



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	662300010037
School Name	Charles E. Gorton High School
School Address	100 Shonnard Place, Yonkers, New York 10703
District Name	Yonkers City School District
School Leader	Gail Joyner-White
Dates of Review	November 17 18, 2015
School Accountability Status	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus School
Type of Review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet for Charles E. Gorton High School

School Configuration (2015-16 data)					
Grade Configuration	9-12	Total Enrollment	953	SIG Recipient	No
Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes (2015-16)					
# Transitional Bilingual	5	# Dual Language		# Self-Contained English as a Second Language	
Types and Number of Special Education Classes (2015-16)					
# Special Classes	50	# SETSS	20	# Integrated Collaborative Teaching	0
Types and Number of Special Classes (2015-16)					
# Visual Arts	18	# Music	10	# Drama	0
# Foreign Language	23	# Dance		# CTE	3
School Composition (most recent data)					
% Title I Population		93	% Attendance Rate		90
% Free Lunch		87	% Reduced Lunch		4.5
% Limited English Proficient		12	% Students with Disabilities		20
Racial/Ethnic Origin (most recent data)					
% American Indian or Alaska Native			% Black or African American		31
% Hispanic or Latino		57	% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander		5
% White		6	% Multi-Racial		1
Personnel (most recent data)					
Years Principal Assigned to School		6	# of Assistant Principals		4
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate		1	% Teaching Out of Certification		0
% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Years of Experience		5	Average Teacher Absences		6
Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools (2014-15)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4			Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4		
Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (4th Grade)			Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (8th Grade)		
Student Performance for High Schools (2014-15)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4		70.7%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4		48.3%
Global History Performance at levels 3 & 4		55.14%	US History Performance at levels 3 & 4		71.2%
4 Year Graduation Rate		66.4%	6 Year Graduation Rate		63.2%
Regents Diploma w/ Advanced Designation		1.7%	% ELA/Math Aspirational Performance Measures		
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	X	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	X
Hispanic or Latino	X	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 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		ALL STUDENTS	

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS WRITTEN BY THE SCHOOL:

1. Increase the number of African-American/Hispanic males, economically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities on track for graduation.
2. Increase the passing rate in mathematics and science for African-American/Hispanic males, economically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities.
3. Identify and monitor student progress for 25-30 students per teacher using the inquiry model.
4. Implement the Respect Campaign to support character education.

Information about the review

- The review was co-led by an Outside Educational Expert (OEE) and representatives from the New York State Education Department. 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 made 82 classroom visits 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, school-wide data, teacher feedback, and student work.
- The school provided results of a 2013 grade nine student survey that 241 students (22 percent) completed.

Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions: Visionary leaders create a school community and culture that lead to success, well-being and high academic outcomes for all students via systems of continuous and sustainable school improvement.

#	Statement of Practice	Stage 4	Stage 3	Stage 2	Stage 1
2.2	The school leader ensures that the school community shares the Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Results-oriented, and Timely (SMART) goals/mission, and long-term vision inclusive of core values that address the priorities outlined in the School Comprehensive Educational Plan (SCEP).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.4	Teachers and students work together to implement a program/plan to create a learning environment that is responsive to students' varied experiences and tailored to the strengths and needs of all students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.5	Teachers inform planning and foster student participation in their own learning process by using a variety of summative and formative data sources (e.g., screening, interim measures, and progress monitoring).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TENET 4 OVERALL STAGE:				2	

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

#	Statement of Practice	Stage 4	Stage 3	Stage 2	Stage 1
5.2	The school leader establishes overarching systems and understandings of how to support and sustain student social and emotional developmental health and academic success.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.3	The school articulates and systematically promotes a vision for social and emotional developmental health that is aligned to a curriculum or program that provides learning experiences and a safe and healthy school environment for families, teachers, and students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.4	All school stakeholders work together to develop a common understanding of the importance of their contributions in creating a school community that is safe, conducive to learning, and fostering of a sense of ownership for providing social and emotional developmental health supports tied to the school's vision.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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	2
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The school is at **Stage Two** for Tenet 2 – School Leader Practices and Decisions.

- The school leader has worked with the school community to change the school’s culture to bring about measurable school improvement. The review team found that all school stakeholders interviewed by the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) articulated the school leader’s vision to prepare students for the future. Teachers, students, and parents stated that the school leader is changing the school’s culture, especially for students, from one of low expectations to one of high expectations; however, the IIT found that the school leaders have not ensured that all teachers’ instructional practices address the varying needs of students. The school leaders and staff developed specific, measurable, ambitious, results-oriented, and timely (SMART) goals, and the school leader reported that the goals are monitored continually through analysis of data from benchmark assessments. A review of data indicated that student achievement improved between 2012 and 2015, with the four-year graduation rate increasing from 50.2 to 62.1 percent and the percentage of students passing the Regents in English increasing from 44.3 to 70.7 percent, with smaller gains in science and social studies. While the school has made progress in raising student achievement, the school staff has not made comparable progress in promoting a shared vision to support all students’ social and emotional developmental health. For example, there are few written protocols in place to guide systems of referrals, save for special education populations.
- The school leader has used some available resources to address school priorities and needs. However, the review team did not find evidence of a system for monitoring the impact of decisions made about the use of resources. The school leader reported that she created grade cohorts for which key staff members loop with students for their four years, ensuring that students are well known and closely monitored. In addition, she had guidance counselors institute a system to track students’ progress toward graduation. The school leader allocated resources to allow students to recover credits, receive Regents preparation after school, and earn college credits in order to graduate early. The school leader reported that she scheduled common planning time for teachers in grades nine and ten and for special education teachers, which teachers stated allows them to plan collaboratively. Teachers also stated that school leaders have empowered teachers by selecting teacher leaders to chair every department and having teachers collaboratively develop baseline, interim, and summative assessments. Although the school leader has put these resources in place, the IIT found that the school leader has not ensured that teacher planning and instruction meets the needs of all students.
- School leaders have begun to increase the instructional capacity of teachers to promote their use of best practices. The review team found that school leaders provide actionable feedback in observation reports, which teachers stated were timely and meaningful. However, reviewers noted that feedback from formal observations and walk-throughs contained different ratings for the same lesson characteristic. As part of the annual professional performance review (APPR), the school leaders introduced a process for teachers to develop individual professional goals and action plans; however, the IIT found minimal evidence to show how school leaders monitor teachers’ progress toward achieving their goals. Although school leaders have provided professional development (PD) on such topics as changing mindset, raising expectations, and using data, they have not established a system to

identify and address common deficiencies noted during observations, which limits the impact of school leaders' support on teaching practices.

- Although school leaders have established limited systems to track and monitor some school-wide practices, they have not systematically analyzed data to inform strategic decision-making. The school leader developed the honors, Regents, and credit accumulation monitoring system that informs her decisions; however, she has not developed similar systems to address other functions of the school, such as supporting students' social and emotional growth. While school leaders ensured that students created goals and action plans in many subjects, the review team found little evidence of a system in place to review these goals and action plans to monitor students' progress. In addition, although hundreds of parents attend numerous events, some events are very poorly attended and there is no system in place to monitor and evaluate parent outreach efforts.

Recommendation:

- Beginning immediately, school leaders should focus on the quality of collaborative and individual teacher planning, including adaptations for specific subgroups, during observations and walk-throughs and provide support in those instances where planning is deficient. School leaders should maintain records of their visits in a manner that allows them to analyze trends and identify shared areas of need that may be addressed through tailored PD.

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.

- School leaders are not sufficiently ensuring that staff are developing a rigorous coherent curriculum that leads to college and career readiness. Although the school leader's vision for the curriculum is aligned with the CCLS and instructional shifts, reviewers found that she has not established a comprehensive system to monitor and evaluate the quality of teachers' curricular planning. Most curriculum documents examined by reviewers were resources that teachers acquired from the internet, and the few teacher-developed plans did not include differentiation or scaffolding to address varied student needs. Although school leaders keep track of their own observations and walk-throughs, they have not developed a record-keeping system to maintain planning data that would show individual and common instructional deficiencies and inform their PD planning for staff. Although both school leaders and teachers reported that school leaders provided some school wide PD, reviewers saw no evidence of follow-up to address specific teacher needs.
- Reviewers found that some lesson plans contained data-driven instruction protocols and aligned with the CCLS. However, most plans were not tailored to meet students' needs and did not include critical thinking activities. Reviewers also found little consistency in the incorporation of complex materials and higher-order questioning in lesson plans and curriculum documents. Teachers stated that some but not all teachers plan instruction based on baseline and formative assessment data, and reviewers saw evidence of collaborative planning by grade 10 English language arts (ELA) and grade 11 social

studies teachers. However, school leaders do not systematically review teachers’ curricular planning to ensure inclusion of the CCLS instructional shifts and adaptations for subgroups.

- Teachers minimally planned interdisciplinary curricula to increase student engagement and opportunities for student success. Although the school leader stated that the grades nine and ten horizontal teams are working on thematic units, reviewers found no evidence of interdisciplinary planning in their observations of team meetings. Furthermore, the vertical teacher group did not report any interdisciplinary planning to reviewers.
- Although some teachers use assessment data to guide curriculum planning, this practice is inconsistent across the school. Reviewers found that approximately half the teachers use a range of assessments to inform their planning and provide students with feedback. Some teachers reported that they use baseline assessments to diagnose student needs and quarterly benchmark assessments to adjust their planning. Teachers and students stated that some teachers use one of three online platforms to provide students with assessment data and feedback, while other teachers do not. Students also reported that although some teachers use rubrics that students generally understand, students did not participate in developing the rubrics. Reviewers found that most student work on display in classrooms contained general comments without actionable feedback.

Recommendation:

- Effective immediately, the grades nine and ten horizontal teams should develop two thematic units to be taught in spring 2016. Two interdisciplinary teams, one in grade 11 and one in grade 12 and representative of every content area and subgroup, should be created to each write a thematic unit, also to be taught in spring 2016. The thematic units should be available for use by other teacher teams. It is further recommended that the Rubicon Atlas template be used to develop these units.
- Effective immediately, the school leader should re-focus and monitor the work of the grades nine and ten horizontal teams at weekly cabinet meetings and through the collection of agendas and minutes.

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.

- Although school leaders reported that they have prioritized teachers’ use of data and assessments during observations and walk-throughs; however, the review team found that they have not ensured that instruction is consistently informed by data and reflective of student needs. While school and teacher leaders have a vision for rigorous instruction and expectations for its implementation, reviewers observed high student engagement and inquiry in less than a quarter of classrooms visited. Although some teachers have made efforts to analyze data to inform instruction, most do not use data to address the needs of subgroups. School leaders have not established a system to identify and address the pedagogical needs of all teachers.
- Reviewers found that only some teachers’ practices reflect use of data-driven instruction that incorporates higher-order questions, text complexity, and multiple opportunities to learn. The review

team visited 82 classrooms and found that less than a third of teachers employed data-driven instruction, and less than a fifth consistently asked higher-order questions and used complex materials. While some teachers used the “keeping learning on track” (KLT) framework to check for students’ understanding, reviewers found little evidence of teachers adapting instruction for English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities. Reviewers found that the needs of students with disabilities were better addressed by their self-contained and pull-out teachers than by mainstream teachers. For example, the self-contained and pull-out teachers made significantly greater use of adaptations, scaffolding, and re-teaching to ensure student understanding.

- Although students, teachers, and most parents interviewed by the IIT described a classroom environment that was physically safe, reviewers found that teachers’ instructional practices typically did not address diverse student needs or create an environment that promotes intellectual discovery and rigorous thinking. The review team found that most teachers’ lessons were teacher-centered and minimally provided students with opportunities to develop their voice through rich discussion with other students. Some classes in the Medical Magnet Program promoted intellectual discovery that featured inquiry-based learning. For example, the team observed a bio-ethics debate in which students made arguments for and against blood transfusions when it conflicted with a person’s religious beliefs. However, this practice was not typical as the team noted instances of teachers missing opportunities to connect what students were learning with their lives. For example, most mathematics instruction observed by team centered on rote computation and did not include connections to real world applications.
- Reviewers found that teachers’ are in the early stages of using data and assessments to inform instructional strategies and to provide students with feedback. The team saw data walls in the lobby and in more than half the classrooms visited. Most of the data walls included charts of student goals and action plans. Students stated that they actively use the displayed material to monitor their progress. While teachers stated that they use baseline and formative assessment data to inform instruction, the team saw minimal purposeful grouping of students in the classrooms visited. Students in focus groups expressed ownership for their learning and described the school’s emphasis on Regents preparation and credit recovery. Students also reported, however, that teachers’ use of online portals to share data and give feedback was inconsistent across the school.

Recommendation:

- Effective immediately, teachers should integrate a minimum of two checks for understanding into every lesson, one as an interim assessment during the lesson and one as part of a closure strategy at the end of the lesson. School leaders should monitor this initiative during observations and walk-throughs and provide support as needed.
- Effective immediately, in accordance with the KLT framework already in use, teachers should integrate a minimum of one highly engaging activity into every lesson, such as think-pair-share, a rich discussion, and/or accountable talk. School leaders should monitor this initiative during observations and walk-throughs and provide support as needed.

Tenet 5 - Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health: The school community identifies, promotes, and supports social and emotional development by designing

Tenet Stage	2
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systems and experiences that lead to healthy relationships and a safe, respectful environment that is conducive to learning for all constituents.

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

- Although some structures are in place to address students’ social and emotional developmental health needs, school leaders have not established a vision and a system that connect these efforts to effectively remove barriers to learning. The school leader reported that she created grade cohorts of students and assigned key staff to loop with students to better serve the needs of all students, and this has likely contributed to the school’s increased graduation rate. The IIT found that other than for special education, the school has no formal written referral system. The district administered a student survey in 2014-15; however, the review team found no evidence of how school leaders used results from the survey to inform decisions regarding supports for students’ social and emotional developmental health needs.
- Reviewers found that the school lacks a comprehensive program to address students’ social and emotional developmental health needs and does not provide PD to staff in this area. Although the school has implemented a program called Respect to promote respectful interactions between all school constituents, students stated that there is a continuing issue with students being disrespectful toward each other. The school leader stated that staff distribute reward tickets, which can be redeemed for food items, to students as an incentive for positive deeds, and students reported that the tickets are motivational. Students also stated that there is at least one adult with whom they can discuss personal issues. The grade nine horizontal team reported that students are paired together to provide academic and emotional support to one another; however, reviewers found little evidence to show that this practice consistently occurred throughout the school.
- Although the school partners with some community organizations to address students’ social and emotional developmental health needs, there is no system in place to connect the work of different stakeholders. Staff reported that the school partners with outside agencies and organizations such as Andrus and Iona College to provide programs and services for students and their families. However, these programs impact a relatively small number of students. The school leader shared that the school has offered some workshops to parents regarding their children’s emotional development but they have generally been poorly attended. Staff interviews indicated that members of the student support team meet sporadically and that they do not coordinate their efforts. The IIT found that not all constituents have developed a shared understanding of how to address and respond to students’ social and emotional developmental health needs.
- Reviewers found that the school’s limited use of social and emotional health data hinders staff in their ability to provide students with necessary support and to remove barriers to student learning. Although the student support team indicated that the eSchool online application could generate reports containing social and emotional health data, school leaders stated that they did not have this capability. School staff collect some student data including information on hall sweeps, suspensions, attendance, lateness, and class cutting; however, staff reported that they do not conduct sufficient analysis of these data to inform decisions and actions.

Recommendation:

- Effective immediately, the student support staff and school leaders should analyze data that are collected, such as academic performance, suspensions, attendance, lateness, cutting class, and sweeps, to determine recidivism rates and identify students who should receive additional support. The identified students should be monitored to determine the effectiveness of provided interventions and inform adjustments to services when there has been insufficient progress. School leaders should monitor students who receive the daily progress report and create a record-keeping system to analyze the effectiveness of interventions and make adjustments as necessary.
- Effective January 1, 2016, the cohort guidance counselor should provide weekly PD at grade-level team meetings on a topic that addresses all students’ social and emotional developmental health needs. Teachers should integrate these understandings and strategies into their regular instructional practices.

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 has developed positive relationships with staff, students, and parents the lack of a vision for family engagement has resulted in few partnerships with families that support children achieving at high levels. The school leader reported that she has shared the school’s high expectations for student success at student and parent gatherings, in written communications, and in her daily interactions with students, teachers, and parents. The school leader also shared that despite her sharing these expectations, the majority of staff do not yet have high expectation of the students they teach. For example, this past spring teachers were hesitant about holding a science fair, because they did not think students would feel confident enough to participate. The school leader reported that the fair drew over 200 student exhibits and over 200 parents attended. The school leader indicated that the school community’s view of student achievement is changing. Based on statements made in focus groups, the IIT team concluded that students’ expectations have changed more than that of teachers. The school leader has not undertaken a parent questionnaire to determine parents’ needs and to inform the school’s decisions regarding parent outreach efforts.
- Reviewers found that the school’s communication with families has allowed limited numbers of staff and families to exchange information to foster improved academic achievement. The school communicates with parents through automated calls via ConnectEd, backpack communication, and daily conduct cards. Staff reported that the school translates key documents into Spanish. Parents reported that few parents participate in the parent-teacher association. The school leader reported that staff have made efforts to share information with parents at events such as open houses; however, parent participation is low, and the IIT found that the school does not monitor the its outreach efforts to parents to determine if all parents’ needs are being met.
- The review team found that the school has not created and sustained effective home-school partnerships that facilitate the collaboration of both parties to support student achievement. The

school leader reported that few parents attend parent workshops intended to promote their understanding of how to support their child's education, and reviewers found in their examination of the PD calendar that there has been a lack of PD for staff to help them develop home-school partnerships.

- The school staff reported that the school provides parents with four report cards and three interim progress reports during the school year; however, parents interviewed by the IIT expressed that they were not aware of when the school issued progress reports. In addition, parents do not have consistent access to an online parent portal to access student data and to communicate with staff. The school leader reported that student progress data were shared with parents at the fall open house, and some students led the parent-teacher conferences; however, less than a third of parents attended the open house and/or parent-teacher conferences. The review team found that not all staff use data in ways that support family and student needs.

Recommendation:

- At the December 7, 2015 faculty conference, a task force should be created to review available online applications. The task force should make a recommendation to the staff for one platform that will be adopted by the school community. This portal should include, but not be limited to, student assessment data, assignment information, anecdotal information, and email links to staff members. School leaders should monitor use of the portal by students and parents monthly.
- Beginning immediately, the school leader should use the opportunity available at well attended parent events, such as the science fair, talent show, and open house, to communicate the school's high expectations for students' academic achievement and social-emotional growth, and provide information to parents regarding school staff and resources available to support students and families.
- During the next three months, the school leaders should collect information via a brief parent questionnaire at well attended parent events to provide the school with information to identify parent needs, inform decisions regarding parent support, and help build home-school partnerships.