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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)

BEDS Code | 131500010001
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School Name | Charles B. Warring Elementary School
School Address | 283 Mansion Street, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601
District Name | Poughkeepsie City School District
School Leader | Jason Gerard
Dates of Review | November 7 and 9, 2016
Date of Return Visit | January 9, 2017
School Accountability Status | ☑ Priority School
Type of Review | ☑ SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)
School Information Sheet for Charles B. Warring Elementary School

School Configuration (2016-17 data)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Grade Configuration</th>
<th>Total Enrollment</th>
<th>SIG Recipient</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K-5</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>YES</td>
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</table>

Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes (2016-17)

- # Transitional Bilingual: 0
- # Dual Language: 0
- # Self-Contained English as a Second Language: 0

Types and Number of Special Education Classes (2016-17)

- # Special Classes: 2
- # SETSS: N/A
- # Integrated Collaborative Teaching: 5

Types and Number of Special Classes (2016-17)

- # Visual Arts: 1
- # Music: 1
- # Drama: 0
- # Foreign Language: 0
- # Dance: 0
- # CTE: 0

School Composition (most recent data)

- % Title I Population: 100
- % Attendance Rate: 93
- % Free Lunch: 100
- % Reduced Lunch: 0
- % Limited English Proficient: 18
- % Students with Disabilities: 22

Racial/Ethnic Origin (most recent data)

- % American Indian or Alaska Native: 0.5
- % Black or African American: 44
- % Hispanic or Latino: 17
- % Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 25
- % White: 29
- % Multi-Racial: 7.3

Personnel (most recent data)

- Years Principal Assigned to School: 0.5
- # of Assistant Principals: 1
- % of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate: 0
- % Teaching Out of Certification: 0
- % Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Years of Experience: 9.4
- Average Teacher Absences: 2.6

Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools (2015-16)

- ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4: 22
- Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4: 17
- Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (4th Grade): 39
- Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (8th Grade): N/A

Overall NYSED Accountability Status

- Priority School: X
- Local Assistance Plan: In Good Standing

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS WRITTEN BY THE SCHOOL:

1. To ensure that the master schedule is created in an equitable manner to facilitate professional development for instructional staff, student access to Title I services, as well as compliance with NYSED regulations Part 200 & 154.
2. Improve building-wide systems to maintain a proactive approach to instruction (academics), attendance, and behaviors.
3. To ensure that there is compliance with PCSD defined best practices focused on improving instructional planning and data driven instruction.
4. To continue participation of the Focus Instructional Learning Walks (FILW) process by all stakeholders to foster reflection and collegial conversation around instruction.
5. To continue vastly improving the impact of increased parent and community involvement in our school building.
Purpose of the visit

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

The purpose of this review is to provide the school with feedback regarding the practices across the school and to provide a number of actionable recommendations to direct the school’s work in the immediate future. This report is being provided as a feedback tool to assist the school and to help identify areas for improvement. These areas can address the subgroups identified or they may be broader and cover additional subgroups or the entire school. NYSED recognizes that there are dedicated staff members at the school committed to the success of the students. The report below provides a critical lens to help the school best focus its efforts.

Information about the review

- The review was co-led by an Outside Educational Expert (OEE) and a representative from the New York State Education Department. The team also included a district representative, a Special Education School Improvement Specialist (SESI) representative, and a representative from the Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN).
- The review team visited a total of 43 classrooms during the review.
- The OEE visited seven classrooms with the Principal during the review.
- Reviewers conducted focus groups with students, staff, and parents.
- Reviewers examined documents provided by the school, including curriculum maps, lesson plans, schoolwide data, teacher feedback, and student work.
- In advance of the review, the school provided results of a student survey that 83 students completed.
- In advance of the review, the school provided results of a staff survey that 22 staff members completed.
- In advance of the review, the school provided results of a parent survey that 21 parents completed.
- In advance of the review, 23 staff members completed a DTSDE pre-review survey conducted by NYSED.
- The Principal has been in his post since January 2016.

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

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<th>SUCCESSES WITHIN THE SCHOOL THAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD BUILD UPON:</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. All students are assessed on their reading performance levels, and these data are used to form flexible ability groups. This results in students in grades one to five receiving daily guided reading sessions where activities are matched to their performance levels.</td>
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<td>2. School leaders devised a resource file to guide staff in their work. Staff stated that morale has improved recently because they are now better supported, and current data related to teacher attendance shows an improvement from the previous year.</td>
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3. The school has developed a system to track academic progress, conduct, and timeliness on a daily basis for all students. This school-wide system is beginning to provide school leaders with information needed to identify trends and patterns throughout the school.

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

Recommendation for Tenet 2 – School Leader Practices and Decisions:

By December 12, 2016, the school leaders should devise a schedule for focused instructional learning walks concentrating on:

- learner engagement;
- assessment and learning; and
- questioning and discussion techniques.

The school leader should devise a tracking tool to monitor how well teachers are implementing these strategies.

Rationale that led to the recommendation:

- The school leader told reviewers that he and the assistant school leader have adopted a classroom visitation tool to help them focus on improving teachers’ instructional practices during their instructional learning walks. However, observations from some learning walks completed previously by school leaders, along with evidence collected by reviewers during their classroom visits, showed that instruction did not always fully engage students. The school leader stated that despite the school leaders’ emphasis on differentiated instruction, teachers did not typically adjust their instruction to meet students’ needs and enable them to stay engaged in the lesson.

- Reviewers noted when visiting classrooms, some with the school leader, that teachers did not always use previous assessments to match activities to students’ achievement levels. Teachers did not always check for student understanding as lessons progressed by asking questions that reinforced and developed student learning. In addition, teachers provided few opportunities for students to discuss topics and collaborate with each other. Consequently, students often became disengaged from their learning.

- During interviews with the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT), the school leader reported that the school leadership had identified the need to focus their instructional expectations on learner engagement, assessment and learning, and questioning and discussion techniques in order to ensure coherent and effective instructional practices, which promote student academic achievement.

- Reviewers’ examination of school documents showed that when school leaders completed their focused instructional learning walks, they did not develop simple charts to show which teachers’ instructional practices contained the expected components and where additional support was necessary. In addition, reviewers found that school leaders did not document return visits to classrooms to confirm whether improvements in teachers’ instructional practices had taken place.
Tenet 3  Curriculum Development and Support: The school has rigorous and coherent curricula and assessments that are appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) for all students and are modified for identified subgroups in order to maximize teacher instructional practices and student learning outcomes.

Recommendation for Tenet 3 – Curriculum Development and Support:

By January 1, 2017, the school leaders and the Transformation Team should:

- review current math resources and assessments;
- identify a math assessment that can be used to track the progress of students in kindergarten to grade five; and
- create small steps to support teachers in utilizing the school’s math data to inform instructional planning and place students into flexible ability groups to better meet student needs.

Rationale that led to the recommendation:

- Reviewers’ discussions with the school leader and visits to classrooms showed that most teachers use the EngageNY math modules as the math curriculum, while a few teachers use a mixture of other math materials. The school leader stated that in reading, students in all grade levels are assessed in a variety of ways using a number of assessments, including fluency and pre- and post- unit assessments. However, the school leader acknowledged that teachers do not usually use math data to adjust the curriculum and inform instructional planning.
- During visits to classrooms, reviewers observed that math lessons were usually teacher led with one lesson planned for all students, whatever their achievement level. Reviewers found little evidence that teachers used data to adjust the curriculum to address varied student achievement levels in math. Reviewers also found no evidence that teachers created flexible ability groups for students in math to address their respective achievement levels, as teachers do in reading.
- The school leader acknowledged that grade-level meetings are currently focused on reading. During a grade-level meeting, reviewers observed that teachers used data from benchmark assessments to identify gaps in students’ reading skills. Discussions with teachers showed that they had used reading assessment data to inform their flexible reading groups.
- The school leader and teachers stated that the use of assessment data to inform flexible groups has just started in reading but has not yet begun in math. School leaders and the Transformation Team, who support them, have not created action steps to support teachers in the use of the school’s math assessment data to inform instructional planning.

Tenet 4  Teacher Practices and Decisions: Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn, so that all students and pertinent subgroups experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking, and achievement.

Recommendation for Tenet 4 – Teacher Practices and Decisions:

By December 12, 2016, teachers should ensure that students receive less teacher-led instruction and are offered more opportunities for student-centered learning by:

- allowing students to take part in more group and class discussions and enabling teachers to act more as a facilitator; and
• offering students more opportunities to explore topics that interest them.

In all instruction, teachers should include higher-order questions that allow students time to think as they reinforce and extend their learning.

Rationale that led to the recommendation:

• During visits to classrooms and through discussions with students, reviewers found that many students had difficulty articulating their thoughts about what they were learning. Students typically received few opportunities to engage in discussions with each other because most lessons were teacher led in which students filled in worksheets and often completed the same activity.

• The IIT found that teachers offered students limited opportunities to participate in student-centered learning because activities rarely allowed students to collaborate with each other. Students had few opportunities to discuss issues where teachers asked questions to develop and reinforce student learning rather than simply telling the students what they needed to know. Students stated that teachers usually planned one lesson for the whole class. Reviewers rarely observed students participating actively in group and class discussions or exploring topics that interested them.

• During visits to classrooms, some with the school leader, reviewers observed that teachers typically posed low-level questions and did not involve students of all abilities, which led to student disengagement. Few students volunteered answers to the questions teachers posed. In addition, when students answered questions, teachers did not encourage them to expand their ideas or encourage other students to listen. Reviewers noted that teachers often did not address students who were not listening to what their peers were adding to the lesson. Teachers rarely asked students open-ended questions that allowed them to reflect and expand their learning. Higher-order questioning, where students were given time to think, reinforce, and develop their learning, was rarely observed by reviewers during visits to classrooms across all grade levels.

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

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

By December 1, 2016, the school leader and school support staff should reestablish the instructional support team by:

• establishing a calendar of instructional support team meetings and informing all staff;
• identifying students to be reviewed; and
• implementing instructional support team meetings.

Rationale that led to the recommendation:

• Reviewers found that the school leader has not organized the school’s resources to address all students’ social and emotional developmental health needs. The school leader and student support staff stated that there is no calendar of scheduled instructional support team meetings planned for the near future.
As a result, staff are currently working as individuals rather than as a team as they focus on individual student social-emotional needs.

- Students reported to reviewers that during recess some students are fearful when they are outside of the building because of the behavior of other students. Teachers stated that at times student misbehavior in class interferes with learning during instruction. The IIT found that student behavioral issues are not addressed consistently; staff reported that often the same students misbehave. Reviewers noted that there was little evidence to show that programs or systems are monitored by school leaders to identify how well the school is working towards removing barriers to learning.

- During discussions with reviewers, support staff and the school leader stated that the school does not have a fully established referral system to identify and then support student social and emotional needs. The school leader and support staff acknowledged that the lack of an effective referral system and a student support team that work together to identify and address student needs impedes student learning and the development of social and emotional skills.

Tenet 6  Family and Community Engagement: The school creates a culture of partnership where families, community members, and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social emotional growth and well being.

Recommendation for Tenet 6 – Family and Community Engagement:

By December 7, 2016, the school leaders should schedule meetings with the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and Community Engagement Task Force to identify the barriers related to reciprocal communication.

Rationale that led to the recommendation:

- Reviewers found though a review of school documents and discussions with parents, staff, and the school leader that the school has some two-way channels of communication that are available for parents to develop relationships with staff and learn how well their children are achieving both academically and socially; however, many parents do not use them. The school leader stated that reciprocal communication is an area that needs to be developed because too few parents are engaged with the work of the school.

- Some parents stated during discussions with reviewers that teachers have established a few reciprocal channels of communication that staff and parents use to develop home-school links. These include parent-teacher conferences, phone calls, text messages, and emails. The school also has a website designed to support families and staff and encourage teachers and parents to work together. However, discussions with parents showed that not all parents have access to the website. Some parents stated that they cannot understand information sent home because English is not their main language.

- During interviews, parents and staff reported that too few families were involved in their children’s education. Although the PTA organizes some events, they are often not well attended. The school leader noted that he has already identified the need to involve parents more in the work of the Community Engagement Task Force and the PTA, which currently involves few parents.

- Although the school leader and the PTA acknowledged that current home-school links are not engaging enough parents, school leaders have not clearly identified and addressed barriers related to why parents are not engaged in their children’s education.
ADDITIONAL AREAS TO ADDRESS

- During discussions with students and support staff, reviewers noted that there is no formal system to ensure that all students are known by an adult in the school. In the future, school leaders will need to ensure that all students are known well by an adult to support their social and emotional developmental health needs.

- Currently there are no formal planning opportunities such as grade-level meetings for English language learner (ELL) teachers to collaborate with grade-level teachers. This issue impacts the quality of support that students receive. In the future, the school leaders will need to ensure that ELL teachers are included in these meetings.

- Data related to school wide practices are beginning to be collected. However, the review team found that data are not being analyzed and utilized consistently to inform next steps. In the future, the school leader will need to ensure that all data are analyzed, utilized, and documented to show the impact school-wide practices are having on student academic and social development.

- Reviewers noted that not all teachers are implementing the CCLS modules with fidelity. In the future, the school leader will need to focus on monitoring implementation during his focused instructional learning walks.
An Outside Education Expert (OEE) returned to the school on January 9, 2017, nine weeks after the review. The OEE reviewed the school’s progress toward the recommendations and provided further guidance regarding what the school should do next.

**PROGRESS TOWARD RECOMMENDATIONS**

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<th>Tenet 2 Update:</th>
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<td>The school leader explained to the OEE that he has created a schedule for focused instructional learning walks. In addition, when teachers ask specifically to have the school leader or a group visit the class, the schedule can accommodate such requests. The school leader reported that to date, every teacher has been part of a learning walk. Teachers are identified using a red-yellow-green scale that is similar to the district’s protocol for identifying students who are far below, below, or at proficiency level. Teachers at the yellow level and particularly those at the red level are provided additional coaching support.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Tenet 2 Next Steps:</th>
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<td>The school leader explained that using the spreadsheet on which he records findings from the Focused Instructional Learning Walks, he and the instructional coach are focusing more on supporting differentiated instruction. The OEE suggested that along with the focus areas in the recommendation, the school leader and others on the learning walks could expand the questioning and discussion techniques they are observing to note how teachers are checking for student understanding of the material.</td>
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<th>Tenet 3 Update:</th>
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<td>The OEE found that the school leader and Transformation Team had reviewed the math resources and decided to use portions of the <em>EngageNY</em> math modules as math sprints for the students. Teachers felt that using math sprints would increase students’ math fluency. Copies of the module sprints had been made for all teachers. A progress-monitoring schedule had been put in place with the expectation that sprints would take place every ten days.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Tenet 3 Next Steps:</th>
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<td>The OEE and school leader discussed ensuring that results of student assessments were recorded on the shared drive and progress monitored on data walls. The school leader understands that he will have to analyze the data. If students are not progressing quickly, he will need to have discussions with teachers and hold them accountable for student achievement.</td>
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<th>Tenet 4 Update:</th>
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<td>The OEE and school leader discussed the recommendation to have teachers create a more student-centered classroom. The school leader explained that the coach from the International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE) is helping teachers use the rigor and relevance framework from ICLE to create a more student focused environment. This area is a work in progress.</td>
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Tenet 4 Next Steps:
Since the OEE is familiar with the rigor and relevance framework, the OEE and the school leader discussed what “real-world application” means and examples of how teachers could create higher level thinking opportunities for students. The school leader now has additional ideas to support teachers in developing lessons and opportunities for learning that are more relevant to students’ interests and would allow them to take ownership of their learning.

Tenet 5 Update:
The OEE found that the school leader now has a person dedicated to facilitating the Instructional Support Team (IST). The IST is meeting every Thursday, and the school leader has adjusted the teacher assistants’ schedules to allow for classroom coverage while teachers attend IST meetings to discuss individual students. Since increasing attendance and decreasing tardiness are school goals, teachers are filing daily reports in these areas. Behavioral reports are submitted as part of the referral process and addressed during IST meetings.

Tenet 5 Next Steps:
The OEE and school leader discussed the benefit of having the Academic Intervention Services (AIS) teachers use the data from IST meetings and subsequent intervention plans to a greater extent than was previously done. AIS teachers should be heavily involved in the referral process and implementation and monitoring of the implementation plans.

Tenet 6 Update:
The OEE learned that the school leader had a meeting with the PTA as recommended. However, the president of the PTA was called away from the meeting before an action plan could be developed. The school leader found that many parents cannot find the time to attend PTA meetings, so the PTA president is researching the idea of having the meetings in a conference call format. A grade level breakfast for parents is being planned to discuss reasons why children should not opt-out of State testing.

Tenet 6 Next Steps:
The OEE and school leader agreed that another meeting with the PTA president should occur so that additional barriers to parent participation could be identified and addressed. Since the school leader did not know how many parents dropped off their children at school and had to continue on to work, he could not predict the attendance at a grade level breakfast. The OEE suggested that before planning a breakfast to which many parents could not attend, the school leader should review some other possibilities to connect with parents.