



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	321100011253
School Name	Bronx High School for Writing and Communication Arts
School Address	800 East Gun Hill Road, Bronx, New York
District Name	NYC CSD 11
School Leader	Ms. Terri Grey
Dates of Review	March 18-19 2014
School Accountability Status	Focus School
Type of Review	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet for 11X253

School Configuration (2013-14)			
Grade Configuration	9-12	Total Enrollment	413
		SIG Recipient	N/A
Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes (2013-14)			
# Transitional Bilingual	N/A	# Dual Language	N/A
		# Self-Contained English as a Second Language	N/A
Types and Number of Special Education Classes (2013-14)			
# Special Classes	N/A	# SETSS	N/A
		# Integrated Collaborative Teaching	N/A
Types and Number of Special Classes (2013-14)			
# Visual Arts	12	# Music	N/A
# Foreign Language	15	# Dance	N/A
		# CTE	N/A
School Composition (2012-13)			
% Title I Population	72.5%	% Attendance Rate	88.2%
% Free Lunch	100.0%	% Reduced Lunch	0.0%
% Limited English Proficient	8.6%	% Students with Disabilities	18.4%
Racial/Ethnic Origin (2012-13)			
% American Indian or Alaska Native	0.5%	% Black or African American	48.7%
% Hispanic or Latino	46.5%	% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	2.4%
% White	1.7%	% Multi-Racial	N/A
Personnel (2012-13)			
Years Principal Assigned to School	1.23	# of Assistant Principals	2
# of Deans	N/A	# of Counselors/Social Workers	2
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	N/A	% Teaching Out of Certification	13.0%
% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Years of Experience	18.5%	Average Teacher Absences	4.1
Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools (2012-13)			
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	N/A	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	N/A
Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (4th Grade)	N/A	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (8th Grade)	N/A
Student Performance for High Schools (2011-12)			
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	81.0%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	55.0%
Credit Accumulation High Schools Only (2012-13)			
% of 1st year students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	% of 2nd year students who earned 10+ credits	N/A
% of 3rd year students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	4 Year Graduation Rate	53.7%
6 Year Graduation Rate	65.8%		
Overall NYSED Accountability Status (2012-13)			
Reward		Recognition	
In Good Standing		Local Assistance Plan	
Focus District	X	Focus School Identified by a Focus District	X
Priority School			

Accountability Status – High Schools

Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA (2011-12)			
American Indian or Alaska Native		Black or African American	Yes
Hispanic or Latino	Yes	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	
White		Multi-Racial	
Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient	
Economically Disadvantaged	Yes		
Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics (2011-12)			
American Indian or Alaska Native		Black or African American	Yes
Hispanic or Latino	No	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	
White		Multi-Racial	
Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient	
Economically Disadvantaged	No		
Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Graduation Rate (2011-12)			
American Indian or Alaska Native		Black or African American	Yes
Hispanic or Latino	Yes	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	
White		Multi-Racial	
Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient	
Economically Disadvantaged	Yes		

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS DESCRIBED BY THE SCHOOL:

Tenet 2: School leadership will use evidence-based systems (i.e. Danielson-aligned observation and inter-visitation, tri-state quality curriculum reviews, and looking at student work protocols and rubric-based) assessment to ensure that teachers and students are able to articulate the academic areas that need improvement school-wide. As a result, the school's graduation rate will increase by 3 % from 53% in 2013 to 56% in 2014.

Tenet 3: Cohort-based inquiry teams will use student work analysis protocols and curriculum review procedures to promote greater consistency in differentiated planning so that lesson planning reflects purposeful grouping, students are challenged, and tasks accommodate different learning styles. As a result, there will be a 2% increase in the course passing percentage of the school's lowest third for the 2013-14 SY.

Tenet 4: The refinement of instructional practices and the alignment of curriculum to the common-core to increase student engagement coupled with the use of data to differentiate instruction, will produce a 5% increase in the number of students who participate in Advanced Placement, and early college programs like Monroe Jumpstart, College Now courses in the 2013-14 SY.

Tenet 5: The revision of attendance systems and structures, as well as increasing the opportunities for parental involvement and engagement will result in a 5% increase in student attendance, to bring the yearly attendance to 90% by June 2014.

Tenet 6: Increase the reciprocal communication with families and communities of students entitled to AIS using Skedula to improve their course passing rates by 5% in the 2013-14 SY.

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.

Mark an "X" in the box below the appropriate designation for each Statement of Practice. Provide the letter rating in the OVERALL RATING row as the final overall tenet rating.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
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).			X	
2.3	Leaders make strategic decisions to organize programmatic, human, and fiscal capital resources.		X		
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.		X		
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).		X		
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 2			E		

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	H	E	D	I
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.			X	
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.			X	
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.			X	
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.			X	
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 3				D	

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	H	E	D	I
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.			X	
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.			X	
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.			X	
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).			X	
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 4:				D	

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	H	E	D	I
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.			X	
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.			X	
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.			X	
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.			X	
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 5				D	

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	H	E	D	I
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6.2	The school leader ensures that regular communication with students and families fosters their high expectations for student academic achievement.		X		
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.			X	
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.			X	
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.			X	
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 6:				D	

School Review – Findings, Evidence, Impact, and Recommendations:

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 Rating	E
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Debriefing Statement: Systems and protocols have been developed to facilitate staff collaboration, student achievement, and teacher development. Although not all constituents articulated the specifics of the mission/vision, the school leader has established mechanism to share the vision, which focuses on student well-being and preparing students to become college- and career- readiness.

Strengths:

2.3 **The school has received a rating of *Effective* for this Statement of Practice:** Leaders make strategic decisions to organize programmatic, human, and fiscal capital resources.

Overall Finding:

The school leader makes strategic decisions to assess and organize programmatic, human, and fiscal capital resources effectively.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- Staffing decisions have been made with student needs in mind to focus on the whole child. The school leader reported that she reprogrammed staff to ensure teachers teach within a single grade level to facilitate consistent collaboration and planning between colleagues. This enables teams of teachers to focus on students’ academic, social, and emotional issues. Common planning time is programmed into teachers’ daily schedule to prioritize teacher collaboration and data analysis. Teachers and support staff indicated that they use common planning time to create action plans that target the specific needs of students. Teachers also reported they have begun to lead unit and lesson planning meetings. Early release time was negotiated to provide time within the school day for professional development (PD).
- A collaborative teaching model is being cultivated to ensure maximum support for each student within the classroom. The school leader has arranged for school, district, and partnership organization staff to work with teachers to plan and build capacity around key teaching and learning strategies. Examples of initiatives include students with disabilities coordinators meeting with teacher plan for students’ individualized education program (IEP)s and to support instructional capacity building; the English language learners (ELL) coordinator working with a grade team where there is a large number of ELLs; and a network specialist working with the ICT teacher pairs to support co-teaching best practices.
- The school leader shared that she modified the schedule to provide additional time for student learning. The school staff transitioned from a semester system to trimester system to provide increased opportunities for credit accumulation and elective class programming. This reprogramming has enabled seniors to earn additional credits towards graduation. The mandated

37.5 minutes AIS period was embedded within the school day to enable longer classes to allow for greater content depth and increased instructional time across all classes.

- The school leader uses the Network to elicit support with hiring and selecting partner organizations. She has prioritized the hiring of teachers with backgrounds in math, drama, AP courses, and bilingual education to meet the needs of the student population. In addition, the school leader has hired an assistant principal (AP) to focus on math and science CCLS teaching and learning, and has begun to transition another AP from a role of AP/administration to AP for English language arts.

Impact Statement:

The school leader organizes available resources to support the improvement of teacher practice and student learning.

2.4 **The school has received a rating of *Effective* for this Statement of Practice:** 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.

Overall Finding:

The school leader has developed a plan to implement the APPR and to use this process to analyze and support the improvement of teacher practices.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school leader reported that school leaders use the Danielson Framework and the Tri-State Rubric to provide observation and feedback to teachers. The school leader also shared that all teachers have received at least three observations this year. Teachers interviewed by the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT or review team) shared that they welcome these observations and see them as an integral component of school improvement.
- Through conversations with teachers and school leaders, the review team learned that teachers receive feedback via email, letter, individual discussions, and/or through curriculum meetings with school leaders. A review of documents and conversations with teachers confirmed that the feedback following observations is developmental and constructive, and outlines strengths in practice as well as areas for development and improvement. Areas identified for improvement then become the focus of future observations. A review of documents showed that detailed Improvement plans are in place for teachers who received unsatisfactory rating.
- Evidence from discussions and a review of observation notes demonstrated that the school leader uses the data from the observations to guide PD planning. The school leader said she reviews student achievement data, including student work, with teachers and then coaches them on how to differentiate instruction based on the data. The school leader implemented a teacher leadership program that includes grade level and department leaders. They turn-key knowledge from PD training and support classroom inter-visitations. A consultant group works with a small group of teachers of varied skill levels to facilitate the sharing of best practices. All teachers participate in weekly PD sessions and teachers noted that the PD often is differentiated, and aligned to the

feedback they receive from the APPR observations.

Impact Statement:

The school leader effectively implements a system of frequent and targeted observations to monitor teachers' performance and to provide teachers with timely information and professional learning opportunities to support improved practices. As a result, all staff members are held accountable for increased student progress and achievement.

2.5 **The school has received a rating of *Effective* for this Statement of Practice:** 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).

Overall Finding:

Multiple evidence-based systems are in place to support the implementation of individual and school-wide practices.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school reported that she uses different strategies to examine the work and performance of the school. The school leader implements a system to evaluate the quality of instruction and the information used to guide improvements. Teachers meet during common planning times to review data and to make instructional and school-wide decisions. Inquiry teams meet and look at the data on the inquiry group of students. Members of the staff use "Kid Talk" meetings to review attendance, behavior, and academic data, as well as develop hypotheses and plans of action for specific students.
- School staff uses Pupil Path/Skedula and other online data systems to keep the school community informed about the status of student achievement. During the parent focus group, parents noted that multiple systems are in place to enable their receipt of information, including phone calls, letters, and emails from the school leader, teachers, and support staff. Parents also shared that they have access to data through the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) Parent Portal, and Pupil Path/Skedula. Students keep folders/portfolios of their work and the effective use of this system informed the planning for the upcoming student-led conferences.

Impact Statement:

The school leader has established systems to create awareness of what is going on at the school and to ensure the staff uses data to support and inform decision, which promotes increased opportunities for staff to work towards school improvement.

Areas for Improvement:

2.2 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** 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).

Overall Finding:

Although the school leader has developed mechanism to communicate the school goals/mission and the long-term vision, not all stakeholders know or articulate the goals or the vision for the school.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school leader reported that she shares the vision and goals at various meetings, including parent orientations, Town Hall meetings, as well as in the Student-Parent Handbook and other written materials. However, evidence from interviews with teachers, parents, and students demonstrated that not all stakeholders know or fully understand the school’s vision and goals. During the parent meeting, parents shared that they were sure that they had heard the vision, but they could not remember it. Although during class visits reviewers noted that teachers discussed writing, during discussion with the IIT, parents, teachers, and students were unable to articulate the mission and specific school-wide goals related to writing.
- Although multiple data analysis systems are in place, the review team found minimal evidence of a formal plan for staff to evaluate and monitor progress towards the goals and the priorities in the SCEP aligned to the long-term vision.

Impact Statement:

The school’s vision and goals are not known and shared by the whole school community, which hinders stakeholders ability to work together to achieve goals and realize the school’s vision.

Recommendation:

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school should:

- Develop and support a common language to describe the school vision, goals, and practices to enable collective ownership of all priority initiatives.

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 Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: The school leader provides opportunities for staff collaboration to design and revise curricula, including units of study. The school has adopted a school-wide lesson plan template and rubrics that reflect the alignment to the expected instructional shifts of the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). However, teachers inconsistently modify and adapt curricula across subject areas to address the learning needs of all students, particularly English language learners (ELL) and students with disabilities.

Strengths:

All ratings for this Tenet are either **Developing** or **Ineffective** and therefore, comments are listed under **Areas for Improvement**.

Areas for Improvement:

3.2 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** 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.

Overall Finding:

The school is in the beginning stages of implementing a comprehensive, systemic CCLS curriculum plan.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- Teachers are expected to work together to develop and utilize CCLS -aligned unit plans, lesson plans, and performance-based assessments in literacy. All plans reviewed by the review team included evidence of the CCLS and instructional shifts, but they did not include adaptations to meet the needs of specific students. In addition, the protocols do not specifically require inclusion of student achievement data to ensure that there is a closer alignment between the tasks that are set and students' abilities. During visits to classrooms, the review team noted that although most teachers of English and social studies classes incorporated CCLS strategies, these teachers did not consistently differentiated lessons to address students' varying skills and abilities.
- CCLS professional learning has been prioritized as evidenced by the multiple sustained learning opportunities provided to teachers. The school leader reported that she attends PD sessions with staff to provide additional support to staff. She finds opportunities for teacher participation in network and district PD, in school, in class coaching, and for daily teacher collaboration and partnership.
- The school leader has hired an assistant principal (AP) to focus on math and science CCLS teaching and learning, and the other AP is being supported to transition from a role of AP/administration to AP for English language arts. However, the team is just beginning to monitor staff's implementation of the CCLS.
- The school is using funds to secure additional books to ensure that all students can engage fully in the CCLS literacy expectations.

Impact Statement:

School leaders have developed a plan to implement curricula aligned to the CCLS. However, leaders do not yet ensure that curricula are modified to include differentiation based on student achievement data and the needs of the student subgroups, which limits opportunities for students to experience curricula that prepares them to become college- and career-ready.

Recommendation:

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school should:

- Closely monitor the CCLS instructional planning processes, meetings, and classroom implementation to ensure that modifications are in place each day to meet the needs of the students and to ensure that all learning is leading to college- and career- readiness. Continue to build instructional leadership capacity.

3.3 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** 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.

Overall Finding:

Teachers are beginning to use data to inform instruction; but do not consistently use data driven instruction protocols to support the planning of differentiated teaching and learning.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- School leaders shared the school-wide expectations for daily formative assessments in the form of multiple checks for understanding throughout a class period. The school leader is putting plans in place to address subgroups' achievement through the recent hiring of an AP, IEP and ELL coordinators. The review team observed "Do Now's" in each classroom, and varied forms of questioning in some classrooms, but saw few examples of teachers using other consistent checks for understanding. Further, lesson plans did not include how instruction would vary based on the assessment done through a "Do Now" or a questioning sequence.
- The review team observed the use of the "Looking at Student Work Protocol" during the grade team meeting and noted that this group reviewed Regents assessment data, interim assessment data, and student work samples during their grade level common planning meetings. Teachers discussed implications of their conversations for classroom practice but few teachers shared specific strategies to improve instruction and learning. Reviewers found that the content of the discussion focused on general rather than specific strategies.
- A review of lesson and unit plans confirmed that only a small percentage of planning included information on student achievement data to inform the development of specific learning activities to support student engagement and progress. During classroom visits, reviewers found limited evidence of data driven instruction protocols. In addition, the work provided for students did not consistently align to their ability level.

Impact Statement:

Teachers do not consistently incorporate DDI protocols in planning, which hinders teachers' ability to provide instruction that addresses students' varying needs and skill levels.

Recommendation:

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school

should:

- Ensure teachers use specific DDI planning protocols to inform the planning of the unit and lesson plans and the performance-based assessments. Focus PD on the identification of grouping and regrouping students, based on student achievement data and the development of corresponding learning activities.

3.4 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** 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.

Overall Finding:

The school's emphasis on writing and partnership with the EPIC Theatre Ensemble are strong interdisciplinary curriculum components, but the school does not yet have a comprehensive school-wide interdisciplinary curriculum.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- Opportunities for collaboration among teachers within the school and with outside partners are provided. Teachers collaborate weekly to plan together within grade level teams, but there is an absence of clear goals or a framework for interdisciplinary planning. Teaching artists work with ELA teachers through the Epic Theatre Ensemble partnership with the school. This partnership supports interdisciplinary work between the ELA and social studies departments, but this does not involve other content areas. Although staff reported that the partnership with the Community Word Project teachers are encouraged to use poetry, art, and music to support communication arts across the curriculum, the ITT did not find examples of this practice in review evidence.
- Lesson observations by the review team showed that some teachers promote an interdisciplinary approach to learning or encourage the use of literary and math skills in different subjects. However, such practices are not common and come about because of the efforts of individual teachers rather than a planned school-wide approach.
- Reviewers found minimal example of teachers incorporating the use of technology during instruction. An evaluation of planning documents as well classroom visits showed that few teachers used technology as an integral component of instruction to engage students and enhance the quality of their learning.

Impact Statement:

Students do not have regular access to interdisciplinary curricula to connect learning across subject areas, which hinders students' opportunities to engage in thoughtful cross-curricula activities that increase their ability to be academically successful.

Recommendation:

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school should:

- Ensure that staff members build upon current partnerships to develop and implement a planned approach to interdisciplinary learning experiences across all content areas.

3.5 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** 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.

Overall Finding:

Teachers are in the early process of implementing a system utilizing summative and formative assessments to develop short- and long-term teaching and learning goals.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- Teachers explained that, at the beginning of the year, they use summative assessment data to determine the needs of students, but there was an absence of a plan to revisit the data throughout the year. The school also uses the Measures of Student Learning (MOSL) assessments twice per year. Although reviewers noted that during the grade level team meetings teachers reviewed assessments, the IIT noted that teachers' lesson plans did not reflect differentiated activities based on assessments or student work.
- The school leader shared her expectation that all teachers conduct formative assessments within each class period utilizing the "Do Now" during the class and an exit ticket at the end of the day. The IIT noted that teachers in all classes visited used "Do now" activities and many teachers used exit ticket activities. However, reviewers found minimal evidence from discussions with teachers and in a review planning documents of how teachers use data from this assessment to evaluate achievement and/or to make adjustments in the next day's lessons.
- Students set goals for themselves and assess their progress related to these goals throughout the year, yet there was limited indication of how these goals corresponded to learning opportunities within the classroom. Students shared copies of their written work and rubrics with teacher comments. Students noted that they are encouraged to correct mistakes and to ask for help but the quality of feedback is variable in terms of how it helps students to make specific improvements to their work. Limited evidence was available in discussions with teachers and students to determine how teachers use test and assessment data to highlight areas that students need to address to achieve at a higher level.

Impact Statement:

Teachers inconsistently use assessments and data to plan and modify instruction, which limits opportunities for the aligning of the curriculum and assessments to promote improve student achievement.

Recommendation:

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school should:

- Ensure teachers uniformly use existing assessment strategies to develop academic plans of action, including specific targets for students. Ensure that teachers school-wide include regular and

relevant data-based feedback to students to develop students' ability to take more ownership of their learning.

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 Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: School leaders, staff, and community partners are increasingly engaged in conversations about student progress, attendance expectations, and instruction. However, teachers are not systematically using the information from data-driven instruction protocols to scaffold and differentiate instruction to address the gap between what students know and what they need to learn.

Strengths:

All ratings for this Tenet are either **Developing** or **Ineffective** and therefore, comments are listed under **Areas for Improvement**.

Areas for Improvement:

4.2 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** 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.

Overall Finding:

The unit and lesson plans do not consistently reflect priority instructional practices, nor do they address specific student goals and needs.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- Although there is an increasing emphasis on the use of data to guide and inform instruction this is at an early stage and is not an established and embedded practice across the school. Instructional strategies are not consistently meeting the needs and abilities of different groups of students. During class visits, reviewers observed differentiated activities based on student skill levels in only three of 20 classes. Specific instructional strategies based on data were not included in the majority of lesson plans reviewed by the team.
- While reviewers observed a uniform class format of Do now, mini lesson, independent practice, summary and exit ticket, reviewers saw few examples of teachers developing student groups based on based on formative assessments. Although evidence from discussions with teachers indicated that they have an awareness of the importance of goal setting, teachers have not established goals for groups of students. This hinders their academic progress because students are not provided with a learning path with interim benchmarks to help them achieve at a higher level.

Impact Statement:

The absence of planning connected to specific instructional strategies, identified for groups of student needs

and goals hampers students from experiencing high levels of engagement and achievement.

Recommendations:

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school should:

- Prioritize and build on the developing emphasis of instructional strategies and learning activities based on data utilization to drive teaching; support and monitor implementation of these strategies through daily classroom walkthroughs and analysis of student work; ensure that groups of students are provided with targeted goals to which they should aspire.

4.3 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** Teachers provide coherent, and appropriately aligned Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)-based instruction that leads to multiple points of access for all students.

Overall Finding:

The school is in the process of incorporating CCLS-based instruction to meet the needs of all students.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- In some of the classrooms, there was evidence of CCLS instructional shifts, such as the attention to annotating notes, text-based writing, and discussion, close reading of texts, student discussion, claims and counter claims. However, it was not clear how these strategies were being used to allow for different points of access to the content for individuals or small groups of students.
- The school leader noted that the priority instructional strategy for this year was student engagement. In all of the classes observed, students were seated in groups. However, high levels of discussion and student engagement were not observed in all classrooms. Teachers' level of questioning varied and did not contain the rigor to solicit extended responses from students. Reviewers noticed that few teachers asked questions that prompted students to listen to each other's answers and offer a claim or counterclaim. When such questions were asked students rose to the challenge and quality discussion and debate followed. However, in most classes observed by the IIT, teachers asked questions that prompted one-word answers and did not stimulate and promote student thinking.

Impact Statement:

A beginning emphasis has been placed on CCLS-aligned instruction. However, this work has not focused on targeting multiple access points to the curriculum for students. The use of instructional strategies that support the common core are not explicitly stated in the lesson plans and are, therefore, not intentional or rigorous enough to lead to high student engagement and achievement.

Recommendation:

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school should:

- Ensure that curriculum and unit plans delineate specific common core-aligned strategies and

materials for students at varied achievement levels to engage all of them in rigorous and relevant learning activities including challenging question and answer sessions.

4.4 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** 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.

Overall Finding:

The school has implemented programs to promote teachers and students working together to create a physically and intellectually safe environment for students. However, teacher's instructional strategies do not address the needs and strength of all students.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The student handbook and the school's personalization of their Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program, Safety, Work Ethic, Accountability and Give Respect (SWAG), sets a strong framework for a positive approach to academic and personal development. A student contract is required and clearly articulates the expectations for both academics and behavior. Town Hall meetings are held monthly. Teachers, support staff, and students collaborate on the planning of these meetings and they have the opportunity to celebrate progress and success.
- Students stated they feel safe and that they, and their peers, are well aware of the consequences for bad behavior, including referral to a dean, calls and letters home, removal of privileges such as sports, talents shows, winter fest, and ultimately suspension. Students also commented that not all teachers encourage them to ask questions and provide opportunities for students to share their opinions through discussions. In addition, the IIT noted that not all teachers provided differentiated instruction to address students' varying needs and ability levels.

Impact Statement:

Students and teachers work together to support a safe school environment. However, teachers' instructional practices do not provide students with learning experiences that meet their varying needs.

Recommendation:

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school should:

- Ensure teachers implement lessons that include differentiation to respond to needs of all students.

4.5 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** 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).

Overall Finding:

A variety of summative and formative data exists, but these assessments are not sufficiently integrated into one system to support teacher and student assessment, planning, and participation.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- Teachers have access to various forms of data but do consistently use the data to align work to the needs and abilities of different groups of students. The results of on-going assessments in the classroom are not used by all teachers to adjust instruction so that it fills gaps or extends student learning.
- The review team found that rubrics are used as a formative assessment tool for writing. During the student meeting, students shared their writing portfolios and showed examples of rubrics that were associated with their writing samples. They noted that rubrics were used both to guide their own writing and for teachers to assess their work. Some students were able to articulate needed next steps on these specific writing samples but this was not routinely the case. Evaluations of student work in the classroom also highlighted that not all teachers provide specific guidance on what students need to do to improve. In addition, there was not always a direct link between the feedback on the rubrics with subsequent instructional strategies or student grouping decisions.
- Teachers and students recently participated in training to support student-led parent- teacher conferences to begin this spring. This has the potential to support increased student ownership of their own learning and collaborative teacher-student planning to support individual achievement targets.

Impact Statement:

The teachers are at an early stage of using data to create plans and adjust groupings and instructional strategies. Teachers have access to various forms of data but do not routinely use it to guide and inform instruction. As a result instruction does not consistently target the specific academic needs of students, which hinders students from taking more ownership of their learning.

Recommendation:

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school should:

- Provide PD and in-class coaching on the use of multiple formative assessments and how to use the data from these assessments to provide detailed feedback to students and to inform instructional decision- making with regards differentiated class activities.

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 Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: The school is developing as a safe community focused on wellness and positive support. There are some programs and partnerships to support student social and emotional developmental health. However, the school has yet to use the data to develop a plan of action for each student to ensure each student's social and emotional development, academic success, and college readiness.

Strengths:

All ratings for this Tenet are either **Developing** or **Ineffective** and therefore, comments are listed under **Areas for Improvement**.

Areas for Improvement

5.2 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader establishes overarching systems and understandings of how to support and sustain student social and emotional developmental health and academic success.

Overall Finding:

The school has made good strides in implementing systems and cultivating understandings on how to support and sustain students' social and emotional development health and academic success, but these systems do not yet ensure the academic success of all students.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school has implemented initiatives to provide individual support to students. In the senior intervention program, students are “adopted” and mentored to encourage improved progress towards graduation. Likewise, the Inquiry students are well known by the grade level teachers and receive support that arises out of discussions in the grade team and “Kid Talk”. The school staff formed a wellness committee to focus on overall student well-being, and hold wellness contests each month. During discussions with the IIT, parents reported that school leaders and teachers know their students by name and that members of the school staff call parents to discuss students' positive and negative behaviors.
- The school has a partnership with organizations such as Montefiore Hospital to support students' physical, emotional, and mental health needs. Students can sign-up for these services at the beginning of each school year. The school leader reported that has partnerships with EPIC Theater Ensemble, and The Community Word Project and the College Summit to support a holistic approach in providing students. Reviewers were unclear how staff used these partnerships as part of a system to address students' needs. The school leader reported that she is in the process of securing a new external partner to provide support for social emotional programming for students.
- The review team did not observe any one system or document that housed information about the continuum of offerings or the data collected as part of the offerings to be used to support students' social and emotional developmental health and corresponding academic success.
- The incorporation of Advisory and College and Career Exploration classes are in place to address barriers to college and career readiness. School leaders and support staff mentioned that they are working on developing better relationships with the transfer schools so that students who are under-credited and over-age will have more options. However, a document review showed that less than 70 percent of the students had completed the CUNY application.

Impact Statement:

The school staff has structures in place to address some social and emotional health developmental; however, the lack of an overarching inter-connected system hinders school staff from supporting student success at optimal levels.

Recommendation:

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school should:

- Establish one over-arching system to ensure that data is collected and analyzed regularly to determine trends and needs, and use this information for school-wide strategic planning and allocation of programmatic and human resources to ensure that all students are well known by a designated adult.

5.3 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** 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.

Overall Finding:

Although students report feeling safe and a staff has established some programs to support a healthy school environment, the school has not adopted specific curriculum that aligns to the vision for social and emotional developmental health.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school uses the PBIS program. The PBIS committee reviews data from the “Kid Talk” meetings, the grade level meetings, and referrals from the guidance counselors. They look at trends and develop school-wide areas of focus like Respect for All, Student Identity, and Celebrating Differences. The theme “SWAG- Stand with Pride, Waste No Time, Achieve Every Goal, and Graduate with Your Class” frames the school’s approach to PBIS. Students articulated rewards for good behavior and the consequences for bad behavior. However, during discussion with the review team neither students nor parents articulated this theme or the existence of available resources to support achieving the goals of the school.
- Although staff reported a decrease in the number of behavioral incidents reported through Online Occurrence Reporting System (OORS), there was evidence of student tardiness to many classes and absence of immediate consequences or handling of this behavior. Students shared that they felt comfortable and safe at school. They noted that the metal detectors help ensure safety and that frequently staff members step in to deal with conflicts and that this was not just the role of security.
- Professional development is provided for and by teachers and support staff to build staff capacity on responsiveness and sensitivity to student needs. PD is being planning on “sensitivity training” to support staff in their ability to understand and appropriately use the personal information that is now available to staff via technology. Teachers and support staff are encouraged to communicate

with each other and students' parents to discuss strengths and challenges. Guidance counselors push into advisory classes to work with teachers to help them respond to student issues. The support staff has provided PD for teachers where they role-play scenarios. Professional development is also provided by members of the student support team on topics such as child abuse prevention and peer mediation, but staff indicated that they would welcome more PD on the skills needed to best identify and meet the social and emotional needs of students.

Impact Statement:

Supports are in place to ensure that students have the assistance they need, but they are not part of one curriculum.

Recommendations

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school should:

- Develop a single curriculum for students' holistic social and emotional development that aligns to the vision.

5.4 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** 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.

Overall Finding:

School stakeholders describe a safe and supportive learning environment, but they are not able to articulate how the safe learning environment meets students' needs.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- Based on discussions with stakeholders and observations through the review, the school community appears committed to providing a safe and secure learning environment. The common planning protocols that underpin the work of the teachers and support staff and the strong collaborative relationships that have been cultivated support a common understanding of the importance of everyone's involvement. However, there was little evidence of a clear plan to ensure everyone's ownership or buy-in in terms of his or her role in supporting social and emotional developmental health and the connection of that work to student success.
- Discussions with students, staff, and parents indicate that they are aware of the factors and characteristics that are needed to ensure that the school is a safe place to learn and work but there is less clarity on an understanding of the roles that each of them has to play in ensuring that this goal is consistently sustained.

Impact Statement:

The lack of a strategic plan to ensure all stakeholders know and understand their role in supporting students' social and emotional development health, hinders stakeholders from working together to support the overall vision for students' social and emotional developmental health and safety.

Recommendation:

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school should:

- Ensure that all stakeholders are cognizant of the roles they have to play in fulfilling and sustaining the school vision as it pertains to student social and emotional well-being and the creation of a consistently safe learning environment.

5.5 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** 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.

Overall Finding:

The school leader and support staff have put structures in place to support the use of data but more needs to be done to ensure that the staff consistently uses data to identify and meet the needs of students.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school community reviews attendance data and looks for trends in raising attendance. The guidance counselors and teachers review and analyze cohort data on credit accumulation. During discussion with the IIT, teachers and support staff shared that analysis of the cohort data informed the development of a new senior intervention program and a plan to address students who had multiple incidents of lateness and absences. The “kid talk” weekly meetings and protocol as well as the wellness meetings provide a forum for teachers to develop plans to support student needs. Guidance counselors push into classes to address issues that arise in the “Kid Talk” discussions. During the review, the IIT attended one of the meeting where staff reviewed student data and developed an action plan to support the special needs of students. However, the review team did not find evidence of any one system for consistent data collection to support students’ social and emotional developmental health and corresponding academic success.

Impact Statement:

Although staff is beginning to use data to address some student needs, staff lacks a consistent and comprehensive plan to collect and analyze data to address student needs and promote academic achievement.

Recommendation:

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school should:

- Conduct a school-wide assessment of the social and emotional issues that the students are facing. Develop a strategic plan based on findings from all available data to target supports and instruction that meet the full needs of all students.

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 Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: The school is working towards a culture of partnership with students, parents, and the community fostering a collective responsibility for academic achievement. However, more needs to be done to ensure that the partnerships between home and school are developed more strongly to best support student success.

Strengths:

6.2 **The school has received a rating of *Effective* for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader ensures that regular communication with students and families fosters the school's high expectations for student academic achievement.

Overall Finding:

The school has many communication systems in place to keep parents informed of student progress, the Common Core Learning Standards, and other educational opportunities.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school leadership, teachers, parents, and students shared that there are multiple vehicles for parent-school communication. The school staff uses ARIS, Skedula, PD, School Messenger, letters, emails, and text messages as vehicles for outlining the school's expectation in relation to student success. The school leaders share a lot of information about programs and extra resources with parents to support their ability to be involved with their child's high school choices. The school leadership and staff welcome parents in school at any time and canvass their views and opinions as to how well the school is doing in establishing relationships with them.
- Parents noted that the school has high expectations for their child's achievement. One parent noted that his child chose this school because of information the school leader included about the CCLS mandates and shifts. Inquiry breakfasts on the CCLS are provided to the parents of the students in each grade's Inquiry group. School staff uses student performances as an opportunity to celebrate student achievement as well as to get parents to the school to provide information about the school expectations for student academic performance and to celebrate student success.
- The school is providing opportunities for students to become college and career ready. A Program is in place that provides opportunities for students with IEPs to participate in work-related learning experiences and actual jobs. The college summit provides information and coaching for students and their families. The school partnership with the EPIC Theatre and the Community Word Project has produced exciting curricula initiatives and experiences for students including the opportunity for students to write their own "Shakespearean play."

Impact Statement:

The schools' prioritization of communication is focused on instilling high expectations for all students across the school community.

Areas for Improvement

6.3 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school engages in effective planning and reciprocal communication with family and community stakeholders so that student strengths and needs are identified and used to augment learning.

Overall Finding:

Although school staff communicates with families, staff lacks a formal plan to ensure consistent reciprocal communication with families.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- There are systems in place for communication with families in different languages, such as Skedula, PD, School Messenger, e-mail messages, and text messages. Parents are using the available online systems. One teacher noted that she sends a weekly letter to parents to support ongoing communication and collaboration. Other teachers noted that they call parents, and parents call them, frequently to address specific student issue. However, this work has not translated into effective school-wide planning to support all students' achievement because initiatives are not strategically planned regularly. In addition, the school has not put in place procedures to evaluate its communication strategies with parents and to make adjustments in response to family and parental feedback.

Impact Statement:

Although the school communicates with families in a number of ways, the lack of a strategic planning to ensure staff monitors and evaluates outreach efforts limits the effectiveness of communication efforts.

Recommendation:

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school should:

- Put in place a strategic plan to ensure that reciprocal communication between home and school is regularly evaluated, and then adjusted to ensure partnerships between home and school lead to greater academic success for all students.

6.4 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school community partners with families and community agencies to promote partnership and provide training across all areas (academic and social and emotional developmental health) to support student success.

Overall Finding:

The school is in the beginning stages of collaborating with families and community agencies to provide training to parents and support student success.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- Parents interviewed by the IIT shared that they have received some training on how to use the Skedula/Pupil Path to monitor their child's progress. In addition, the school hosts Inquiry breakfasts

and luncheons to share information with parents of targeted low performing students. However, these initiatives are not part of a strategic and on-going plan that outlines systematic strategies, tips, and support mechanisms that would enable parents to play a more proactive role in meeting the academic needs of their children.

- The school is at an initial stage of drawing up plans to provided PD for staff on developing the skills and knowledge to better equip them in building up strong and effective partnerships with parents and families.

Impact Statement:

The school does not yet provide effective training for staff and support for parents to best support student success.

Recommendation:

In order for the school’s strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school should:

- Develop a strategy to build the capacity of all parents and staff to better support the accelerated improvement of students at all levels of the achievement spectrum.

6.5 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** 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.

Overall Finding:

The school shares various types of data with parents, but additional effort is needed to empower families to use data to advocate for additional support in order to prepare their child for school success and college-readiness.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school uses data systems such as Skedula and School Messenger, and has an open door policy to promote dialogue around data. Parents articulated that they are able to keep track of their child’s progress through Skedula. The parents were able to articulate a program the school provides for internships for students with difficulties and the services rendered. However, some parents reported that they at times they do not understand the data shared by the school, which hinders their ability to advocate for their child’s learning. Parents receive both academic and social and emotional data but evidence from discussion with parents, staff and school leaders indicate that parents are not always sure how they can make best use of the information to access services that could lead to better support structures for their child and in turn lead to greater success.

Impact Statement:

Although the school shares data with parents, the school provides limited opportunities for parents to understand and use data to better support student progress, which hinders student achievement.

Recommendation:

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school should:

- Provide PD opportunities for families to understand how to read, use, and analyze school and student data to empower them to support student learning and to advocate for support services.