



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)

Modified School Review



BEDS Code	1406000010110
School Name	South Park High School #2060
School Address	150 Southside Parkway
District Name	Buffalo City School District
School Leader	Theresa Schuta
Dates of Review	October 10-11, 2013
School Accountability Status	Priority School
Type of Review	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) Modified School Review

School Information Sheet												
Grade Configuration	9-12	Total Enrollment	832	SIG Recipient	x	Title 1 Population	69%	Attendance Rate	77 %			
Free Lunch	64.3 %	Reduced Lunch	5.3 %	Student Sustainability	64 %	Limited English Proficient	6.7%	Students with Disabilities	27 %			
Number of English Language Learner Classes												
#Transitional Bilingual	0		#Dual Language		0		#Self-Contained English as a Second Language			6		
Number of Special Education Classes												
#Special Classes	51		#Consultant Teaching		0		#Integrated Collaborative Teaching			50		
# Resource Room	9											
Number Special Classes												
#Visual Arts	14	#Music	8	#Drama	0	#Foreign Language	16	#Dance	0	#CTE	#21	
Racial/Ethnic Origin												
American Indian or Alaska Native	10%	Black or African American	24.8 %	Hispanic or Latino	18%	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	2.6 %	White	51.4 %	Multi-racial	2.0 %	
Personnel												
Years Principal Assigned to School	3		# of Assistant Principals		3		# of Deans		0		# of Counselors / Social Workers	4
Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	15 %		Teaching Out of Certification		4 %		Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp.		3 %		Average Teacher Absences	12
Credit Accumulation (High School Only) and Performance Rates												
% of 1 st yr. students who earned 10+ credits	INP		% of 2 nd yr. students who earned 10+ credits		INP		% of 3 rd yr. students who earned 10+ credits		INP		4 Year Graduation Rate	INP
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4			Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4				Science Performance at levels 3 & 4				6 Year Graduation Rate	INP

INP - Information Not Provided

Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA			
	American Indian or Alaska Native	X	Black or African American
	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
	White		Multi-racial
	Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient
X	Economically Disadvantaged		All Students
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Math			
	American Indian or Alaska Native	X	Black or African American
	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
	White		Multi-racial
	Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient
X	Economically Disadvantaged		All Students
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science			
	American Indian or Alaska Native		Black or African American
	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
	White		Multi-racial
	Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient
	Economically Disadvantaged		All Students
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for Effective Annual Measurable Achievement Objective			
	Limited English Proficiency		

Describe the school's top priorities (no more than 5) based on the school's comprehensive plans (SCEP, SIG, DCIP, etc.):

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS DESCRIBED BY THE SCHOOL:

1. Graduation Rate - Our priority is to have a sustained cohort and reduction in overage under credited student transfers. Prior to SIG funding South Park high School graduation rate was between 37-47 percent. For the last three years the graduation rate has slowly moved between 50 percent to its' highest rate of 60 percent. As stated in our SCEP plan, our goal is to increase our overall graduation rate to 80 percent.
2. AYP English /Math -To increase student achievement within subgroups. Minimal progress has been made in this area. Looking at individual student's data within subgroups the student data indicates language/ reading deficiencies that require targeted, differentiated, and increased instructional time.
3. Increasing Student Attendance- South Park has showed minimal gains in student attendance. The district and the school continue to create programs and interventions that target students that have high frequency absences. South Park immediate approach is to have personal contact with the individual student families to develop a written plan to increase their child's attendance.
4. Reducing Student Suspensions- South Park has decreased out of school detentions for the last three years. We look to continue the positive trend that has been established.
5. Increase Parent Involvement- Seeking proactive strategies for our parents who are challenged in meeting with administrators, teachers, and staff during the school day.

Mark an "X" in the box below the appropriate designation for each SOP.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
2.3	Leaders make strategic decisions to organize programmatic, human, and fiscal capital resources.		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 School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP) (student achievement, curriculum and teacher practices; leadership development; community/family engagement; and student social and emotional developmental health).		X		
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	
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	
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		
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	

School Review Narrative:

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.

Strengths:

2.3 The school has received a rating of *Effective* for this Statement of Practice: Leaders make strategic decisions to organize resources concerning human, programmatic and fiscal capital so that school improvement and student goals are achieved.

- The school leader uses resources aligned with the school vision to improve instruction and strategically deploy the staff necessary to ensure the school is making progress towards meeting the academic and social needs of all students. Documents reviewed by the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT or "the review team") show that the school leader, assistant principals, coaches and teachers collaborate regularly to discuss student progress and plan for student instruction. The school leader has distributed the leadership of the four main content areas of English language arts (ELA), social studies, science and mathematics between herself and her team of three assistant principals, each charged with overseeing one area. Additionally, the school leader used SIG funding to create five instructional coaching positions in the core areas of mathematics, reading, English, science, and social studies. The school leader advocated successfully for the district to provide an additional \$250,000 in the current year's budget to allow these positions to continue. Staff reported and documents reviewed by the review team indicated that these full-time coaches work daily with teachers during common planning time to provide support for instructional practices. The ELA coach indicated to the review team that she is in classrooms daily and provides turnkey professional development (PD) to staff based on her own learning from attending New York State Education Department (NYSED) Network Team Institutes. The ELA coach further stated that she has provided PD sessions to teachers that include the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and the instructional shifts in literacy. Her turnkey training on the CCLS shifts was not only presented to her department, but to other teachers, such as those who teach Languages other than English (LOTE) and physical education. The school leader stated that one of the building goals was to improve the school climate. Documents reviewed by the IIT indicated that the school participates in the Safe and Civil Schools Program and school staff use the Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS). Team reviewers observed students exhibiting appropriate behaviors throughout the building. The school leader has also been successful at building school community partnerships with outside groups, citing the school's partnership with the Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection, a program that helps address the many barriers students face outside of the classroom. The program also provides expanded learning time to ensure that students come to class prepared to learn. This program is sponsored by the Wegmans Family Charitable Foundation. According to documents reviewed by the IIT, the Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection provides students with mentoring, tutoring, and life and social skills and provides eligible students with relevant job readiness training and opportunities to participate in part-time employment. The

school leader indicated to the IIT that 16 out of 19 students who participated in the program last year graduated from high school, with some securing full-time positions with Wegmans after graduation. School leaders reported to the IIT that the student population includes a significant number of over-aged and under-credited transfer students. The students receive Regents test preparation, and a credit recovery program is offered to seniors through an online tutorial program. The school leader's proactive approach to align resources in support of student achievement efforts has resulted in the school's procurement of staff and programs to address the immediate academic and social needs of the school community. The implementation of one of these programs has coincided with an improvement in graduation rates.

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).

- The school leader understands and has established systems to improve the teaching practices of staff. The school leaders' work with the School-Based Management Team (SBMT) and other stakeholders to set both long- and short-term goals focused on improving student achievement. Goal setting is a collaborative process involving the SBMT, which is comprised of a group of fourteen people that includes school leaders, coaches, teachers, guidance counselors, and community representatives. The school leader indicated to the IIT that the SBMT developed the School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP) using recommendations from the Joint Intervention Team (JIT) review, NYSED SIG school review and school self-review documents. One goal outlined in the SCEP is to "target math proficiency in 2014 by increasing student performance in mathematics by two percent." School-wide efforts have been focused on achieving this goal by employing a variety of strategies, including the use of coaches to provide content specific PD to mathematics teachers, tracking individual student progress in grade level meetings, and using student data to inform the adjustment of student schedules to allow for expanded learning time. School leadership informed the IIT that these efforts have resulted in some gains in student performance. Documents reviewed by the IIT provided evidence that the school leader holds weekly data meetings with other school leaders to examine the achievement of individual students and schedule common planning time for staff to meet with coaches to plan for instruction based on the needs of students. Each school leader has oversight of one content area, with all keeping records of formal and informal classroom observations, including walk-through evaluation forms showing feedback provided to teachers. All school leaders conduct daily informal visits to classrooms. During interviews with the IIT, both teachers and school leaders stated that low attendance rates have a negative effect on student achievement. The SCEP includes goals to address the issues of students arriving late to class and student absences. School leaders have implemented systems to reward students for attending school by using positive reinforcements, such as weekly and monthly drawings for gift cards and other items donated by area businesses. Because the school leader has implemented systems and regularly monitors strategies that address the goals outlined in the SCEP, students have demonstrated progress towards achieving school

wide goals.

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.

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.

- There is a plan in place to implement the CCLS in all classrooms. The plan includes full-time instructional coaches providing CCLS training and monitoring application of instructional shifts in all classrooms through a system of embedded coaching and targeted PD opportunities for teachers. The school's SCEP identified targeted, achievable goals that include implementation of CCLS and the use of achievement data to develop a PD plan and calendar to equip teachers with skills and content knowledge to support CCLS instructional practices. For example, the school's PD Plan makes provision for instructional coaches to provide teachers with PD on how to unpack the CCLS standards to improve instructional delivery that incorporates the CCLS shifts and use data to determine student growth for the writing of Student Learning Objectives. Staff stated to the IIT that this has helped them decrease lecture-based instruction and helped them understand how to use formative data to differentiate instruction for their students. At the time of the review, coaches offered PD to teachers of content areas for which there are no State assessments. Instructional strategies involving close reading of text and student engagement in writing were the focus of this PD. The school leader stated to the IIT that staff meet regularly to discuss the CCLS rollout in a horizontal meeting structure, but do not meet vertically. Team reviewers observed ELA and mathematics teachers using materials and curriculum that support CCLS; however, the school leader reported that materials for science and social studies are in the process of being developed. Some teachers have aligned their lessons plans to the CCLS. The school leader reported to the IIT that teachers receive PD on the Tri-State Rubric to help them to develop lesson plans that support CCLS. Although there is strong evidence that there is a plan in place to provide teachers with PD necessary to roll out implementation of the CCLS, not all teachers are applying the instructional shifts in their classrooms and, in some classes, no evidence of the instructional shifts was observed by team reviewers. Thus, while there is a clearly articulated PD plan to roll out the CCLS, not all staff are equipped to consistently apply CCLS instructional practices or use CCLS aligned materials to meet the needs of all students. These factors impede implementation of curricula designed to ensure that students are on the path to college and career readiness.

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.

- Teachers develop both unit and lesson plans collaboratively based on achievement data in an effort to meet the needs of their students. For example, English teachers use common planning time to analyze data from the Regents Examination in English to determine how many students missed specific questions, what skills were involved in the questions, and where the topic was introduced in the curriculum. Teachers then create strategies to address gaps in student learning in both unit and lesson plans. Teachers reported to the IIT that, “During common planning time we share our strategies – not just pulling facts, but how we apply higher order thinking.” Teachers acknowledged in an interview with the IIT that their instructional practice benefits from formative and summative assessments, and the teachers shared that they have incorporated the “quick sort” and “ticket out the door” strategies to determine if re-teaching was necessary. Team reviewers noted objectives posted in most classrooms visited and that the majority of teachers referenced these objectives throughout lessons. Lesson plans provided to team reviewers during classroom visits demonstrated a varying degree of alignment with CCLS. Based on a review of ELA curriculum documents, the IIT found that the school utilizes a combination of NYS Common Core Modules supplemented by district-developed units, some of which were designed to support the NYS ELA Standards. Teachers indicated to the IIT that they monitor and adjust curricula to support learning and ensure that students consistently have an opportunity to engage in higher order thinking skills. Teachers stated, “Previously we were given data. Now we have learned how to collect and use the data to adjust what we are teaching to better help our students.” Although there is evidence that some teachers are collaboratively developing lesson and unit plans informed by formative and summative data, classroom visitations by the IIT found that some teachers are not applying these practices. Because of this inconsistency, student access to instruction in all grades and subject areas that addresses students' needs and is informed by data is limited.

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.

Areas for Improvement:

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.

- Teacher teams have common planning time to develop lessons and build in accommodations for identified students. Lesson plans reviewed by the IIT show that all teachers follow a common lesson plan format that includes planning for the needs of all students. The school has been increasing the use of an inclusive, integrated co-teaching (ICT) model over the last several years. Team reviewers observed evidence of shared teaching responsibilities when visiting ICT classes, where both teachers were checking in with all students while circling the room. In some instances, teachers shared the responsibility for the presentation of the material or paraphrasing and clarifying confusing points. In a few non-ICT classrooms, teachers differentiated instruction for students by varying the length of time for students to complete tasks in order to provide additional

support for struggling learners and by encouraging advanced learners to pursue a topic in greater depth. Technology integration was a common instructional practice used in most classrooms visited, with teachers using SMART boards and computers to engage students and provide multiple points of access to content. Teachers reported to the IIT that they “stimulate student thinking by asking questions through the use of adaptive CCLS (or content-based standards) instructional materials that contain high levels of text and content complexity.” However, reviewers saw the use of higher-order questioning in only some content areas, with most teachers using a whole class instructional model. Teachers in some classes would ask questions that started with “Who knows?” or “Who can tell me?” and this led to only a few students actively participating. In one class observed by a team reviewer, the teacher did not present a deep understanding of the material in her instruction and called on the same student repeatedly for responses. During instruction, teacher modeling of the content and skill was evident in the majority of classes that the IIT observed. In the majority of the classrooms visited, the IIT saw classroom discussion that was largely teacher directed, with students having little involvement in discussing and dialoguing about the material. Although students were observed sitting in groups in classrooms that the IIT visited, there was little opportunity for interaction within those groups. Teachers provided timely and specific feedback to students who did respond to questions, but specific correction procedures, such as having students restate the correct answer after giving an incorrect answer, were not utilized. Because of teachers' application of the CCLS curriculum and instructional shifts with limited differentiation in questioning or consistent checking for understanding for all students, the instructional delivery lacks rigor, which limits student engagement and restricts the instructional experience to basic content with a single point of access.

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.

Areas for Improvement:

5.4 **The school has received a rating of *Effective* 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.

- The school community engages in and develops partnerships that support a safe environment where all students can learn. Students, teachers, and parents stated to the IIT that the school is safe, and they feel welcome in it. A parent reported he visited the school in prior years as part of his job and found it to be very dangerous but noted a dramatic turn-around that occurred under the present school leadership. Staff receives PD in the school’s behavioral management program. Teachers reported to the IIT that school-wide implementation of the Safe and Civil Schools Program is happening in all classes. Teachers indicated that the program is taken “very seriously.” Students reported to the IIT that the school leadership and security enforced the rules. The school has “daily reminders” and incentives for students who follow the rules and consequences for students who do not. Documents provided to the IIT provided information about CHAMPS, the

school's Positive Behavior Intervention System program. Students told the IIT that there is "no bullying because students will intervene for peers." Posters that support school safety and appropriate behaviors were visible throughout the classrooms and hallways. Staff, including the school leader, participates in hall duty. Team reviewers observed appropriate behaviors in all classes visited and throughout the building. The school provides students with multiple social and emotional developmental supports that include mental health counseling; crisis intervention services; and support groups, such as for teen parents and for grief counseling. Programs that support health and wellness are available through community partnerships, such as one with Daeman College to administer free physical exams for students. The school also provides academic support and begins from Freshman Academy, the school's version of orientation, to encourage students to think of graduation as one of their goals. Because the school has a number of successful strategies developed by multiple stakeholders focusing on managing student behavior and supporting student social and emotional developmental health, the school is a safe place where students can learn.

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.

Areas for Improvement:

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.

- The school uses a variety of strategies to engage families in the educational process and provide information about their children's progress and school improvement efforts. These include mailings, automated phone calls, flyers, newsletters and the school's website. Team reviewers were provided documents, such as parent meetings agendas and meeting minutes, relating to the parent involvement plan and school-family involvement policy. The school leader told the IIT that there are one-on-one meetings for a senior credit review with parents and students and an annual meeting with the Student Support Team for students with disabilities and their parents. Parents indicated to the IIT that they were aware of the Infinite Campus computer system and that the school has a parent portal, but they were not aware of how to use it. The portal, which is maintained by the district, is only available in English. A student reported to the IIT that she had to translate the information to her mother, whose only language is Spanish; however, the student also added that her mother uses the portal to track her grades. The school leader reported to the IIT that the portal is not getting many "hits." The district-appointed parent liaison does not have access to parent information, which limits her outreach effectiveness. Because the schools plan for sharing data with the school community is in the developmental stages, with limited availability of information in languages other than English, some parents are uninformed about their child's achievement and unable to advocate for his or her educational program.