



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	261600010016
School Name	John Walton Spencer School #16
School Address	625 Scio Street, Rochester, NY 14606
District Name	Rochester City School District
School Leader	Matthew Laniak
Dates of Review	February 9-10, 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 John Walton Spencer School # 16

School Configuration (2015-16 data)					
Grade Configuration	K-8	Total Enrollment	589	SIG Recipient	No
Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes (2015-16)					
# Transitional Bilingual	0	# Dual Language	0	# Self-Contained English as a Second Language	6
Types and Number of Special Education Classes (2015-16)					
# Special Classes	9	# SETSS	8	# Integrated Collaborative Teaching	1
Types and Number of Special Classes (2015-16)					
# Visual Arts	53	# Music	50	# Drama	0
# Foreign Language	3	# Dance	0	# CTE	0
School Composition (most recent data)					
% Title I Population	92%	% Attendance Rate		%	
% Free Lunch	82%	% Reduced Lunch		1%	
% Limited English Proficient	8%	% Students with Disabilities		16%	
Racial/Ethnic Origin (most recent data)					
% American Indian or Alaska Native	<1%	% Black or African American		78%	
% Hispanic or Latino	14%	% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander		2%	
% White	7%	% Multi-Racial		<1%	
Personnel (most recent data)					
Years Principal Assigned to School	3	# of Assistant Principals		2	
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	0%	% Teaching Out of Certification		0%	
% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Years of Experience	0%	Average Teacher Absences		9%	
Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools (2014-15)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	3%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4		5%	
Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (4th Grade)	53%	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (8th Grade)		21%	
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		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		Black or African American	X
Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	
White		Multi-Racial	
Students with Disabilities	X	Limited English Proficient	
Economically Disadvantaged	X	ALL STUDENTS	X
DID NOT MEET Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics (2013-14)			
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	X	Limited English Proficient	
Economically Disadvantaged		ALL STUDENTS	
DID NOT MEET Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science (2013-14)			
American Indian or Alaska Native		Black or African American	X
Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	
White		Multi-Racial	
Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient	
Economically Disadvantaged	X	ALL STUDENTS	X

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS WRITTEN BY THE SCHOOL:

1. 100 percent of the teachers engaging in data-driven instruction.
2. Increase attendance.

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 district-selected Outside Educational Expert, and a Special Education School Improvement Specialist (SESIS) representative
- The review team visited a total of 42 classrooms during the two-day review.
- Reviewers conducted focus groups with students and staff.
- Six parents confirmed their intention to participate in the parent focus group; however, no parents actually attended focus group meetings with the review team.
- Reviewers examined documents provided by the school, including lesson plans, schoolwide data, teacher feedback, and student work.
- During the two days of the review, there were a high number of teacher absences. On Day 1, 26 percent of the teachers were not in school. On Day 2, 17 percent of the teachers were absent. In addition, on three separate occasions, when reviewers entered a classroom, the teacher announced he or she had an “emergency” and left a teaching assistant in charge of the class. At one point, the teaching assistant pleaded with the reviewer to stay and help control the class. This same scenario also occurred with another reviewer and a certified teacher who had lost control of the class.

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 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"/>
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 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"/>

TENET 3 OVERALL STAGE :							1
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 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
4.5	Teachers inform planning and foster student participation in their own learning process by using a variety of summative and formative data sources (e.g., screening, interim measures, and progress monitoring).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
TENET 5 OVERALL STAGE :							1
#	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 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"/>		
TENET 6 OVERALL STAGE :							1

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
<p>The school is at Stage One for Tenet 2 – School Leader Practices and Decisions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school leader indicated that he met with the building leadership team, which consists of assistant principals, teachers, and parents, to discuss the development of the School Comprehensive Educational Plan (SCEP) and school improvement goals. Teachers and staff stated that the school leader completed the SCEP and emailed it to all staff, but did not hold subsequent meetings to discuss how the goals will drive student achievement and school improvement. Teachers were unable to identify a vision for academic progress, other than the completion of intervention logs and data collection. The Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) found no evidence of systematic procedure in place for evaluating the school’s progress toward realization of the SCEP goals. • Although the school leader has allocated resources to address certain SCEP priorities, such as regular instructional team meetings and familiarizing teachers with the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), these provisions have not led to improvements in teaching and learning. The school leader has scheduled a daily intervention period to address the remediation needs of some students. The school leader reported that he created the position of intervention specialist to model lessons for teachers and to improve instruction. However, this specialist and the district-provided instructional coach do not yet work with teachers of all grade levels. The school leader created an extended day program, but lack of transportation has limited student participation this year. The team found no evidence to show how the school leader’s resource decisions have increased student achievement. • School leaders have established a regular schedule of teacher observations. However, there is no system to ensure that the feedback from observations is implemented to improve instruction. The review team found that while the notes on the teacher observation forms were highly descriptive of what the school leaders observed, with some ranging up to 15 pages of direct quotation of teacher and student dialogue, the feedback provided to teachers was not instructive. In addition, there was no documentation of follow-up observations to confirm that teachers implemented the recommendations for improvement. School leaders have established a schedule of grade level meetings, which are held at least once during a six-day cycle. However, the IIT did not find consistency in instruction across classes within a grade level. Class visits showed that few teachers are addressing the instructional shifts or using complex materials during instruction. • School leaders have established systems to track individual and school-wide practices through grade level meetings and monitoring by coaches; however, the school leader has not ensured that all staff use the available systems. The school leader reported that teachers of grades kindergarten through six, including those of the self-contained special education classes, keep weekly intervention logs, which list the topics on which each student is working. The school leader indicated that this expectation has not been explicitly expressed to the grades seven and eight teachers including special education and English as new language (ENL) teachers, these teachers are not keeping intervention logs. The school leader reported data-driven instruction is a priority. However, during grade level meetings and classroom observations the IIT found little evidence of teachers using data to inform or adjust instruction to meet the needs of students. 		

Recommendation:

By the beginning of March 2016, school leaders and instructional support staff should review systems in place to support the goal of data-driven instruction to include teachers in grades seven and eight as well as special education (grades seven and eight) and ENL teachers. A plan should be developed and implemented that ensures the support and active participation of these teachers in data collection, analysis, and referral/intervention processes. The school leader should continue with oversight of teacher involvement in these grades and the special areas.

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

1

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

- The school leaders have not ensured that teachers are implementing a curriculum that is aligned to the CCLS and differentiating the curriculum to address diverse student needs. Teachers told the IIT that the district provides useful pacing guides, but they do not have a written curriculum to guide their work. Teachers stated that they are supplementing the *EngageNY* modules with other materials. However, the IIT found that the supplementary materials used by most teachers were often below grade level and were not consistently aligned to the CCLS. In addition, the school leaders have not instituted a process to ensure that supplemental materials meet grade level standards. School leaders are not holding teachers accountable for adapting the EngageNY modules to meet the needs of all students. Teachers said that neither the school leader nor the district provides designated time for them to develop curricula, and they therefore do not document the adaptations they make.
- Although some elementary level teachers use data from diagnostic assessments of reading fluency to differentiate activities and create instructional groups based on common needs, the IIT found little other evidence that teachers were using data to adjust their instruction or modify their curriculum, especially in grades seven and eight. Few lesson plans examined by the IIT included methods for differentiating instruction. Most plans provided for whole- group instruction and did not incorporate complex materials, or higher-order questions. The questions listed in lesson plans were typically factual, knowledge-based questions that did not require higher-order thinking on the part of the students.
- Teachers do not currently have, nor are they developing interdisciplinary curricula. The school leader and teachers said they are not working on interdisciplinary curricula because the school has made data collection and student acquisition of core content knowledge the major priorities. Students told the IIT that they do not participate in interdisciplinary lessons, but they thought that integrating the arts into the content areas would make learning more interesting.
- Teachers are beginning to collect data from assessments such as AIMSweb and Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA), but they are not yet using assessment data to revise the curriculum. Students interviewed by the IIT reported that they had conversations with their teachers about their assessment results. Some students were able to state the implications of the results, but said that their teachers did not conference with them regularly to review their progress. Some teachers had created data walls

in observed classes, although in some classes and conference rooms the data posted was from 2014-2015.

Recommendation:

By mid-March 2016, the school leaders and instructional coach should design a plan to collect and evaluate modifications teachers have made to EngageNY ELA modules based on assessment data. The plan should include a timeline for implementation of the project and a method to store the revised modules in a format, such as Google Docs, which can be accessed and used by all teachers as the first stage of a kindergarten through grade 8 ELA curriculum.

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 Stage

2

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

- The school leader has provided some support to develop teachers’ capacity to use data to inform planning and instructional decisions. However, the IIT did not find evidence in observed classes that data analysis had resulted in grouping of students with similar needs, or differentiation of instruction. The school leader reported that the intervention specialists initially focused on supporting teachers in delivering effective Tier 2 and 3 interventions, but now the specialists have begun to support teachers in providing Tier 1 Interventions. The school leaders and intervention specialists are also beginning to support teachers in infusing more writing into their instruction to increase proficiency, especially in English language arts (ELA). The IIT found little evidence of the impact these initiatives are having on teachers’ instructions. The school leaders indicated that they have adjusted class schedules to provide intervention periods for many students. However, during class visits, the IIT saw few examples of teachers implementing effective interventions. For example in many intervention classes students watched YouTube videos or socialized with friends instead of working on assignments.
- In classes visited, the IIT found that most instruction was teacher-centered and devoid of strategies to engage students actively. In addition, few teachers asked higher-order questions, or provided multiple ways for students to learn during instruction. In most classes, students were not engaged in their work and many students exhibited disruptive behavior that interfered with learning. In most observed classes, the tasks were low-level, and teachers relied heavily upon worksheets and packets. In some observed classes, teachers wrote notes on the SMART Board and students copied them passively. In the grades seven and eight classrooms observed, most students were disengaged and few teachers held students accountable for completing the learning activities. In addition, the few students who completed the tasks finished quickly and proceeded to carry on private conversations unrelated to the content.
- Class visits showed and student and teacher interviews confirmed that found that most classroom environments are not meeting the needs the academic and behavioral needs of all students. The IIT found that many teachers do not implement consistent classroom management protocols. Teachers

reported that many students come to school angry and their behavior influences other students and escalates conflict. During class visits, the IIT noticed that teachers often allowed disruptive behavior to begin and continue without consequences. In addition, in several observed classes, students completely ignored teacher directives. Students reported that other students picked on them or mistreated them in class, which made them feel unsafe. Students also stated that they do not feel safe asking questions in class, but were comfortable talking to their teachers individually.

- Teachers are using a variety of assessments, such as AIMSweb, module assessments, and Skills Strand Assessments to track student progress. However, they are not routinely utilizing the results to adjust instructional practices in order to meet the diverse needs of their students. The IIT found that while some teachers are completing intervention logs weekly for every student, reviewing progress every six weeks, and assigning students to intervention groups based on data, most teachers are not adjusting their classroom instruction to meet individual student needs. At one grade level meeting observed by the IIT, teachers analyzed students' practice assessment results to determine next steps and strategies to improve student achievement on subsequent practice assessments, but the IIT found little evidence to show this practice occurs consistently throughout the school. Although students reported that they sometimes receive feedback on their work, they told the IIT that they did not always understand how to use this feedback for improvement.

Recommendation:

By mid-March 2016, the school leader and other instructional support staff designated by him should support the focus on increasing student achievement in ELA by identifying the desired goals of a writing initiative for kindergarten through grade eight, researching successful strategies of existing writing initiatives, and developing a process and procedure to implement such an initiative. Special education and ENL teachers should be included in the discussions.

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 Stage

1

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

- Although the school leader and support staff indicated that the school has a behavioral referral system, the IIT found no evidence of a proactive system in place for identifying students who may benefit from services, but do not exhibit the behaviors that trigger a referral. Support staff in interviews indicated that teachers document disciplinary issues that occur in class including the kind of infraction, the frequency, and actions they have taken to address them. This system is in the beginning stages of implementation and resembles the tiered academic intervention system. The school leader and support staff reported that they enter decisions from all intervention meetings into the Google.docs database, and all teachers and staff have access to this database. However, the IIT found little evidence to show that the school leader ensures that all staff use data to identify areas of need and leverage resources to promote student social and emotional developmental health. During discussions with the IIT, although staff were able to discuss the process for addressing certain student behaviors, the school leader and student support team, which includes the guidance counselor, school psychologist, and social worker, were unable to articulate a comprehensive vision for addressing the social- emotional developmental health needs of all students.

- The school has a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) committee and some teachers and staff are implementing PBIS principles. Teachers told the IIT that the implementation of the PBIS program is inconsistent. Many teachers and staff distribute reward tickets, called Eagle/Safe, Organized, Accountable, and Responsible (SOAR) bucks, to students, but there is no consensus about when or for what behaviors these tickets are to be awarded. School leaders stated that teachers are using different behavior management systems. For example, middle school teachers use a four-point rubric to describe acceptable behaviors. The IIT observed that not all students throughout the school were practicing PBIS principles, or the behaviors addressed in the rubric. The student support team explained that while some staff received training in PBIS and restorative justice practices, other staff have not. In addition, teachers have not received professional development (PD) focused on addressing students' social-emotional development health needs.
- The school has some supports in place to respond to some students' needs, but lacks systems to ensure all stakeholders collaborate to address the needs of all students. The school has an onsite clinic, which provides counseling services for some students. School support staff said that the school relies on a teacher referral system to identify those students with the greatest needs. In addition, many members of the support staff work, part time, which limits support to students. Support staff reported that they are not able to effectively use their time to collaborate with one another to develop proactive approaches to address all students' needs. School leaders, teachers, and staff agreed that the number of students in need identified by committees such as the problem solving team, the educational support team, and the functional behavior assessment (FBA) team are greater than the resources available at the school.
- The school collects attendance and behavior data in order to identify patterns and trend proactively; however, the school does not have strategic plan in place to ensure that staff use these data to comprehensively address student needs. Most students' needs are currently identified through a reactionary referral process. Teachers and staff are not yet collecting data from the PBIS program. The school leader provided the IIT with behavioral referral data and stated that staff is not yet analyzing available data to create a school culture that focuses on attending to the needs of all students and improving achievement. The data showed that behavioral referrals have been increasing throughout the school year, indicating that the PBIS system is not operating effectively.

Recommendation:

By the beginning of March 2016, the school leader should meet with the PBIS committee to review the current level of consistent implementation of the PBIS program, including understanding of and commitment by all teachers and staff to the principles of the PBIS program. Once the review is complete, the committee, including the school leader and a representative from kindergarten through grade eight, should meet regularly to revitalize the program. The committee should address, for example, the consistent use of Eagle/SOAR bucks, the planning of award/reward events, the use of the SOAR store, refresher PD for teachers and staff, and evaluation of the success of the PBIS program in grades kindergarten through eight.

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

1

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

- Although the school leader expressed that he has high expectations for student success, the IIT found little evidence that the school leader’s vision is understood or implemented throughout the school. The IIT found that many teachers were not providing challenging materials and learning activities for their students. This vision has also not been effectively communicated to families. The school leader and parent liaison told the IIT that the school leader shares his vision for student success at the beginning of family events, such as open house. However, school leaders are not institutionalizing this vision by holding teachers accountable for challenging students with higher-order questions and complex tasks. The IIT found low expectations for student learning in most observed classes.
- The school provides for some opportunities for parents to communicate with the school including home visits made by the school leader, teachers, and social worker to discuss attendance, academic, and social- emotional concerns with families. However, reciprocal communication is predominantly achieved when parents actively take advantage of the school leader’s open door policy and visit the school. The parent liaison maintains contact with families and plans events for them. The school communicates with parents through newsletters; however, the newsletters are available only in English and in hard copy. There was little evidence of parents initiating communication with the school unless there was a problem. Teachers and staff hold open house, parent teacher conferences, and other family events. Events such as open house are well-attended, while others have a low turnout. The school developed and administered a parent/family survey to determine the needs of families; however, at the time of the review the school staff had not analyzed the results to inform a plan for supporting families.
- The school has not provided any training for parents or staff to develop and sustain home-school partnerships. The IIT found little evidence that parents are involved in the support of their children's achievement, except during the student referral process. The school leader explained that he and other school staff discuss how parents can build and maintain relationships with teachers and staff during home visits. Teachers and staff agreed there was no formal training on creating home-school partnerships for them.
- The IIT found that the school does not share data in ways that empowers all parents to take action to support student learning. Teachers told the IIT that some teachers provide weekly reports on all of their students in order to help parents understand how they are progressing, but this practice is not uniform or school-wide. The school issues quarterly report cards. Students said that parents learn how they are doing when report cards arrive. School leaders explained that data are shared with the parents and families of children identified by the Problem Solving Committee or the Educational Support Services Team prior to their referral to the Committee on Special Education. However, there is limited communication with parents of children who are not part of the referral/intervention process. Although the school leader reported that teachers and staff explained assessment results to parents during home visits. The school leader indicated that only a small amount of home visits are conducted

each month.

Recommendation:

By the beginning of March 2016, the school leaders, support staff, and the parent liaison, should review and revise, if necessary, the existing parent survey and administer the survey at two upcoming parent events. A team should be identified to analyze results and create a plan to address identified areas to increase parent and family involvement in student success.