



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	421800010047
School Name	Institute of Technology at Syracuse Central
School Address	258 East Adams Street, Syracuse, New York 13202
District Name	Syracuse City School District
School Leader	Donna Formica
Dates of Review	January 12 and 14, 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 the Institute of Technology at Syracuse Central

School Configuration (2015-16 data)					
Grade Configuration	9-12	Total Enrollment	446	SIG Recipient	No
Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes (2015-16)					
# Transitional Bilingual		# Dual Language		# Self-Contained English as a Second Language	
Types and Number of Special Education Classes (2015-16)					
# Special Classes		# SETSS		# Integrated Collaborative Teaching	
Types and Number of Special Classes (2015-16)					
# Visual Arts		# Music		# Drama	
# Foreign Language		# Dance		# CTE	
School Composition (most recent data)					
% Title I Population	73.8	% Attendance Rate	96.7		
% Free Lunch	68.4	% Reduced Lunch	5.4		
% Limited English Proficient	2.7	% Students with Disabilities	13.7		
Racial/Ethnic Origin (most recent data)					
% American Indian or Alaska Native	1.3	% Black or African American	59.0		
% Hispanic or Latino	13.5	% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	5.2		
% White	17.9	% Multi-Racial	3.1		
Personnel (most recent data)					
Years Principal Assigned to School	2	# of Assistant Principals	1		
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	0	% Teaching Out of Certification	1		
% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Years of Experience	9.8	Average Teacher Absences	1.71		
Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools (2014-15)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	NA	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	NA		
Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (4th Grade)	NA	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (8th Grade)	NA		
Student Performance for High Schools (2014-15)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	78.1	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	87.7		
Global History Performance at levels 3 & 4	79.8	US History Performance at Levels 3&4	85.1		
4 Year Graduation Rate	78.9	6 Year Graduation Rate	82.0		
Regents Diploma w/ Advanced Designation	4.4	% ELA/Math Aspirational Performance Measures	14.9		
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		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
DID NOT MEET Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics (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
DID NOT MEET Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science (2013-14)			
American Indian or Alaska Native	NA	Black or African American	NA
Hispanic or Latino	NA	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	NA
White	NA	Multi-Racial	NA
Students with Disabilities	NA	Limited English Proficient	NA
Economically Disadvantaged	NA	ALL STUDENTS	NA

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS WRITTEN BY THE SCHOOL:

1. Increase Regents pass rates for identified groups.
2. Have teachers create lesson plans aligned to the CCLS that are engaging to students.
3. Consistently utilize data to drive instruction.

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 OEE, and a Special Education School Improvement Specialist (SEIS) representative.
- The review team visited a total of 36 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 was closed for day two of the visit (January 13) due to a snow day. As a result, the review took place January 12 and 14 with the recommendations provided to the school leadership at the end of January 14.

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 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 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:				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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4.3	Teachers provide coherent, and appropriately aligned Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)-based instruction that leads to multiple points of access for all students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4.4	Teachers and students work together to implement a program/plan to create a learning environment that is responsive to students' varied experiences and tailored to the strengths and needs of all students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.5	Teachers inform planning and foster student participation in their own learning process by using a variety of summative and formative data sources (e.g., screening, interim measures, and progress monitoring).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
TENET 4 OVERALL STAGE:					1

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

- The school leader has not developed clear goals for the school that are specific, measureable, ambitious, results-oriented, and timely (SMART), and she has not communicated to all school stakeholders how they can contribute to the accomplishment of the school’s goals, mission, and vision. Stakeholders interviewed by the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) stated they are not aware of the school’s vision. The goals listed in the School Comprehensive Educational Plan (SCEP) are not in SMART goal format. An example is the goal for tenet two, which states “90% of students will report that school is a positive place and are engaged in learning.” This goal is not directly related to the tenet, and there is no way to measure if the goal is being met. Further, the review team found that the school leader does not monitor progress toward the school goals. In addition, the SCEP goals are not well understood by all members of the school community, as many teachers and parents interviewed by the review team could not cite specific school-wide goals or explain how they could contribute toward school improvement. One of the goals listed on the school website states that the graduation rate is to be over 80 percent; however, according to data, that goal was already achieved.
- The lack of SMART goals hinders the school leader’s ability to make strategic, data-informed decisions regarding the use of resources in order to bring about measureable school improvement. For example, the school leader could not identify positive outcomes resulting from her decisions to implement both an extended day program, in which students receive additional tutoring in core subject areas, and the Liberty Partnership Program, in which math tutors are provided to students in need of additional support. While the school leader shared that additional programs are designed to assist students academically, such as after school tutoring, out of school internships, and Academic Intervention Services (AIS), and stated that these programs directly impacted student success on State assessments, the school leader did not provide baseline data to demonstrate the direct impact of these supports. As a result, it is difficult to ascertain if these programs have had the intended impact on student achievement.
- Although the school leader reported that she has communicated her expectations to teachers about planning lessons aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), she does not effectively monitor and support teachers’ implementation of lesson planning or their instructional practice. The review team found that the school leader’s walk-through feedback to teachers does not connect observed teacher practice with the school leader’s expectations about curricular planning or instructional practice. For example, none of the six walk-through documents examined by the review team contained any formative feedback that would allow teachers to improve their instructional practice. Several of these documents included feedback that the lesson was not CCLS-aligned, but no feedback on how to align the lesson, and some feedback was descriptive only. Further, the review team found that professional development (PD) provided to teachers is either driven by the district or is not consistently based on data. While some of the PD offered focused on higher-order questions and content-specific subject areas such as social studies, the review team found that these offerings were not based on school data collected through either lesson plan reviews, classroom walk through data, or

APPR data.

- The school leader stated that she has not established systems to inform her decision-making and determine if the school’s initiatives and programs are having a positive impact on student success. The school leader also stated that she does not consistently monitor teachers’ lesson plan design or classroom practices, including those for which teachers have been given PD, to determine if they align with the CCLS and are being implemented with fidelity. Additionally, the school leader did not cite data to demonstrate that lesson plan or classroom walk through data was tracked, analyzed, and used to regularly improve pedagogical practices.

Recommendation:

- In order to ensure that there is a well-known, school-wide understanding of the components to be included in a CCLS-aligned lesson plan, by February 1, school leaders should begin to check each teacher’s lesson plans monthly and provide a minimum of two written, formative, actionable comments that target one or two specific areas in each lesson to increase alignment with the CCLS. Some instructional areas in which feedback may be provided include:
 - data-driven instruction;
 - higher-order questions;
 - differentiated instruction; and
 - student-led inquiry.

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.

- Although the school leader has provided her staff with a CCLS aligned curriculum supplied by the district, she has not ensured teachers regularly adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of all students. The school leader and teachers reported that teachers use both the district and EngageNY curricula to guide their curricular planning. However, the school leader stated she does not regularly or systematically monitor the quality of teachers’ lesson plans to ensure they align with the CCLS. While the school leader informed the review team of a recent lesson plan review that indicated 21 out of the 27 lesson plans reviewed aligned to the CCLS, the review team’s review of lesson plans demonstrated that the majority of lesson plans did not contain planning for subgroups, reference data to differentiate instruction, or higher-order questions. While some lessons referred to the CCLS end-of-the-year targets, they were not modified to meet varied student needs or to include the instructional shifts.
- The review team found in their examination of lesson plans that although the lessons appeared to be at grade level, the majority of teachers did not regularly plan lessons informed by student achievement data or that incorporated higher-order questions. For example, only one of four lesson plans submitted for review included data to inform the lesson. Further, only three out of the six lesson and unit plans reviewed by the review team contained elements of higher-order questions related to

application, analysis, synthesis, or evaluation, while the majority of questions were at low levels of fact and comprehension. In addition, only one out of the four lesson plans stated a reteaching strategy for specific content, while the others were not adapted for student subgroups or students who may need to be re-taught. Teachers stated they have not received PD on planning lessons that address the needs of all students.

- Most teachers do not plan an interdisciplinary curriculum that promotes student engagement and deepens students’ understanding of the curriculum. In classroom visits, the review team found that teachers typically did not connect the curriculum across subjects, and the school leader and teachers reported that the school leader has not set any school-wide expectations regarding interdisciplinary planning, which they acknowledged is not a school-wide practice. While a grade nine ELA lesson plan integrated Roman history with writing, interdisciplinary connections were not consistent in the other lesson plans reviewed.
- The review team found that teachers do not regularly use the district’s benchmark assessments or teacher-developed assessments to inform curricular planning. Though the school leader stated that some teams of teachers review data to make curricular decisions, the review team did not find evidence that this takes place on a regular basis. For example, only one lesson plan reviewed by the IIT demonstrated that data were used to help guide the lesson. Although some lesson plans identified “check in” and “teacher observations” as a means to assess student understanding, these were at a basic level and did not indicate how the teacher would determine if students met the lesson’s objective. During classroom visits, the review team found that the majority of verbal feedback provided to students was not specific or formative, and much of it consisted of teachers telling students “good job” or “you are correct” with little elaboration on why they were correct. Further, while the school leader shared that some teachers are using multiple methods to communicate feedback to their students, the review team found that written teacher feedback was generally vague and not actionable or formative.

Recommendation:

- By February 1, the school leader and vice principal should begin monitoring teachers’ lesson planning to ensure that all teachers include a minimum of two higher-order questions in every lesson. These questions should be open-ended, rigorous, and allow for multiple and varied student responses.

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

1

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

- The school leader’s vision for teacher instruction aligned to the CCLS, informed by data, and customized to meet the needs of all students was not evident in the vast majority of classrooms visited by the review team. Reviewers found instruction to be primarily teacher directed, and teachers did not differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all students. The school leader reported that although she regularly visits classrooms and provides teachers with verbal and written feedback, she does not

monitor the quality of instruction or school-wide trends that may inform strategic decisions to improve instructional practice. School leader feedback to teachers reviewed by the IIT typically was descriptive rather than formative in nature and did not connect to CCLS-aligned instruction. Though Teachscape is used to capture APPR data, and is used as a means to facilitate dialogue between the school leader and teachers, it is not apparent that this is driving changes in instructional practices. Most of the walk through feedback provided to teachers was vague, such as stating that the lesson was not CCLS aligned and a request for the teacher to follow a lesson plan template. Some pieces of feedback asked questions related to how would the teacher assess the students, but did not provide a strategy that the teacher could consider. One piece of formative feedback included the school leader sharing with the teacher that she would like the teacher to discuss the learning objectives throughout the lesson. The review team did not find evidence that the school leader has provided teachers with PD related to data-driven instruction.

- The review team found in the majority of classrooms visited that the dominant instructional strategy used by teachers was teacher-led instruction, encompassing lecture and teacher-generated questions. While there was some limited evidence of teachers engaging students in learning, this was not typical across the school. For example, in one class, the teacher introduced a concept and spoke uninterrupted for 15 minutes before she asked any questions or gave students an opportunity to participate. In most classrooms visited, all students performed the same tasks and produced the same products. Further, in most classes, the review team found that teachers mostly asked low-level questions, did not challenge students to inquire more deeply about subject matter, and did not assess student understanding. While most teacher questions and activities were low level, the majority of students appeared to be on task during lessons.
- While the review team visited some classrooms where teachers were engaging students in learning, the instruction in most classrooms was often teacher-led, and that there was little student voice or interaction among students. Students interviewed stated they are not hesitant to participate or seek help in class, even if they incorrectly respond to a question; however the review team found in many of the classrooms visited that teachers primarily asked closed-ended questions that typically had only one right answer, limiting students' opportunities for discussion, intellectual discovery, and higher-order thinking.
- Though teachers collect and review data through benchmark assessments and other classroom assessments, the review team found no evidence in classroom visits that teachers use student data to modify their instructional practices to meet the needs of all students. Few classrooms visited by the review team contained instructional groupings, and only one lesson plan reviewed by the review team included student groupings based on assessment data. During classroom visits, students did not engage in self-evaluation, and teachers did not provide written, formative, or actionable feedback to students that would help them understand how they performed against a standard and what they needed to do to improve.

Recommendation:

- By February 1, the school leader and vice principal should monitor teachers' instruction to ensure that all teachers provide students with a think-pair-share activity in every lesson taught. During this activity, students should discuss questions, complete tasks, or write responses with one another that align with

the lesson's objective. The school leader and vice principal should monitor this practice through lesson plan reviews and classroom visits.

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

2

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

- The school leader has not ensured that all community stakeholders share her vision for student social and emotional developmental health or are aware of how they can support the school's social and emotional developmental health program. Parents and the student support team reported that the school's social and emotional developmental health program is provided by the district and is not school-specific. Although the school leader introduced restorative conferences last year, and restorative circles this year to support student success, the review team found that not all parents had a clear understanding of these programs. While the parents of grade nine students reported that the grade nine orientation made families aware of the school's behavioral expectations and the programs that support students' social-emotional health, parents of students in other grades did not have a consistent understanding of the school's expectations for student social and emotional developmental health. The school has a well-known referral process and referral form, which both teachers and members of the student support team could cite.
- The student support team reported that the restorative circles program, which is new this school year, has not been implemented school-wide with fidelity, but that restorative conferences introduced last year are a more common practice in the school that allows students an outlet to discuss issues that are important to them. While the review team found that student behavior in classrooms was positive, and both students and parents stated that students are physically safe at the school, the school does not provide formal training for staff or families on the identification of students' social-emotional needs, or training for staff on the identification of students who may have disabilities.
- The school leader reported that she has placed an emphasis on working with community partners, such as the Liberty Partnership Program, to support student needs; however, the review team found these partnerships are not consistently linked to specific school-wide goals. Further, while the school leader stated that the school's AIS program has had a positive effect on student success, no systems are in place to assess the impact of AIS on student social and emotional developmental health. The school leader shared that a counselor provides regular counseling to students, and that 25 out of 29 students who met with the counselor are now track to graduate within 4 years as a result of modifying their behavior based on this counseling. Families interviewed stated that the school's tier one, two, and three process would be clearer if the school sent home a school-specific document detailing programs and stakeholders' roles and responsibilities.
- The school leader and student support team stated that although the school collects student social-emotional data, such as referral and suspension data, to inform decisions related to individual students, they do not regularly use data to analyze school-wide trends, make strategic programming decisions, or evaluate the effectiveness of programs. For example, staff have not yet reviewed data related to the restorative circles program, which is new this school year, to assess its' impact on

students' social-emotional health. The school hosted a "Fun Night" with social activities to improve the school climate, and according to the school leader, this event helped decrease the number of student referrals between December and January.

Recommendation:

- By February 1, the School Intervention Team should ensure the development of a document/brochure that outlines the scope, roles, and responsibilities of school staff and community partners in the identification of student needs and the provision of supports to promote all students' social and emotional developmental health. This document should be distributed to the members of the school community, including students, staff, families, and community organizations.

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.

- Although the school leader stated that she would like to see greater parent engagement, she does not have an explicit vision for family and community engagement, and her communications with families do not ensure that all parents are aware of high expectations for student success. The school leader and parents stated that the school leader communicated goals related to the graduation rate and the passing rate of Regents exams, which are posted on the school website; however, parents stated that the school does not provide regular updates on progress toward these goals. Parents stated that although they are enthusiastic about the positive relationships that exist between some staff and students, they would like there to be more communication between the school and families. The school leader reported she has not developed a communication plan on how to best engage families in supporting improved student learning or set expectations for teachers' communication with families.
- While the school uses multiple tools to communicate with families, such as a website and a Facebook page, there is limited evidence to demonstrate that these tools have led to increased reciprocal communication between parents and staff in regard to meeting student needs. The school leader stated she does not send home or post a school newsletter to inform parents of expectations concerning academics, student behavior, or family involvement. The school leader and parents cited generally low attendance at school-wide events, limiting the ability of the school to foster positive relationships with families. While 85% of parents attended the grade nine orientation, and 65 percent of families attended the school's Open House in the fall, the school leader stated that she does not analyze attendance data from school-wide events to determine how to increase attendance or provide more opportunities for reciprocal communication. Although parents stated that staff are willing to spend time with them to help them understand what their children need to do to be successful, most parents also reported they sometimes need to initiate contact with teachers and student support staff to ensure that their children receive needed services.
- While the guidance counselor communicates with families prior to state assessments, the school does not provide training to staff or families on creating and sustaining home-school partnerships to support

students' academic success and social-emotional health. Although parents interviewed stated they were generally satisfied with communication from the school, parents also stated they would like more information on effective strategies they could use at home to help their children become academically successful. While the school has developed a document with information about community agencies that can provide supports to families, the document is not sent home but is available on the school website.

- Although the school shares some student achievement data with families on a regular basis, such as five-week progress reports, parents stated to the review team that the school does not define what the data mean or how they can use this information to support student learning. Parents stated that they sometimes use the school's online portal, E-School, which gives parents and students real-time access to classroom grades, and all students interviewed stated that they use this portal on a regular basis to obtain their grades.

Recommendation:

- By February 1, the school leader should begin posting a school newsletter on the school's website on a monthly basis. This newsletter should contain information related to the SCEP and may include information about the school's progress toward SMART goals, the school leader's vision concerning the CCLS, students' social and emotional health, and practices to engage families as partners in their children's learning. The school should make "robo" calls to families to let them know when the newsletter has been posted on the website. Families should be able to request the newsletter be mailed to their home or sent home with their children.