



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	412300010018
School Name	Kernan Elementary School
School Address	929 York Street, Utica, NY 13502
District Name	Utica City School District
School Leader	Angela Evans
Dates of Review	October 27-28, 2015
School Accountability Status	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus School
Type of Review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet for Kernan Elementary School

School Configuration (2015-16 data)					
Grade Configuration	K-6	Total Enrollment	635	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	0
Types and Number of Special Education Classes (2015-16)					
# Special Classes	3	# SETSS	2	# Integrated Collaborative Teaching	0
Types and Number of Special Classes (2015-16)					
# Visual Arts	1	# Music	1	# Drama	0
# Foreign Language	0	# Dance	0	# CTE	0
School Composition (most recent data)					
% Title I Population			31%	% Attendance Rate	92%
% Free Lunch			86%	% Reduced Lunch	3%
% Limited English Proficient			16%	% Students with Disabilities	11%
Racial/Ethnic Origin (most recent data)					
% American Indian or Alaska Native			0	% Black or African American	31%
% Hispanic or Latino			23%	% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	14%
% White			20%	% Multi-Racial	12%
Personnel (most recent data)					
Years Principal Assigned to School			1 ½	# of Assistant Principals	0
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate			0.02	% Teaching Out of Certification	0.02
% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Years of Experience			19%	Average Teacher Absences	4% rate
Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools (2014-15)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4			8%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	16%
Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (4th Grade)			71%	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (8th Grade)	N/A
Student Performance for High Schools (2014-15)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4			N/A	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	N/A
Global History Performance at levels 3 & 4			N/A	US History Performance at Levels 3&4	N/A
4 Year Graduation Rate			N/A	6 Year Graduation Rate	N/A
Regents Diploma w/ Advanced Designation			N/A	% ELA/Math Aspirational Performance Measures	N/A
Overall NYSED Accountability Status (2014-15)					
Reward				Recognition	
In Good Standing				Local Assistance Plan	
Focus District				Focus School Identified by a Focus District	yes
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	X	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	X
White	X	Multi-Racial	X
Students with Disabilities	X	Limited English Proficient	X
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	X
White	X	Multi-Racial	
Students with Disabilities	X	Limited English Proficient	X
Economically Disadvantaged	X	ALL STUDENTS	X
DID NOT MEET Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science (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		Limited English Proficient	
Economically Disadvantaged	X	ALL STUDENTS	X

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS WRITTEN BY THE SCHOOL:

1. 100 percent of teachers will regularly use formative and summative assessment data to adjust curricular and instructional strategies to meet individual subgroup needs with a goal of increasing proficiency levels on New York State English language arts and math assessments or targeted student growth scores by 5 to 15 percent.
2. 100 percent of teachers will use observation feedback and benchmark assessment data to adjust instructional practices to best meet the needs of all students as evidenced by a 5 to 15 percent increase on quarterly benchmark assessments.
3. 100 percent of teachers will be provided with job embedded professional development on using data to inform instruction as evidenced by a 5 to 15 percent increase on benchmark assessments.

4. During the 2015-16 school year, the Kernan School community will continue to use Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to improve student behavior as evidenced by a 5 to 15 percent reduction in office discipline referrals and suspensions.
5. By September 1, 2016, the school will articulate a plan, with an emphasis on English as a new language parents, to engage all families beyond the normal outreach for parent involvement to be directly involved with the learning process of their students.

Information about the review

- The review was co-led by an Outside Educational Expert (OEE) and a representative from the New York State Education Department (NYSED). The team also included a district representative, a district-selected OEE, 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 38 classrooms during the two-day review.
- Reviewers conducted focus groups with students, staff, and parents.
- Reviewers examined documents provided by the school, including curriculum maps, lesson plans, schoolwide data, teacher feedback, and student work.
- The school provided results of a student survey that 338 students from grades three through six (100 percent) completed.
- The school provided results of a staff survey that 42 staff members (100 percent) completed.
- Kernan Elementary School is a high poverty school with great ethnic diversity that results in a significant language barrier for some students and many parents. In addition, there is a high staff turnover rate, which results in many new teachers joining the staff each year.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3	Leaders make strategic decisions to organize programmatic, human, and fiscal capital resources.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4	The school leader has a fully functional system in place aligned to the district's Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) to conduct targeted and frequent observation and track progress of teacher practices based on student data and feedback.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TENET 2 OVERALL STAGE :				2	

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 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 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 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
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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 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	2
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The school is at **Stage Two** for Tenet 2 – School Leader Practices and Decisions.

- The school leader, together with the school-based inquiry team, developed the mission and vision for the school. The vision is visible on posters throughout the school and heard daily during morning announcements. Students know the mission and vision and school staff select students who are “living” the vision to receive monthly awards. The school leader and inquiry team also developed school goals, taking care to write them so students can understand them. The team based the goals on the 2014-15 district-led school review findings and prioritized teacher use of assessment data to adjust curricula and instruction, professional development (PD) related to data use, and a push toward improvements in the areas of student behavior and family engagement. The team meets quarterly to review progress towards the goals and sends quarterly reports to the district documenting progress and any adjustments made.
- The school leader is using school resources to address priority areas listed in the self-reflection and to support the accomplishment of school goals. She works with the full-time data coach, a new hire in 2015-16, to collect and analyze assessment data. Together, they have been able to identify areas of weakness such as vocabulary deficits. The school leader adjusted the teaching schedule to allow for weekly grade-level meetings organized by the data coach at which assessment data and individual student progress reports from the software program, *iReady*, are analyzed and action plans developed. Based on information gathered from formal and informal teacher evaluations, including instructional walks, and lesson plans collected and reviewed monthly, the school leader has identified the targeted use of data and higher-order questioning in the classroom as priorities and has arranged for teacher PD focused on these areas. The school leader has used some of her Title I funds for an after-school program to restore instructional time some students have lost because of behavioral issues.
- The school leader has established a 2015-16 observation schedule for pre- and post-observation discussions, as well as informal and formal observations, as required. In addition, the school leader conducts instructional walks and frequent classroom visits, after which she provides feedback informally. While interviewed teachers agreed that the feedback was helpful, reviewers found that teacher practices are largely unchanged; for example, when reviewers visited classrooms they saw many students receiving whole group instruction and limited checks for understanding or little follow-up if checks revealed students were not fully understanding the material.
- The school leader has put interconnecting systems in place to address school priorities. Teachers are meeting weekly by grade level to collect, analyze, and practice consistent data use and monthly extended faculty meetings provide time for vertical teachers to meet; teachers submit meeting agendas and summary notes to the school leader for each meeting. The school-based inquiry team meets regularly to develop action plans, and identified individuals bring decisions and directives back to their own teams to ensure consistent communication throughout the school. To track and monitor decisions, the school leader has prioritized the collection and analysis of data from a variety of sources. For example, teachers administered *iReady* diagnostic assessments in September 2015 and will give

quarterly benchmark assessments within the next few weeks. The school leader shared that an analysis of *iReady* English language arts (ELA) diagnostic data comparing 2014-15 to 2015-16 results showed a decrease from 51 to 22 percent in the number of students schoolwide reading one grade below grade level.

Recommendation:

- Starting next week, during instructional walks and classroom visits, the school leader will focus on teachers’ frequency and quality of methods to check for student understanding. She will provide timely and actionable feedback to teachers and re-visit classes to ensure that teachers have implemented the feedback.

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 district provides teachers with curriculum maps based on the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) modules for ELA and mathematics. The school leader and data coach have defined a structure and communicated expectations for weekly grade-level meetings during which teachers make curricular adjustments to the modules based primarily on data taken from *iReady* assessments; the school leader receives all documentation from these meetings. Teachers are expected to write a reflection on the success of each lesson in their daily plans and to share them with the school leader who reads them on an informal basis. The school leader has provided teachers with PD to support the development of essential questions and higher-order thinking, as these are identified priorities. However, during classroom visits, reviewers found that teacher use of higher-level questioning was limited.
- An Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) review of lesson plans showed that teacher plans did not always account for the use of complex materials or specific opportunities to meet student needs. For example, teachers checked general modifications, such as “repeat question,” on the lesson plan form, but prepared few specific adjustments to meet the needs of students with disabilities or English language learners (ELLs). Reviewers noted that in many classrooms instruction was not relevant to student experiences. There were several examples of references to topics that were not part of many students’ background knowledge, such as ice cream trucks, showing that teachers do not sufficiently adjust curricula to suit student needs. The school leader and teacher leaders shared that many primary grade students enter school without basic academic skills that include letter and number recognition or a solid vocabulary; and added that this deficit is compounded for ELLs, many of whom have no English words or experience with the English alphabet. Teachers said that following the CCLS modules has resulted in a widening of the vocabulary gap for these students.
- Teachers have begun to use congruence forms designed by the data coach this year. These forms, which teachers complete at grade-level meetings, provide information to every teacher about the content and skills taught at each grade level. This enables teachers of the special subjects to address

these topics in their classes. Reviewers observed one example of collaboration in a physical education class where students used mathematics facts in running relay races. However, to date, there has been little opportunity for classroom teachers and teachers of special subjects to develop curricula across the disciplines to help students deepen their understanding of content.

- Teachers use a variety of assessments to determine student learning, but do not sufficiently adjust the curricula based on what they have learned about student strengths and weaknesses. At the time of the review, quarterly benchmark assessments were about to be administered in all grades; and teachers were in the process of developing second quarter benchmark assessments. Additionally, students visit the computer lab daily to engage in assessments and remediation work through the *iReady* program. Teachers share daily progress reports for individual students during weekly grade level meetings and use them to inform required grade-level action planning activities. Teachers share the progress reports with students and parents and use them to set goals for students. Many students shared that they are aware of their goals.

Recommendation:

- To address the vocabulary deficits in the primary grades, horizontal grade-level teams for kindergarten, grade one, and grade two that include English as a new language (ENL) and special education teachers, should, by second quarter, further develop two CCLS ELA modules. Enhancement to the modules could be based on the existing curriculum work of the Academic Intervention Services (AIS) facilitator and include, for example, additional songs, skits, or stories using module vocabulary. Amended modules should be uploaded to the shared drive to make them accessible to all teachers.

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 has taken steps to support teachers as they work to improve their instructional effectiveness. One example is the school leader’s expectation that meetings of teachers at a grade level or within variable grade spans take place so teachers can review data and create uniform action plans to increase student success. Teachers routinely provide agendas and meeting notes to the school leader, although she often attends meetings. Teachers participate in ongoing PD on creating essential questions and higher-order question stems and upload teacher-generated questions to the school’s shared drive for schoolwide use. The school leader also shared with the review team that teachers have had a book study on “Total Participation Techniques,” which describes strategies to increase student engagement during lessons.
- The school has a large population of ELLs. The school leader has provided a specific schedule for ENL teachers to meet with ELL students; however, ENL teachers spend the majority of their time in regular education classrooms. Additionally, language specific translators known as academic coaches are not always available to assist ELLs. Teachers depend on other students, who may or may not speak the language, to help their ELL classmates. Special education teachers serve students with disabilities in

the resource room or in self-contained classes. General education teachers said leaders have not provided them with targeted PD to help them to meet the needs of students with disabilities and ELLs. These teachers stated that they had participated in a poverty simulation workshop that increased their understanding of the effects of poverty; however, reviewers did not observe teachers using particular strategies that provide multiple opportunities for students to learn.

- Academic deficiencies resulting in acting-out behavior present a major area of schoolwide concern. Through conversations with teachers, students, and parents, and the monitoring of behavioral and disciplinary referrals, school leaders determined that many classroom behavioral issues, especially in the upper grades, were caused by students feeling uncomfortable and like failures in front of their peers. For example, some students in grades five and six are reading well below grade level, which makes instruction and learning difficult as students are embarrassed by their limited reading skills. In interviews, students in the upper grades spoke of bullying and discomfort in class; and parents echoed student reports of bullying and teasing. In addition, although there are many ethnic groups and languages spoken in the school, IIT reviewers did not observe instructional practices capitalizing on these differences.
- With the guidance of the data coach, teachers are analyzing data and examining their instructional practices. During grade-level meetings, teachers are developing action plans with the data coach to produce more effective instructional strategies based on the results of a variety of assessments. Teachers are analyzing student data and using it to form instructional groups; however, whole group instruction predominated in observed classes. When students shared their work with the reviewers, they often said they did not understand the grades on their papers and did not know how to improve their work.

Recommendation:

Within the next two weeks, the school leader should identify a group of teachers to establish and oversee a “Reading Buddies” program to be held during the breakfast period. Teachers will:

- choose students from the upper grades who are reading below grade level to read to primary students;
- develop the parameters of the program; and
- identify appropriate books at each reader’s proficiency level.

The program will provide struggling readers at all levels the opportunity to have additional reading practice in an inviting environment while simultaneously increasing primary students’ exposure to additional vocabulary and language.

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 believes that before meaningful learning can take place it is necessary to address

students' social and emotional developmental health needs. As a result, the school leader put many systems and programs into place in 2014-15, such as grade-level and vertical teacher meetings, so that staff could place a greater focus on student academic success in 2015-16. The school leader has established groups that support students emotionally, psychologically, and academically. For example, she worked closely with the social worker, data coach, and school psychologist to form the school's instructional support team. The team meets weekly, and more frequently as needed, to review data, monitor student progress, and oversee the implementation of intervention plans. The school leader ensures that the work of this team is connected to the work of other student support staff. The school leader is also strengthening connections with community groups and organizations that focus on social and emotional needs, including those of ELLs, students with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged students, to increase school accessibility for families.

- A Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program has been in place since 2014-15. Banners and posters hang throughout the hallways and teachers display the PBIS principles, "Be Safe, Be Responsible, and Be Respectful," in each classroom. Reviewers heard teachers refer to the principles and all of the students reviewers spoke with knew them well. One reviewer observed a teacher-student conversation in which PBIS tenets played a large part in the correction of misbehavior. Reviewers attended the "student of the month" awards assembly where students from each class were honored by teachers and celebrated by peers for displaying positive traits. School-provided data showed that the number of in-school suspensions has declined; however, the school leader and data coach have not linked this decrease to any one program or initiative.
- In 2015-16, the district added a parent liaison to the staff at the request of the school leader. The liaison communicates with parents, serves on the instructional support team, and provides additional support for students. For example, she has formed student lunch groups to provide emotional support to students with social or emotional issues. When asked how the school could improve, students and parents stated the need for more clubs, extracurricular activities, and opportunities for students to learn leadership and coping skills. Interviewees told reviewers that although disciplinary referrals have decreased with the consistent implementation of PBIS, acting-out behavior continues to impede teaching and learning.
- School staff work with several agencies or teams to support student growth. Family Outreach for Collaborating, Understanding, and Support (FOCUS) works with families and Community Health and Behavioral Services (CHBS) provides students and their families with anger management strategies and counseling. There is a health clinic housed in the school building, which also provides the services of a therapist one day each week.
- The school leader and support staff collect data on individual students from a variety of sources to monitor the success of interventions and services and make necessary adjustments. One such data source is the *Check-In, Check-Out* program where students are paired with an adult who monitors their behavior and sends daily reports home.

Recommendation:

- Within the next month, the school leader, together with the parent liaison and other interested staff, should design a plan to implement peer mediation within the school. The plan should incorporate parts of the existing PBIS program, if appropriate, address common behavioral issues at the school such as bullying, and include students in its 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.

Tenet Stage

1

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

- The school leader holds high expectations for student success and is committed to sharing this vision with parents and families; reviewers found that the school leader recognizes the importance of family engagement and makes many attempts to bring families into the school community. However, she and teacher leaders shared that leadership efforts, including literacy nights and special events focusing on parents of ELLs, have met with mixed success. Attendance varies. Parents praised the school leader for caring about all students and being available to parents and families at any time; however, parent participation continues to be low.
- The school leader, teachers, and support staff use a number of means to communicate with parents that include home visits, letters, newsletters, email, the parent portal, and notebooks in which parents and teachers correspond with each other. Interviewees expressed frustration because calls to parents are sometimes not answered or returned and family contact numbers often change. Communication logs showed that 186 of 200 calls made to parents were unsuccessful. Parents said that they receive prompt responses from teachers and school leaders whenever they initiate contact with the school. Parents added that they were always warmly welcomed during school visits; however, also knew of parents who had never visited the school.
- There is a large population of parents and families for whom English is a second language. Translators, also known as academic coaches, are available within the district to support ELLs and their parents while they are in school, during events, and at meetings. When asked about translations of letters and other communications, school staff reported using translation services for many documents and stated that the school and district websites provide a function for word-for-word document translations; however, the predominant first languages of Somali, Burmese, and Karen, were not available on the website.
- There is currently no specific training for staff or families on strategies for creating or strengthening home-school partnerships.
- The school collects and analyzes a variety of data including assessment results, attendance data, disciplinary referrals, and information from programs such as *Check-In*, *Check-Out*, the after school

program, and PBIS. Relevant data, such as attendance in the after school program, is shared with parents. School staff disseminate academic data such as *iReady* reports, state and benchmark assessment results, and quarterly report cards. Instructional support team members invite parents to meetings to discuss intervention plans specific to their children that the team develops through an analysis of data. School personnel inform parents of services offered at the health clinic and required Title I parent meetings are held at the school. Additionally, the parent liaison participates in the work of the FOCUS family outreach group. Despite these efforts, low attendance at parent events results in school staff being unable to share information intended to address student and family needs.

Recommendation:

- By the end of the second quarter, the school leader should support the parent liaison, the academic coaches, and the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) in efforts to identify a willing parent or group of parents in each cultural group within the school community. These “turnkey” parents will be the “go to” people to receive information about important school events that would benefit all parents, but especially those of ENL students. As such, they will share the information with their ethnic communities and, thus, strengthen the lines of communication and engagement between the school and the parents.