. The school leader stated that some teachers have not yet bought in to the instructional vision. Furthermore, the review team found that because the school leader provides limited feedback to teachers, he is not providing the necessary oversight to guide teachers in using new strategies.
- The review team generally found that teachers use whole-group classroom instruction and do not regularly analyze data to adjust instruction to meet the learning styles of all students. In a majority of the 37 classrooms visited, reviewers observed whole-group instruction where students were completing the same or similar tasks. Interviewed students stated that they typically do the same tasks

as other students in their class regardless of achievement level or skill. Class visits also showed that teacher instructional practices seldom incorporated higher-order questions and complex materials. Reviewers found that most of the questions teachers asked were both low level and closed ended, limiting opportunities for students to engage in rigorous thinking; the school leader agreed with this assessment. Interviewed teachers stated they were unsure of how to incorporate higher-order questions into their instructional practices while using prescriptive curricular programs.

- In the majority of classrooms visited, lessons were teacher directed and students did not take ownership of their own learning. Teachers typically asked most questions and expected that students respond in a traditional manner; as a result, teachers did not provide students with opportunities to take intellectual risks. Furthermore, reviewers found that most teachers do not plan and deliver lessons that account for diverse student needs.
- Classroom visits and student interviews proved that most teachers do not regularly use data to adjust instruction, nor do teachers regularly provide feedback to students to allow for self-evaluation. While teachers use data to determine student groupings for extended learning time periods, reviewers noted only two instances during classroom instruction where student achievement data were used to adjust instruction to meet the needs of individual students. A review of student-submitted work showed that the majority of feedback provided to students was not targeted or formative and did not allow students to know the next steps needed to make progress in a specific skill or content area. In many cases, these students were unable to express what the feedback meant or how they should use it to improve their learning.

Recommendation:

By December 1, 2015, the school leader should ensure that all teachers provide explicit feedback to students on all writing assignments. The feedback should be directly linked to student performance in the areas assessed in the writing assignment and should provide clear guidance to students on how to improve in each skill area noted.

- All teachers should provide a minimum of two formative comments for each piece of student work.
- This feedback should clearly explain to students how they performed in relation to the writing objective(s), what skill(s) they need to improve upon, and what they can do to become better writers in that particular area.
- The school leader, administrative intern, the director of instruction, and instructional coaches should review samples of student writing biweekly to ensure that teachers are implanting this practice with fidelity. Each grade-level team should have their feedback reviewed a minimum of once every month.

The school leader, intern, director of instruction and/or instructional coaches should then provide feedback to the teachers whose feedback they reviewed to help these teachers improve their practice in this area.

<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 Stage</p>	<p>2</p>
--	---------------------------	-----------------

The school is at **Stage Two** for Tenet 5 – Social and Emotional Developmental Health

- Although the school leader has not yet established systems to monitor whether the school is meeting the social and emotional developmental needs of all students, he reported that he is beginning to track student data, such as data on behavior, attendance, and tardiness, to make some decisions related to these areas. For example, the school leader cited the addition of a lunch monitor this school year in response to behavioral issues occurring during lunch period. However, the school leader conceded that he has not made it a common practice to analyze student behavioral data as a basis for decision-making.
- According to the school leader, there has been inconsistency in the implementation of the school's social and emotional developmental health program, which has no detailed and documented policies. Reviewers learned that the school leader disbanded the student support team as a formal decision-making unit this school year and now expects each grade-level team to act as a response to intervention (RTI) team. The grade-level teams review student data, such as data on attendance, suspensions, and referrals, with support staff input, and make recommendations for students who may need social and emotional supports beyond interventions in the regular classroom setting. However, teachers stated there are no expectations for how teams implement the RTI program; the school leader reported that staff do not receive training in tier one, two, or three interventions. The school leader also stated there has been no training for staff on understanding the social and emotional impact of poverty on students, a subgroup of concern to school leaders.
- Teachers and parents reported that the school does not have clearly defined roles and responsibilities for staff, families, and community stakeholders that ensure all parties understand how they may work together to support the social and emotional developmental health needs of students. Interviewed teachers and parents could not site the specific roles and responsibilities for their respective groups, and school staff have not produced a document that defines them. The school leader and teachers stated that the school and district do not provide staff members with professional development (PD) on how to build partnerships with families or community agencies, and parents reported that the school has not offered training in how to support the social and emotional needs of children.
- The student support staff reported, and the school leader confirmed, that the school does not regularly collect, analyze, and use data to determine if the school's efforts to support students' social and emotional developmental health are removing barriers for all children. The student support staff stated they tend to look at intervention outcomes on a student-by-student rather than school-wide basis and cited the school's anti-bullying program as an example; however, they were unable to provide evidence that this program has had a positive impact on the school as a whole. Both the student support staff and teachers reported there are no direct links between the school's PD program and an analysis of referral and suspension data. As a result, staff may not be able to offer the social or emotional support that students require as staff may not understand student needs or how to identify students who have social and emotional needs.

Recommendation:

The school leader, school psychologist, and social worker should ensure that the school develops a document that details the roles and responsibilities of all adult members of the school community – staff members,

families, and community organizations – as they pertain to the school’s social and emotional developmental health program. This document will define the specific roles and responsibilities of the:

- School leader
- School psychologist
- Social worker
- Nurse
- Resource officer
- Teachers
- Grade-level teams
- Support staff
- Parents
- Community organizations

Development of the document should begin by November 23, 2015 and should include members of the above groups. The document should be completed by January 31, 2016.

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 Stage	2
--	--------------------	----------

The school is at **Stage Two** for Tenet 6 – Family and Community Engagement.

- The review team found through interviews with staff and families that the school leader has not communicated a clear vision for engaging families as partners in their children’s learning. Additionally, the school leader stated that he has not yet developed a plan for communication with parents to ensure they have high expectations for their children. Teachers reported that the school leader has not provided them with guidance or protocols on communicating with families.
- The school does not regularly provide avenues for reciprocal communication between staff and parents so that parents have opportunities to understand student needs and support student achievement. The school leader stated that he has begun hosting Community Cafés three times a year at which he discusses school activities and challenges with parents; the school provides dinner and childcare to encourage parental involvement. The school leader and some parents who have attended these sessions reported that they found them very productive and informative, although attendance was lackluster; typically between ten and twenty-five people attend each session. The school also communicates to families through a newsletter.
- The school leader reported that the school has not provided training to families on how to effectively use school services or become partners in children’s learning. Although support staff reported mailing a document to families that described the community services available for the academic and social-emotional support of children, none of the eight family members interviewed could recall receiving the document. Additionally, the school leader and teachers stated that staff members have received no training on how to reach out to families to engage them in taking an active part in their children’s education.

- Teachers or school staff do not share student performance data in ways that parents can easily understand and use to support their children’s learning at home. Parents stated they often need to contact teachers to request information about their child’s academic needs; and parents noted that they would like teachers to update them more frequently on their child’s academic performance. The school leader stated that the school stopped sending reading progress data home because parents misunderstood the purpose of the reports, believing them to be a measure of aptitude rather than achievement data. Although the school has never sent math assessment data home, the school leader stated he believes that these data would be easier for parents to understand and use to help their child at home.

Recommendation:

Beginning February 1, 2016, the school leader and teachers should ensure that all families be provided with academic performance data on their child from the My Math Standards Check assessments twice per year. This communication should include:

- the child’s score;
- what the score means, what skills the child is best at, and what skills the child needs the most support on to improve; and
- strategies and resources related to the My Math program that all families should have access to that they can use at home to help their child improve.

The school leader should provide family workshops on this assessment and related resources and strategies during his scheduled Community Cafés.