



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

**DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)**



<b>BEDS Code</b>	11-02-00-01-0011
<b>School Name</b>	Cortland Junior-Senior High School
<b>School Address</b>	8 Valley View Drive, Cortland, NY 13045
<b>District Name</b>	Cortland Enlarged City School District
<b>School Leader</b>	Joseph Mack, grades 10-12 Kenneth Brafman, grade 9 Kevin Cafararo, grades 7-8
<b>Dates of Review</b>	April 15-16, 2014
<b>School Accountability Status</b>	Focus School
<b>Type of Review</b>	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet												
Grade Configuration	7-12	Total Enrollment	1150	SIG Recipient	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Title 1 Population	1150	Attendance Rate	86.76%			
Free Lunch	33%	Reduced Lunch	8%				Limited English Proficient	0.09%	Students with Disabilities	8.87%		
Number of English Language Learner Classes												
#Transitional Bilingual	0	#Dual Language			0							
Number of Special Education Classes												
#Self-Contained	3	#Consultant Teaching			21		#Integrated Collaborative Teaching			42		
#Resource Room	31											
Number of Special Classes												
#Visual Arts	30	#Music	16	#Drama	1	#Foreign Language	38	#Dance	0	#CTE	0	
Racial/Ethnic Origin												
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.17%	Black or African American	4.78%	Hispanic or Latino	3.39%	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0.78%	White	88.88%	Multi-racial	2.0%	
Personnel												
Years Principal Assigned to School	GL 10- 12:1 GL 9: 13.5 GL 7-8: 5		# of Assistant Principals		1	# of Deans		0	# of Counselors / Social Workers		6	
Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	0%		Teaching Out of Certification		0%	Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp.		14%	Average Teacher Absences		5%	
Credit Accumulation (High School Only) and Performance Rates												
% of 1 <sup>st</sup> yr. students who earned 10+ credits	11%	% of 2 <sup>nd</sup> yr. students who earned 10+ credits	88%	% of 3 <sup>rd</sup> yr. students who earned 10+ credits	91%	4 Year Graduation Rate		79%				
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	131	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	48	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	150	6 Year Graduation Rate		2013: 90% 2012: 89% 2011: 91% 2010: 89% 2009: 87% 2008: 94%				

<b>Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA</b>			
	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
<b>Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Math</b>			
	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
<b>Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science</b>			
	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
<b>Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for Effective Annual Measurable Achievement Objective</b>			
	Limited English Proficiency		

**SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS DESCRIBED BY THE SCHOOL:**

1. **Increase graduation rate**
2. **Reduce student absences**
3. **Increase the number of students achieving proficiency on state assessments**
4. **Reduce the number of course failures**
5. **Increase student motivation for academic success**

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

#	Statement of Practice	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
<b>OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 2:</b>					<b>I</b>

**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
<b>OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 3:</b>					<b>I</b>

**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	
<b>OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 4:</b>				<b>D</b>	

**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
<b>OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 5:</b>					<b>I</b>

**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
<b>OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 6:</b>					<b>I</b>

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

<b>Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions:</b> 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.	<b>Tenet Rating</b>	<b>I</b>
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**Debriefing Statement:** School leaders have not created a School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP) or established consistent systems of continuous and sustainable school improvement based on a widely understood vision. The mission and goals of the school are not clear. While groups of teachers lead a range of efforts to improve student academic achievement in different sections of the school, these are not systematically promoted, coordinated, monitored, and evaluated.

**Strengths:**

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

**Areas for Improvement:**

2.2 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* 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:**

The leaders’ practices and decisions have not created a culture that is currently leading to success for all groups of students. The school lacks a clearly identifiable vision and plan to drive a strategy for sustained school-wide improvement.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- The leaders stated in their Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness (DTSDE) self-assessment that they have created some personal Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Results-oriented, and Timely (SMART) goals, but without the use of any specific data. They have no SCEP in place and SMART goals are not defined. Leaders stated that the targets assembled are unintentional and not based on the achievement of specific outcomes.
- Through Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) discussions with groups of staff, students and parents, reviewers found a lack of clarity, across stakeholders, about a known, understood, and common vision of the school’s purpose. Communication about priorities across the school and wider school community is reportedly limited and inconsistent.

**Impact Statement:**

The lack of a school vision and SMART goals shared by all staff, students and parents limits the school’s ability to drive through improvement to student achievement in sufficiently coordinated ways.

**Recommendation:**

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

- In collaboration with school staff, district personnel, and community representatives, analyze data for use in SCEP development that identifies the overarching vision, mission and SMART goals for the short, medium and long terms, which all three leaders own and drive throughout the school and its wider community.
- Use actual school data and the goals established in the district's Professional Development Plan (PDP) as a basis to guide consultation about SCEP objectives, ensuring that outcomes are focused on raising achievement for all groups of students.

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

**Overall Finding:**

School leader responsibilities are not designated clearly and leaders have little to inform strategic decisions about how resources should be assigned. Although leaders are organizing resources to meet operational needs, the allocation is based on reactive and inadvertent short-term practices, rather than a considered longer-term approach.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- From IIT discussions with stakeholder groups, reviewers learned that school leaders have few systems in place and no substitute for a SCEP to guide leadership responsibilities and decision-making processes about strategic resource allocations. Reviewers found that processes are reactive, and not led by an overarching vision and identified priorities.
- Reviewers found that leaders do not sufficiently take into account alignment of the overall instructional program to improving and sustaining achievement for all groups of students.
- Leaders have not taken steps to secure and sustain personnel who will enable the school to meet the academic and social needs of students. IIT interviews with school staff revealed that communication is less than effective in defining the immediate needs of the school community, and there is little monitoring of the impact of the resources used. Although some of the leaders reported a desire to allocate resources in new ways, they have not defined intended outcomes based on any convincing needs analysis, as confirmed by the DTSDE self-assessment.
- Decisions on how fiscal capital is used are based mainly on partial analyses and historical patterns. With no SCEP in place, and few data-driven monitoring systems, discussions with school leaders and stakeholders revealed that the school has not formulated explicit school funding needs for the contemporary environment in which it operates.

**Impact Statement:**

As a consequence of misaligned systems, school leaders are not using available resources and organizing instructional programs in coordinated ways to meet the school community's immediate and longer-term

needs. As a result, student progress is not being purposefully supported.

**Recommendation:**

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

- Ensure school, district and community members work together to identify and define leadership responsibilities, and the immediate, longer-term needs of the school and its students. Produce plans that guide actions to meet these needs.
- Use focused allocations of fiscal, human, and programmatic resources to meet these immediate and longer-term needs; use measurable evaluation criteria about student progress at the forefront of decision making about resource allocation and program organization.

2.4 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* 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:**

Leaders conduct frequent and targeted observations, with review and analysis of classroom data, to ensure accountability procedures occur with a view to creating continuous improvement. However, a fully functional system that brings practical improvement to pedagogy, aligned to the district's Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) plan, is not in place.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- School leaders have plans and schedules for staff observations, and produce lengthy feedback notes based on assessments from those observations. The school's DTSDE self-assessment stated that leaders do not connect observations to targeted student data, nor track teacher practices based on student feedback. Reviewers found the APPR reports overly lengthy and less than adequate for improving the quality of instruction. Pages of notes are reported by many staff participants as overly bureaucratic and could be reduced, without loss, to "half-page summaries" of two or three points to bring about more focused improvements in instructional practices.
- With only broadly agreed-upon evaluation instruments and criteria, informed feedback for specific purposes is often unavailable or inaccessible. As leaders and staff expressed in meetings with reviewers, this means that improvements are not made in prioritized areas of need and little of the associated accountability for driving and measuring improvement in required areas is realized.
- With limited qualitative observation data to measure the differentiated effectiveness of instruction, school leaders and other administrators reported that they are constrained in informing staff about steps for improvement and professional development (PD) decisions.

**Impact Statement:**

The lack of focused, tangible advice emerging from the APPR process hinders continuous improvement at the

different levels of teaching, instructional leadership and management.

**Recommendation:**

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

- Use existing, and create new, evaluation instruments and measurable criteria that lead to a fully functional system aligning the district APPR process to the evaluation of instructional practices against declared priorities.
- Bring teachers routine, succinct feedback that is useful in creating needed changes to heighten teacher and staff accountability for ensuring improvement in student achievement.

2.5 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* 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:**

Leaders have not developed a school-wide evidence-based system or SCEP. This results in weakly defined school-wide practices, which hinders leaders in encouraging staff to use required best practices.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- Leaders stated that staff are encouraged, rather than required, to use school-wide systems, which were nonetheless found to be unclear. Reviewers found weak monitoring systems in place that were unrelated to strategic planning. The lack of a SCEP underpinned by evidence-based systems makes it difficult to define school-wide practices. Leaders have little to inform decisions about practices that are effective, ineffective, or necessary for improvement.
- A lack of documented, deliberate plans and direction, and discussions with school leaders, revealed that leaders have not taken steps to develop an evidence-based system to monitor and adjust staff practices. Reviewers found a lack of common and agreed-upon whole-school goals, and identified areas for improvement. This limits school leaders' ability to monitor school-wide practices and use insight to make informed decisions that will move the school forward.

**Impact Statement:**

The lack of succinct monitoring systems and clearly defined school-wide goals impedes school leaders' ability to examine school-wide practices and measure progress toward the achievement of school improvement priorities.

**Recommendation:**

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

- Create and use evidence-based systems aligned to a culture of comprehensive continuous

improvement.

- Develop and agree to a common monitoring system to measure success toward achieving school-wide goals using an overarching vision, mission and specific outcomes for the achievement of groups of students. Use this evidence-based system to focus the direction given by the three school leaders and staff.

**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**

**I**

**Debriefing Statement:**

The school is moving forward with the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and educational shifts promoted by the New York State Education Department (NYSED). School leaders understand how to develop plans that ensure support for teachers in using rigorous instructional practices promising coherent outcomes for all students. However, a lack of careful monitoring of teacher practices and student performance inhibits consistent progress.

**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 Ineffective 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:**

Leaders intend CCLS implementation; however, implementation is only partially realized. The school curricula, as a whole, does not take into account student needs, and contributes little to students' education and college and career readiness.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- School leaders take a limited range of actions, drawn mainly from district initiatives, to support implementation of CCLS-aligned curricula. However, as leaders stated within the DTSDE school self-assessment, curricula has not been sufficiently developed.
- Reviewers found that school leaders do not provide teachers with adequate access to pedagogical support, materials, and training to align their curricula to the CCLS and instructional shifts for individual and subgroups of students. Some staff expressed a desire for more strategic direction and resources, while others stated that re-alignment of existing curricula was straightforward.

- School leaders stated that they are encouraging staff to use curricula inclusive of the necessary shifts to align it with CCLS and New York State (NYS) standards, but leaders reported only partial implementation, lacking progression. Processes are ad hoc, with no guiding plan or systematic monitoring and adaptation based on standardized data.

**Impact Statement:**

School-wide curricula are not meeting the needs of many groups of students because of the lack of a defined plan and actions focused on improving student growth toward planned student outcomes. As a result, curricula do not fully support students' college and career readiness.

**Recommendation:**

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

- Ensure the curriculum is modified in line with a newly produced SCEP, written so as to meet the needs of students in line with CCLS requirements, and contributes to student ownership of learning and college and career readiness.
- Implement a strategy for consistent and defined shifts in delivery of a curriculum with explicit CCLS features; use available supporting resources, as necessary.

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:**

Although roughly half the teachers and teaching teams are beginning to plan units and lessons that include some data-driven instruction (DDI) and align to the CCLS, the practice is sporadic and the process not school-wide.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- Systems are not in place to ensure that all teachers use formal structures and data to work collaboratively to develop unit and lesson plans in line with the CCLS. According to the DTSDE school self-assessment, some teachers include DDI and align their instruction to the CCLS, but this was declared as not being part of a school-wide process.
- From reviewers' observations and discussions, it appeared that about 40 percent of teachers use lesson plans appropriately to support CCLS implementation. Others appear to do so inconsistently or inadvertently, and some do not align with the CCLS at all. Across the school, reviewed planning did not incorporate a progression of sequenced and scaffolded skills using a variety of appropriately complex materials. Reviewers noted that teachers rarely adjusted their planning to meet the needs of all groups of students. Planning is generally not based on outcomes from structured evaluations of assessments from students' prior learning.

**Impact Statement:**

The demands of CCLS across grades and subject areas are not consistently reflected in planning. Consequently, student growth is inconsistent, and the achievement of all students shows limited improvement.

**Recommendation:**

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

- Collaboratively develop a viable and reliable curriculum aligned, both horizontally across grades, and vertically throughout the school, with NYS CCLS.
- Incorporate the district's lesson and unit plans into the school's curricular-planning process. Use assessment data to inform the development of all plans. Provide feedback to the district to enable adjustments for improvement to be made at the district level.

3.4 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* 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:**

Some teachers are working together to connect curricula across subjects. This gives some students opportunities to engage and succeed; but the practice is not consistent, and does not lead to college and career readiness for all students.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- According to the school's DTDSE self-assessment, planned collaboration occurs in pockets, but is not school-wide or intentionally planned. Staff reported some informal collaboration; but this did not prove to be as effective as possible, primarily because there is limited data available to inform an accelerated process through cross-curricular learning.
- With no formalized, comprehensive planning in place to provide direction, reviewers found that school leaders did not charge teachers to partner with other teachers within and across grades or topics. Classroom observations showed learning environments primarily focused on the limited dimensions of the specific lesson, rather than on learning gleaned from wider interdisciplinary aspects of those lessons.
- Reviewers noted that the concept of increasing student learning opportunities by linking different subjects is developing with only some teachers. Reviewer observation of a grade-eight team meeting showed team members discussing interdisciplinary learning and sharing successful strategies. The music, technology, art, and physical education departments showed evidence of working partnerships providing opportunities and raising student standards of achievement. However, school efforts to comprehensively plan for cross-curricular learning opportunities that significantly raise student academic achievement are under-developed.

**Impact Statement:**

Student academic achievement is restricted because opportunities to elevate learning through cross-curricular activities are not planned comprehensively, and systematically, across the school.

**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 comprehensive plan for teachers within and across all grades and subjects to create interdisciplinary curricula targeting the arts, technology, and other enrichment opportunities.
- Use data to inform both the instructional planning and the distribution of resources across subjects and grades to enable student academic success within grades and vertically, from grade to grade.

3.5 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* 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:**

There are too few assessments to guide and inform the curricula used by teachers. Student feedback does not ensure students have the knowledge or understanding to take ownership of their learning and improve their skills.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- In the absence of properly organized and rigorous data about student achievement, teachers and staff were unable to discuss data use to inform curricular decisions. As leaders stated in their DTSDE school self-assessment, assessments are not aligned school-wide or school-developed.
- Reviewers found insufficient assessment data to provide students with clear feedback about their learning to help them understand what they do well and what they need to improve. Groups of students had varied responses, but some groups stated that they received little data-based feedback, because data is generally not available.

**Impact Statement:**

While there are systems for ensuring assessments occur, the use of assessments in short- and long-term planning does not secure outcomes aligned with the CCLS or ensure that student achievement is at appropriate levels.

**Recommendation:**

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

- Develop systems that bring a consistent approach to developing formative and summative assessments that point to the next steps of learning for students, and accurately document their achievements.

- Ensure formative assessment is practiced school-wide as central to the alignment of student achievement, and that the newly created SCEP addresses this practice in relation to the CCLS and NYS curriculum modules.

**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:** Teachers do not consistently engage in collective decision-making about programs and lessons planning. Although teachers ensure that students are compliant, engaged, and productive, data does not inform and guide lessons to meet the needs of diverse groups of learners. Too few strategies provide multiple points of access for these groups. The development of strategic approaches securing instructional practices that bring high levels of student achievement is limited.

**Strengths:**

All ratings for this Tenet are **Developing** 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:**

School and teacher leaders do not ensure that students are meeting their potential, or increasing their outcomes, through instructional planning and practices informed by data, and based on student needs and learning styles.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- While teachers make efforts to implement instructional practices in line with the CCLS, strategies are not in place to ensure this happens systematically. As observed by reviewers in just over half of the lessons seen, not all groups of student needs are being addressed, nor their potential met or exceeded. Reviewers found that not all conversations between teachers and leaders about raising standards for all students are routine and systematic; teacher support in this aspect is limited.
- With no overarching plans in place at the whole-school level, teachers have few structures and little overall support in developing instructional practices or strategies at individual and team levels. Similarly, with few operating systems of detailed formative assessment, teachers are not informed about the specific progress of groups of students.
- Without available assessment data, teachers are not supported in setting goals that show what individual and groups of students are expected to achieve. Without clarity around individual goals, students are unable to determine how their outcomes align with expectations, or whether any goals

are set at the correct level.

**Impact Statement:**

Erratic instructional practices, with weak structural support from school leaders, lead to levels of student achievement that are generally too low.

**Recommendation:**

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

- Lead and support the development of instructional plans and practices with built-in high levels of student engagement and a sharp focus on high achievement.
- Use criteria in the CCLS and district plan to assess students' current achievement and form a series of baselines from which to drive improvement. Use formative assessment and feedback to students as the main vehicles to set goals and raise academic standards and achievement.

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

**Overall Finding:**

Although some positive steps are being taken by staff across some grade-level teams and departments, coherent instruction aligned to the CCLS to improve engagement and achievement across the school is not in place.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- Teachers are beginning to develop lessons plans aligned to the CCLS in some departments and grade-level teams to inform their instructional practices, but this is in the early stages. For example, in an observed grade nine English language arts (ELA) lesson, the co-teaching team had selected part of a CCLS module on a famous Shakespearean play. The material was appropriate, but because students had not experienced the lead-up material to this section of the module, many of them struggled, even though teachers provided scaffolding for the text analysis to assist students.
- Reviewers observed incidents of higher-order questioning and the use of high levels of text and content complexity in parts of the school, however these were not consistently occurring. For example, in a grade eight social studies lesson closely aligned to CCLS, the well-executed instruction was interesting, pacey, well resourced, and engaging. However, students did not do well in a simple recall test. Questions were well within their capabilities, but because their own expectations and accountabilities to perform well were weakly embedded, they did not do well enough collectively. This level of observed practice was replicated in other classrooms across the school.

**Impact Statement:**

Instructional practices and processes undergoing improvement by many teachers do not result in high levels of student engagement and achievement, primarily because of inconsistent expectations and practices across the

school.

**Recommendation:**

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

- Identify a core group of teachers to assist teaching teams with planning and implementation of instructional delivery, which feeds into the SCEP and explicitly and consistently aligns with the CCLS; ensure that questioning challenges student thinking and demands justified and extended answers.
- Provide students with multiple ways and times to demonstrate academic achievement and gain increased engagement.

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 learning environment is physically safe and secure; but the quality of classroom arrangements, planning, and programs, vary widely, with few facilitating opportunities for students to feel intellectually safe, take risks, and use their "student voice" enough.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- School leaders acknowledged that teachers often use instructional methodologies based on their own comfort levels in classroom environments organized to suit themselves, rather than their students. There are few ambitious, common expectations set out by the school leaders, especially given the good possibilities for closely sharing professional practices across the school. Consequently, reviewers found many teachers tend to "do their own thing," and justify this in terms of the long experience they have in working this way, which brought previous success.
- Teachers have difficulty in meeting and accounting for all students' needs. Reviewers evidenced this during classroom observations where students were seated at individual "note-taking" chairs, listening to teachers as they circulated or spoke from a lectern. Reviewers noted some students with very weak literacy skills, for example, in a grade nine ELA lesson; such dated "university-style" furnishing arrangements are not conducive to the learning needs of such students, nor are they effective in creating a routine learning environment that facilitates responsiveness to groups of students who have a considerably wide spread of ability levels.
- There are few strategies in place that directly address the current and changing needs of students, and embrace their values and perspectives. Students stated that although their teachers invariably have good relationships with them, their learning environments often do little to engage and interest them; teachers suggest that many students show apathy.

**Impact Statement:**

Student learning environments do not lend themselves to meeting students' differing needs or to a climate of

academic risk-taking and intellectual safety, so the culture of engaging students in new learning and seeking higher aspiration is limited.

**Recommendation:**

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

- Ensure school leaders and teachers work together on the common aspects and shared topics pertaining to subject specific and cross-curricular endeavors, to create a range of learning environments that take account of students' interests, abilities and personal characteristics, and meet their differing levels of need within classrooms and across the school.

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 (for example, screening, interim measures, and progress monitoring).

**Overall Finding:**

School leaders and teachers often do not actively address the perceived challenge of “student-apathy” and the need for students to participate more in their own learning; nor do they use formative assessments well enough to sharpen students’ focus on their work and rates of progress. Summative assessments are in place.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- Teachers do not have school-wide direction for the adjustment and use of plans for groups of students based on the outcomes of formative assessments. School leaders stated within the DTSDE school-self assessment that, “The major problem is student apathy.” Reviewers found that there is little student ownership of learning and students often appear to place responsibility on the school or teachers. Few formative assessment systems are in place that students can use to help them secure their own progress across the different components of their courses.
- While helpful feedback is given at specific levels to individual students or more widely to groups, the practice is limited because of the lack of a school-wide data-driven system to provide a basis for continuity. Many students had little to say about the informative quality of feedback from teachers and were not equipped to participate in their own goal setting. Consequently, reviewers found that students do not take enough responsibility for improving their learning outcomes.

**Impact Statement:**

Student achievement is low because of minimal data-driven instruction and ad hoc processes based on early developments in formative assessment techniques.

**Recommendation:**

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

- Accelerate the development of consistent formative assessment policies and practices across the school, so that staff and students have a shared understanding of the next steps needed for

improvement and the responsibilities for follow through.

- Undertake a survey focused on understanding students' perceptions and needs, and use the outcomes to inform instructional planning and foster greater student responsibility in the formative assessment processes.

**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**

**I**

**Debriefing Statement:** The school is developing basic systems to chart support for student social and emotional developmental health. The school environment is safe, and students easily identify adults they can trust. However, school leaders have not developed a data system for referral and support that fosters students' social and emotional developmental health in a way that meets the academic needs of all students. Further, there is little time for PD to increase staff capacity to address student needs. As a result, the social and emotional developmental health of all students is not effectively addressed.

**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 leaders have ensured basic systems of safety, but none that identify and support the social and emotional health needs of students. Leaders have not sought to coordinate and make effective the random plans and systems that do exist to support students.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- The school leaders reported in the DTSDE school self-assessment that school-wide systems for social and emotional developmental health are not in place, and stated that individuals sometimes create their own. Although top-level school planning has not been produced, basic planning exists and procedures are followed to provide support, primarily on a reactive basis. Reviewers found that an assessment of impact is lacking. Information trails and data are limited, although casework is appropriately documented. The school did not present a convincing case that the needs of their students are adequately met. Parents and stakeholders were aware that care and guidance is provided for their children, yet also realized this aspect of school life and students' development is not coordinated to achieve effective levels.

- Reviewers found that best use is not made of all available data to identify and track the needs of students. Discussions with students indicated that they feel confident about there being an adult they can talk to if they have any concerns, but this does not appear to be a formalized system.

**Impact Statement:**

Without a school-wide plan and strategy, attempts to address social and emotional issues and overcome barriers are not effective and do not contribute to ensuring student academic success.

**Recommendation:**

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

- Identify needs and develop agreed upon policies and practices with student support personnel; establish coordinated systems to address student needs that include clearly defined whole-school referral and support processes. Ensure that formalized systems are in place so that every student is known by an adult.

5.3 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* 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:**

The school has not communicated a vision for social and emotional developmental health across the school. Without a comprehensive plan based on firm data, and with few PD opportunities to increase staff understanding of social and emotional developmental health issues, the school is unable to properly address the needs of all students.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- The school leaders acknowledged that support varies considerably across departments, and that a number of previous supports had been removed, namely the Youth Intervention Team, the Renaissance Program and Link Crew. Appropriate school-wide support programs are described as possibly being available from within the district. The school lacks a specific vision designed to meet the social and emotional developmental health needs of its students. There is no designated program to support the teaching of social and emotional developmental health.
- Discussions with staff and school leaders revealed that staff do not benefit from enough quality PD to enable them to meet consistently the needs of students. Staff also reported that there are no plans to provide support aligned to this kind of work.

**Impact Statement:**

The lack of vision, planning, and PD for social and emotional developmental health causes the school to fail in providing a proactive school-wide approach to meeting the needs of students.

**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 implement a vision and teaching program for social and emotional developmental health that aligns with, and is complementary to, the school's developing curricula; provide ongoing staff PD to equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to meet consistently the needs of students.

5.4 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* 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:**

There is a common understanding about the contributions necessary to ensure a safe school environment for all students, but the direction of the school is unclear with regard to its work with stakeholders in fostering ownership of actions to meet the social and emotional developmental health needs of students.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- School leaders in the DTSDE school self-assessment reported that the school is developing some basic protocols, especially around safety, but that wider protocols for social and emotional developmental health are limited.
- Discussions with stakeholders demonstrated a lack of clarity and awareness of stakeholder roles and responsibilities in helping to make the school a safe place to learn, work and best meet the needs of students. Staff is not always aware of the routes for referrals, and reviewers found inconsistencies in the methods of student referral. Some students reported not always feeling they have a voice in contributing to the culture of the school community or understanding how the impact of their behaviors and actions contribute to the establishment of an environment conducive to learning. Not all parents interviewed were aware of the school's commitment to creating a safe school or ways they could contribute to best support this commitment. This lack of shared awareness adds to uncertainty as to how safety and the meeting of student social and emotional needs are guaranteed. Stakeholders explained that they do not understand their own roles well enough. Reviewers found few school-wide and leader-driven policies, practices, and processes aligned to students' personal development needs that stakeholders can use with confidence.

**Impact Statement:**

Stakeholders are unable to convey, in words or actions, how they ensure that the school community meets students' social and emotional developmental health needs. As a result, the potential achievements of many students are unfulfilled because their needs are being left unsupported.

**Recommendation:**

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

should:

- Identify a school leader responsible for social and emotional developmental health that will drive the creation and coordination of a school-wide culture that ensures the implementation of appropriate social-emotional programs. Provide relevant PD across the school community to ensure that staff, students, and parents understand the importance of social and emotional developmental health and the contribution it and they can make to ensure student academic success.

5.5 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* 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 does not have a strategic plan in place that steers the collection, analysis, and use of data to identify and meet the social and emotional health needs of students.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- The school leaders reported in the DTSDE school self-assessment that there is no plan in place, and there is little school-wide understanding of how data is used to address students' current social and emotional developmental health needs. However, leaders stated that the school is in the process of working together to establish better support structures, and members of the support staff use specific data in their casework.
- The school community has not prioritized the need for data to inform judgments about the supports needed to meet the social and emotional developmental health needs of students. Staff have little understanding of or guidance on how to collect relevant data. In the absence of clarity of purpose and structures, the school shows only a weak grasp of how data might be used effectively.

**Impact Statement:**

Students are not supported in becoming academically and socially successful through structures that use relevant data appropriately.

**Recommendation:**

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

- Establish a task group of staff members, led by a school leader, to help establish required data sources and develop a system to gather and use this data to inform and meet the needs of students, so that chances of student academic success are increased.

**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.

<b>Tenet Rating</b>	<b>I</b>
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**Debriefing Statement:** The school espouses a culture of partnerships where families, community members,

and staff work together in shared responsibility for students' academic progress and social and emotional growth. Home-school communications are typically one way, rather than reciprocal. Collaboration with community agencies is reactive, rather than proactive, and efforts to improve partnerships are sporadic, rather than systematic. These practices do not promote shared responsibility among school, family, and community, and do not ensure social and academic benefit for all students.

**Strengths:**

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

**Areas for Improvement:**

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

**Overall Finding:**

School leaders communicate with families regularly throughout the academic year, although this does not lead to students being sufficiently supported to help them reach high expectations.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- School leaders identified a number of ways that they communicate with families and students. The DTSDE school self-assessment contained a list of nearly 20 examples of communications used. However, at the time of the review there was no plan in place to show how communication leads to systematic improvement in the partnerships between home and school, and increased outcomes for students.
- Reviewers found little evidence that the school is equipping families with the information and depth of understanding they need to support their children in their work at school. Parents and students reported they do not feel that communication is as effective as it could be about home-school expectations. Some groups of students reported that they are not well equipped to help themselves academically.
- School leaders explained that adjustments are being made in school staff efforts to build reciprocal family-school relationships; it is hoped that these modifications will assist in raising expectations for student academic achievement. It is accepted that while open house events, "honors" and "merit" letters, and "tips for academic success" programs play a part in supporting home-school interactions, there is little in place in the system that intentionally fosters the raising of achievement levels for all students.

**Impact Statement:**

The culture across family, community, and school relationships is not contributing to meeting student needs. Communication systems are not adequately fostering high expectations for student achievement and well-being, and impelling the academic success required 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:

- Ensure that existing events, patterns of communication, and responses are developed and shaped into coherent forms of dialogue with families and stakeholders that fulfil the requirements of a comprehensive school communication policy aimed at fostering high expectations and improving outcomes for all groups of students.

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 students' strengths and needs are identified and used to augment learning.

**Overall Finding:**

Although the school is open to parents and responds to their inquiries, planning and communication between the school and its stakeholders are not reciprocal in ways that augment student learning.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- The school communicates limited information to families and is responsive to inquiries from parents, but communication processes are not driven by an imperative to raise student achievement, increase student rates of progress, and improve the quality of students' personal development. The school website, for example, has content about a framework for literacy that teaching staff regard as obsolete. In addition, the icon for the school's SCEP opens to a SCEP for an entirely different school.
- Stakeholders reported that the Parent-Teacher Awareness Group (PTAG) had undertaken significant work to raise levels of understanding about issues pertaining to the complementary nature of home and school contributions, and the importance of these supports in promoting students' education. However, it was reported by parents that the PTAG had not been particularly active recently, and parent levels of participation were and are often low. School leaders further stated in the DTSDE school self-assessment that communication is not reciprocal.
- Reviewers found that the school does not produce and send letters translated into languages other than English, as almost all of the school community speak or understand English.

**Impact Statement:**

Families are not provided with sufficient information and encouraged to support their children's education in concerted and systematic ways, which limits academic achievement and the social-emotional growth of students.

**Recommendation:**

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

- Organize a school-community-family partnership team, perhaps through the existing PTAG mandate; meet regularly and frequently to develop a dynamic plan for reciprocal communication that intentionally and robustly supports student achievement and well-being. Monitor the impact of this new “plan in action” in terms of the academic progress and personal development of students, and make planning adjustments based on the findings to raise further standards.
- Improve the school website and its relevance to the community; provide information to parents on the school’s goals and ambitions, and ways to obtain regularly confidential information about their children’s progress and achievement.

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

**Overall Finding:**

There is limited support in place to provide training for staff on home-school partnerships that promote student achievement being supported by both teachers and parents.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- At the time of the review, school leaders were not working on a plan to share different methods parents might use to support their children’s growth and achievement. School leaders reported that support is sporadic and individual.
- Staff are not provided with PD and training to turn the trend of weak home-school relationships into something constructive and effective in improving student outcomes.

**Impact Statement:**

Support for parents to help accelerate their children’s academic and social and emotional growth is weak and therefore, student outcomes suffer.

**Recommendation:**

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

- Define the most important aspects of support required by parents and families to best support their child’s academic development; implement strategies, workshops, communications, tips, and tools that together provide a series of options for parents to utilize to support their child; provide PD to staff on effective ways to develop partnerships with families and the community.

6.5 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* 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:**

Data is not shared or assessed, so it is not available in a way that allows stakeholders to understand both student and family needs or to advocate effectively for services that address those needs.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- School leaders acknowledged that they do not share data across data specialists, student support professionals, and program coordinators with any prioritized intent or within an integrated data system. Leaders reported that they meet as needed with community agencies, such as the Committee for Special Education (CSE), wrap-around services, and drug and alcohol prevention services. They explained that data is not shared in a systematic way, and suggested that a parent portal is needed as a part of the school's electronic communications system.
- Parents reported that the data they receive is minimal, and expressed a lack of any real depth of understanding of the data that they do receive.

**Impact Statement:**

Existing data sharing actions are not influencing families to raise their aspirations and support their children to pursue higher standards and achieve better educational outcomes.

**Recommendation:**

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

- Take deliberate steps to raise aspirations by collecting and sharing salient data with school stakeholders, particularly parents. Provide training to parents so that they understand the data being shared.