



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	61030106001
School Name	Dryden Elementary School
School Address	36 Union Street, Dryden, NY 13052
District Name	Dryden Central School District
School Leader	Mr. Joshua Bacigalupi
Dates of Review	May 10 – 11, 2016
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 Dryden Elementary School

School Configuration (2015-16 data)					
Grade Configuration	K-5	Total Enrollment	504	SIG Recipient	
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	1	# SETSS		# Integrated Collaborative Teaching	10
Types and Number of Special Classes (2015-16)					
# Visual Arts	29	# Music	30	# Drama	0
# Foreign Language	0	# Dance	0	# CTE	0
School Composition (most recent data)					
% Title I Population		35	% Attendance Rate		96.9
% Free Lunch		49	% Reduced Lunch		11
% Limited English Proficient		1.4	% Students with Disabilities		16
Racial/Ethnic Origin (most recent data)					
% American Indian or Alaska Native		.19	% Black or African American		0
% Hispanic or Latino		2.99	% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander		0
% White		87.00	% Multi-Racial		6.95
Personnel (most recent data)					
Years Principal Assigned to School		<1	# of Assistant Principals		1
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate		.15	% Teaching Out of Certification		0.0145
% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Years of Experience		13	Average Teacher Absences		
Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools (2014-15)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4		25 %	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4		21.7%
Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (4th Grade)		76.7%	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (8th Grade)		N/A
Overall NYSED Accountability Status					
In Good Standing			Local Assistance Plan		
Priority School			Focus School		X
<p>SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS WRITTEN BY THE SCHOOL:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Close the Achievement Gap 2. Kindergarten Preparedness 3. Rigorous Curriculum 4. Data Driven Practices 5. Youth Development 					

School Identification Status		
The school was identified for not meeting the subgroup performance minimum cut point for the following subgroups in 2014-15:		
Subgroup	School's Performance	Minimum Cut point
Students with Disabilities	12.5	29
Economically Disadvantaged	57.5	64

Purpose of the visit

This school was visited by the State Education Department Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) because of its low performance.

The purpose of this review is to provide the school with feedback regarding the practices across the school and to provide a number of actionable recommendations to direct the school's work in the immediate future.

This report is being provided as a feedback tool to assist the school and to help identify areas for improvement. These areas can address the subgroups identified or they may be broader and cover additional subgroups or the entire school. NYSED recognizes that there are dedicated staff members at the school committed to the success of the students. The report below provides a critical lens to help the school best focus its efforts.

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, a Special Education School Improvement Specialist (SEIS) representative, and a representative from the Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN).
- The review team visited a total of 39 classrooms during the two-day review.
- The OEE visited eight classrooms with the school leader during the 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.
- In advance of the review, the school provided results of a student survey that 97 students completed.
- In advance of the review, the school provided results of a teacher survey that 61 teachers completed.
- In advance of the review, the school provided results of a parent survey that 40 parents completed.
- Both the Principal and Assistant Principal have been in post for approximately one year.

The Review Team concluded that the school's current systems and practices are generally aligned with Stage 2 or Stage 1 on the DTSDE Rubric, with the majority of Statements of Practice aligning with Stage 2.

SUCCESSSES WITHIN THE SCHOOL THAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD BUILD UPON:

1. Teachers have created an environment conducive to teaching and learning through the establishment of clear routines, procedures, and expectations. The review team observed that students were polite, calm, attentive, and cooperative in their classrooms and throughout the school.
2. The administration, psychologist, and social worker (APS) team meets weekly to identify student and family needs, make appropriate provisions, and monitor the effectiveness of student support services. The school provides essentials such as clothing, toiletries, and school supplies. Support staff conduct home visits and collaborate with external agencies, including social services and health organizations, to support students and families.
3. The school's character education program contributes to a strong school culture by helping all students develop positive attributes and traits. Teachers conduct lessons based on specific character themes. In

interviews, the school leader, staff, students, and parents remarked about the importance and value of the character education program.

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.

Recommendation for Tenet 2 – School Leader Practices and Decisions:

Beginning on June 6, 2016, the school leader should collect teachers' lesson plans weekly to monitor the implementation of his lesson planning expectations. The school leader should provide individual teachers with detailed, actionable feedback within two days of the submission of their plans and compile and share his observations from lesson plan monitoring with all teachers to improve their practices and ensure accountability.

Rationale that led to the recommendation:

- Although the school leader stated that he had implemented the formal Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) procedures, the IIT found little evidence to show that the school leader monitors teachers' planning and instruction to provide quality feedback to help teachers improve their practice. While teachers submit a formal lesson plan to the school leader for their scheduled APPR observations, outside of APPR process teachers' plans are not regularly reviewed. The school leader stated and teachers confirmed that he did not review their lesson plans or provide developmental feedback. Teachers reported that there was not a regular walk-through schedule, and they usually did not receive feedback after "drop-ins."
- The IIT found that the school leader was unaware of the quality of individual teacher's lesson plans and the quality of lesson planning across the school. Most reviewed lesson plans did not contain rigorous expectations and differentiated activities to address a range of learner needs. During class visits, the IIT found that typically teachers' instruction did not sufficiently support student learning. For example, the IIT found that most teachers did not incorporate strategies such as scaffolding, adaptations for student subgroups, higher-order questioning, or ongoing assessment to meet students' varying needs.

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.

Recommendation for Tenet 3 – Curriculum Development and Support:

At the faculty meeting on May 18, 2016, the school leader should inform teachers that all lesson plans must include learning targets stated in student-friendly language. The school leader should also require teachers to share and discuss the learning targets with students at the start of and during the lesson. Teachers should adapt the learning targets to ensure that all students are able to understand them, including English language learners (ELLs) and Students with Disabilities.

Rationale that led to the recommendation:

- The school leader told the IIT that he had not established standard lesson plan components. The lesson plans reviewed by the IIT consisted of brief headings and agendas and typically did not include data-driven instruction (DDI) strategies, higher-order questioning, use of complex materials, and activities planned to meet a range of students' learning needs.
- The school leader reported and teachers confirmed that he had articulated the expectation that teachers should implement the curriculum modules and units from New York State with fidelity so that teachers can become familiar with the curriculum content. The school leader indicated that teachers began implementing the modules for math a few years ago and began implementing the modules for ELA this year. The review team found that teachers typically implemented the curriculum materials exactly as written and did not modify the curriculum to meet students' need. In most observed classes, all students engaged in the same learning activities and used the same materials. The learning targets in teachers' lesson plans were taken directly from the New York State published materials and were not usually stated in student-friendly language. In observed classes, few teachers ensured that students understood the lesson objective, and when asked, students were unable to articulate the purpose of the ongoing learning activity.

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.

Recommendation for Tenet 4 – Teacher Practices and Decisions:

Effective immediately, the school leaders should make sure that the existing APPR process results in detailed recommendations and actionable feedback intended to improve the instructional practices of individual teachers. The school leader should monitor to ensure that each teacher implements the recommendations to improve the quality of instruction as part of the APPR cycle.

Rationale that led to the recommendation:

- The IIT found through interviews and a review of documents that the school leader implemented the required APPR process in accordance with the procedures and timelines. However, while the APPR process resulted in feedback to teachers, the IIT found that this feedback was typically descriptive rather than directive and was devoid of detailed and specific guidance to help teachers improve their instructional practices.
- The school leader said that he did not regularly monitor the quality of lessons through instructional rounds and informal walk-throughs. Teachers stated that while the school leader frequently visited their classrooms, he did not routinely provide verbal or written feedback following these visits. Consequently, teachers did not receive specific advice to help them improve their instructional practices. The school leader stated in the Self-Reflection document and in interviews that the New York State curriculum plans that teachers used included some key elements, such as higher-order questioning and use of complex materials. According to documentation and interviews, teachers received training in Explicit Direct Instruction and Specially Designed Instruction intended to help them to differentiate learning activities and scaffold instruction. However, there was little evidence of

higher-order questioning, complex learning materials, differentiation, and scaffolding in observed classes.

- In most observed classes, teachers were delivering whole-class instruction and all students were using the same textbooks and worksheets. The IIT found that students were usually compliant and passive rather than actively participating in lessons by asking questions and engaging in discussion with the teacher and their peers. Students reported and observations confirmed that learning tasks were often basic. For example, in one observed mathematics lesson students were completing a cut-and-paste activity composed of numbers adding up to ten. In another lesson, students with different abilities were all working through a simple Tangram exercise following step-by-step teacher instructions. As a result, many students were completing the task very easily and waiting to move on. The team observed several lessons where learning tasks were too easy for students. The quality of observed instruction across the school was not strong enough to increase student achievement.

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

Recommendation for Tenet 5 – Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health:

By June 6, 2016, the school leader should identify a coordinator to oversee the school’s social and emotional support programs and procedures. The coordinator should monitor the implementation of programs to make sure that social and emotional supports are coherent, appropriate, and effective for all students.

Rationale that led to the recommendation:

- During discussions with the IIT, teachers, support team members, parents, students described a range of curricula, programs, and services that support students' social-emotional developmental health. All stakeholders interviewed by the IIT reported that the character education program, planned by the school Character Education Committee, was essential to the school culture. In addition, the school offers the Second Step anti-bullying program, the Students Taking Action Respectfully (STAR) program through which older students serve as mentors to younger students, and student council through which students participate in decision-making and school governance. However, the review team found no evidence of a plan or strategy to drive, coordinate, and monitor social and emotional programs, interventions and support services. The school leader said that there was a need to structure and coordinate the school's social and emotional programs and services and to analyze student performance data strategically to identify students' needs and determine the effectiveness of interventions, programs, and support services. He added that a research-based program could provide the school with the framework for a more coherent and cohesive approach.
- Classroom teachers said that the Responsive Classroom training they received had enabled them to address individual student's social and emotional needs. The IIT learned through interviews with parents and staff, that whenever school personnel or parents expressed a concern about an individual student, the school leader reacted promptly to provide an appropriate intervention. The IIT examined attendance and behavior referral data for individual students that showed the positive impact of strategies such as working closely with families, home visits, and small group tutoring. For example,

data showed improved attendance for individual students and reduced behavior referrals for other students.

- The school leader told the IIT that the school lacked data to demonstrate that social and emotional support improved students' academic achievement. The IIT found that the school leader had not communicated his vision of students' social-emotional development and created a strategic plan for coordinating the work of teachers, staff, parents, and external organizations. The school leader reported that the district develops a strategic plan that the school leaders use as a foundation to build a plan specific to the needs of their building. However, the review team found no evidence of a school specific vision or strategy in place to ensure staff consistently identify and address the social and emotional developmental health needs of all students." In interviews, teachers, parents, and student support team members were unable to describe a whole-school vision for students' social-emotional development.

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.

Recommendation for Tenet 6 – Family and Community Engagement:

By June 6, 2016, the school leader should identify a parent liaison coordinator to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and impact of parental communications and engagement strategies. The coordinator should work to identify parent needs and wishes, monitor the effectiveness of communication strategies, attendance at school events, and responses to communications, and analyze parental engagement data.

Rationale that led to the recommendation:

- The school leader has developed positive and supportive relationships with parents and students; however, the school lacks coordinated systems to monitor and evaluate outreach to families to determine the effectiveness of its communication efforts. In Interviews, parents stated that the school leader and staff were open, approachable, and responsive. However, some parents stated that the frequency and quality of communication was inconsistent from teacher to teacher. Documents reviewed by the IIT showed that the school communicates with families in many ways, including summer mailings, the student handbook, emails, and regular newsletters. Additionally, the school offers parent conferences and events such as Math Night to explain the mathematics curriculum. Although the school provides multiple methods of communication, the review team found few references to high expectations for student learning in information sent to parents. The school leader and members of the support team told the IIT that the school lacked a coherent structure for planning, coordinating, and determining the effectiveness of parent communication and engagement strategies.
- There was no evidence of systematic trainings to equip parents to support their children at home. Parents reported that they regularly receive report cards and daily homework folders; however, some parents stated that the report card was hard to understand and that the school often did not provide timely notice when a student was struggling. Parents and the school leader said that there had been no training to help parents interpret student performance data. Teachers and parents stated that they had not received training and support to help them develop effective home-school partnerships. The school leader reported that he needed to formalize plans to increase family engagement and added

that the staff have not surveyed parents to solicit their input or identify their support needs.

ADDITIONAL AREAS TO ADDRESS

- The team found the school leader did not ensure that data analysis drives instruction or that instruction reflected student needs and learning styles. As a result, lessons observed by the team were typically whole-class instruction and did not usually promote high levels of student engagement or increased achievement for all students. In the future, the school leader should work with teachers to improve their ability to use student achievement data to inform lesson planning and instructional strategies so that lessons meet the full range of student learning needs.