



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	430700010005
School Name	Geneva Middle School
School Address	101 Carter Road, Geneva, NY
District Name	Geneva City School District
School Leader	Mr. Robert Smith, Acting Principal
Dates of Review	February 4-5, 2014
School Accountability Status	Focus School
Type of Review	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet												
Grade Configuration	6-8	Total Enrollment	496	SIG Recipient	<input type="checkbox"/>	Title 1 Population	64%	Attendance Rate	95 %			
Free Lunch	55%	Reduced Lunch	9%	Student Sustainability	%	Limited English Proficient	5%	Students with Disabilities	10.2%			
Number of English Language Learner Classes												
#Transitional Bilingual	25		#Dual Language			#Self-Contained English as a Second Language						
Number of Special Education Classes												
#Special Classes	2		#Consultant Teaching		13		#Integrated Collaborative Teaching			6		
# Resource Room	3											
Number Special Classes												
#Visual Arts		#Music		#Drama		#Foreign Language		#Dance		#CTE		
Racial/Ethnic Origin												
American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	Black or African American	19%	Hispanic or Latino	20%	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	11%	White	55%	Multi-racial	4%	
Personnel												
Years Principal Assigned to School	1		# of Assistant Principals		1		# of Deans		1		# of Counselors / Social Workers	2
Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	0%		Teaching Out of Certification		0%		Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp.		11%		Average Teacher Absences	11
Credit Accumulation (High School Only) and Performance Rates												
% of 1 st yr. students who earned 10+ credits		% of 2 nd yr. students who earned 10+ credits		% of 3 rd yr. students who earned 10+ credits		4 Year Graduation Rate						
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	25%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	18%	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	67%	6 Year Graduation Rate						

Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA			
	American Indian or Alaska Native	X	Black or African American
X	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
	White		Multi-racial
X	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
X	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
X	White		Multi-racial
X	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, DIP, etc.):

1. Increase student performance in all subgroups by 10%
2. Provide differentiated professional development to all staff
3. Use of data to improve student achievement
4. Increase the safety and climate of the building
5. Improve collaboration and communication with the school community

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

Mark an "X" in the box below the appropriate designation for each tenet, and mark in the 'OVERALL RATING' row the final designation for the overall tenet.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
2.2	The school leader ensures that the school community shares the Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Results-oriented, and Timely (SMART) goals/mission, and long-term vision inclusive of core values that address the priorities outlined in the School Comprehensive Educational Plan (SCEP).			X	
2.3	Leaders make strategic decisions to organize programmatic, human, and fiscal capital resources.		X		
2.4	The school leader has a fully functional system in place aligned to the district's Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) to conduct targeted and frequent observation and track progress of teacher practices based on student data and feedback.			X	
2.5	Leaders effectively use evidence-based systems and structures to examine and improve critical individual and school-wide practices as defined in the SCEP (student achievement, curriculum and teacher practices; leadership development; community/family engagement; and student social and emotional developmental health).			X	
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 2:				D	

Tenet 3 - Curriculum Development and Support: The school has rigorous and coherent curricula and assessments that are appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) for all students and are modified for identified subgroups in order to maximize teacher instructional practices and student-learning outcomes.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
3.2	The school leader ensures and supports the quality implementation of a systematic plan of rigorous and coherent curricula appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) that is monitored and adapted to meet the needs of students.			X	
3.3	Teachers develop and ensure that unit and lesson plans used include data-driven instruction (DDI) protocols that are appropriately aligned to the CCLS and NYS content standards and address student achievement needs.			X	
3.4	The school leader and teachers have developed a comprehensive plan for teachers to partner within and across all grades and subjects to create interdisciplinary curricula targeting the arts, technology, and other enrichment opportunities.			X	

3.5	Teachers implement a comprehensive system for using formative and summative assessments for strategic short and long-range curriculum planning that involves student reflection, tracking of, and ownership of learning.				X
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 3:				D	

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

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
4.2	School and teacher leaders ensure that instructional practices and strategies are organized around annual, unit, and daily lesson plans that address all student goals and needs.			X	
4.3	Teachers provide coherent, and appropriately aligned Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)-based instruction that leads to multiple points of access for all students.			X	
4.4	Teachers and students work together to implement a program/plan to create a learning environment that is responsive to students' varied experiences and tailored to the strengths and needs of all students.			X	
4.5	Teachers inform planning and foster student participation in their own learning process by using a variety of summative and formative data sources (e.g., screening, interim measures, and progress monitoring).			X	
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 4:				D	

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

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
5.2	The school leader establishes overarching systems and understandings of how to support and sustain student social and emotional developmental health and academic success.			X	
5.3	The school articulates and systematically promotes a vision for social and emotional developmental health that is aligned to a curriculum or program that provides learning experiences and a safe and healthy school environment for families, teachers, and students.		X		
5.4	All school stakeholders work together to develop a common understanding of the importance of their contributions in creating a school community that is safe, conducive to learning, and fostering of a sense of ownership for providing social and emotional developmental health supports tied to the school's vision.			X	
5.5	The school leader and student support staff work together with teachers to establish structures to support the use of data to respond to student		X		

	social and emotional developmental health needs.				
	OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 5:			D	
Tenet 6 - Family and Community Engagement: The school creates a culture of partnership where families, community members, and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being.					
#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
6.2	The school leader ensures that regular communication with students and families fosters their high expectations for student academic achievement.			X	
6.3	The school engages in effective planning and reciprocal communication with family and community stakeholders so that student strength and needs are identified and used to augment learning.			X	
6.4	The school community partners with families and community agencies to promote and provide training across all areas (academic and social and emotional developmental health) to support student success.			X	
6.5	The school shares data in a way that promotes dialogue among parents, students, and school community members centered on student learning and success and encourages and empowers families to understand and use data to advocate for appropriate support services for their children.			X	
	OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 6:			D	

School Review 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.	Tenet Rating	D
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Debriefing Statement:

The acting school leader is in the process of reviewing the status of student achievement levels, effective teaching practices, resource allocation, and family and community engagement. Systems in place are being examined for efficiency and effectiveness. Where no systems or processes exist, they are being developed. Since focus on systems has not been undertaken in recent years, its impact has not yet been realized in instruction, school environment, or student achievement.

Strengths:

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

Overall Finding:

Although the budget was already in place when the school leader began his position, he is making strategic decisions with regard to the resources available in order to achieve the vision for the school.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school leader has a number of systems in place to ensure student needs are met. They include, for example, an after school program for homework help and English/Language Arts (ELA) and math help funded by the 21st Century Grant, a morning enrichment program, and a partnership with a local community center. In addition, he convenes a Site Council monthly, which is comprised of staff, parent, and community representatives to discuss issues important to the functioning of the school.
- There are several partnerships with nearby colleges, which provide student teachers and tutors for middle school students. These individuals become known to the school leaders and staff, so are often hired when positions become available. The school leader is pro-active when it comes to staffing. As an example, he has alerted the district that when filling the newly vacant position of family liaison it is critical for that person to be bi-lingual to better serve the students and families.
- The school leader is monitoring existing programs and deployment of staff to determine the effectiveness of the current assignments and partnerships. During the review team’s interviews with the school leader, it was clear that the determining factor on whether programs and staff assignments continue is how well they meet student needs. For example, the school leader is evaluating whether the current Academic Intervention Services program is successful for all students. If he determines it is not, he will reconfigure the staffing to deploy teachers into new teams.

Impact Statement:

The school leader makes strategic decisions to organize resources to address the immediate needs of the school community.

Areas for Improvement:

2.2 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader ensures that the school community shares the Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Results-oriented, and Timely (SMART) goals/mission, and long-term vision inclusive of core values that address the priorities outlined in the School Comprehensive Educational Plan (SCEP).

Overall Finding:

While the school leader worked with some stakeholders to develop the goals in the SCEP, not all stakeholders are currently aware of the stated goals, and some stakeholders have yet to embrace all components of the school's mission.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- When parents and students were asked if they knew the school's goals and/or vision, they could not articulate the school's goals and/or vision. Students knew they were supposed to get good grades on their tests so they could get into college. While this is a universal goal, it is not the stated "vision" of the school. Parents thought the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) program was the vision. The parents identified elements of the district's mission statement as the school's vision statement.
- The school leader has a data-driven mission and provides professional development (PD) opportunities for staff around data collection and analysis. However, based on instruction observed during classroom visits and discussions with teacher groups, teachers are not consistently using the data to make instructional decisions.
- The SCEP was developed last summer and was reviewed in December. The school leader is in the process of establishing a monitoring plan. However, staff has not adapted the goals to ensure alignment with the school's vision.

Impact Statement:

The school is limited in its ability to achieve the long-term vision as long as some stakeholders are not fully aware of the goals the school has prioritized.

Recommendation:

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

- Have a group of representative stakeholders review the school's SMART goals periodically and evaluate them to determine alignment with the SCEP.
- Revisit existing plans to ensure that the school community understands the need to use data to achieve the school's long-term vision.

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 observations and track progress of teacher practices based on student data and feedback.

Overall Finding:

There is a system in place to observe staff both formally and informally. The school leaders are in the process of using data to strengthen the system to ensure that staff is accountable for student improvement and to ensure that there is follow-up with teachers that results in professional growth.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding: :

- School leaders use the Danielson rubric to evaluate staff. Tenured teachers receive one announced and one unannounced observation per year while non-tenured teachers receive three observations in the first year, and ten overall observations over three years. Discussions with teachers indicated that walk-throughs are only held periodically with only positive feedback provided to teachers.
- The school leader stated that by providing immediate feedback to teachers after observations and walk-throughs he is beginning to see improvement, especially in the area of classroom management. For example, he might have a brief discussion on the most efficient way to hand out papers to make better use of class time going forward. However, reviewers found limited evidence that the teachers were acting on the feedback given or that the school leader was tracking the progress of teachers to ensure their continued growth.
- Executive Council and department chair meetings are held every two weeks. During these meetings, findings from teacher observations are discussed. PD is planned, including the creation of professional learning communities, with this group and with the Assistant Superintendent.

Impact Statement:

Systems are in place to align with the APPR. However, the systems do not yet result in continuous professional growth for teachers that leads to increased student achievement.

Recommendation:

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

- Increase the use of student data, including grades, test scores, attendance, and level of engagement, to inform decisions on providing necessary support for improving teacher practices.

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

The school leader and staff are only beginning to use evidence-based systems to analyze and improve areas that are outlined in the SCEP.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- Staff is encouraged to use evidence-based systems. The work of the Student Support Team (SST) is a particularly good example of a system in place. For example, SST members meet every week and attend most teacher team meetings. They are present at Response To Intervention (RTI) meetings, which are meetings to discuss instructional and behavioral strategies for individual students. The SST has crisis

teams and protocols in place. Although other teams, such as grade level teams, are in place, meetings visited by IIT lacked structure and did not include protocols to promote effective decision-making.

- The school leader is in the process of monitoring and revising existing systems, such as those to determine if requested PD is aligned with SCEP goals. The school leader is monitoring existing systems by meeting regularly with teams of stakeholders. For example, meeting with the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) team provides him with ongoing information about the implementation of the program including successes and challenges encountered. However, the school leader’s response is inconsistent. For example, although systems are in place to monitor the quality of instruction, the information gleaned from these observations is not used consistently to help teachers improve their teaching and student learning.

Impact Statement:

The school leader recognizes the need for evidence-based systems and structures. However, measurable progress toward the SCEP goals has not been achieved school-wide.

Recommendation:

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

- Increase staff understanding of SCEP goals and their role in achieving those goals.
- Support and require the use of data to show progress towards the SCEP 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.

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement:

The teachers use a combination of CCLS modules from EngageNY and district-developed curricular materials to reflect the CCLS. There are opportunities for teachers to collaborate horizontally and vertically. However, teachers do not use protocols to focus discussion or to create action plans during meeting time. Currently, action plans and lesson plans do not reflect the use of data in development and are not modified for identified subgroups in order to maximize student learning.

Strengths:

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

Areas for Improvement:

3.2 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader ensures and supports the quality implementation of a systematic plan of rigorous and coherent curricula appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) that is monitored and adapted to meet the needs of students.

Overall Finding:

The school leader is in the process of ensuring rigorous and coherent curricula, but lacks a comprehensive plan to ensure consistent implementation of CCLS curricula across all content areas.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school leader reported that he is in the process of developing a systematic plan to ensure that robust curricula in all content areas. Some teachers are using modules from EngageNY to align curricula to the CCLS. Although teachers adapt modules to address the needs of some students, not all teachers ensure that the curriculum is adjusted to address the needs of specific subgroups. Science and social studies teachers were able to work on curriculum development over the summer. The school leader reported that he is hopeful that the budget will allow additional curriculum work to take place in summer 2014.
- Evidence from a review of documents showed that the school has provided appropriate access to pedagogical support, materials, and training to teachers aligned to CCLS curricula and instructional shifts for individual and subgroups of students. Teachers have had many opportunities to unpack the CCLS and the accompanying modules. For example, the school leader provided release time as well as common planning time daily for staff to work on aligning the curriculum with the CCLS.

Impact Statement:

While some teachers align plans to the CCLS, the school staff lacks a systematic plan to develop curricula that aligns to CCLS across all content areas, which limits teachers' ability to consistently provide curricula that prepares students 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:

- Develop and implement a systematic plan for CCLS and/or NYS standards aligned curriculum
- Ensure the plan includes protocols for monitoring and adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of all students including sub-groups

3.3 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** Teachers develop and ensure that unit and lesson plans used include data-driven instruction (DDI) protocols that are appropriately aligned to the CCLS and NYS content standards and address student achievement needs.

Overall Finding:

Teachers are beginning to develop unit and lesson plans that align to standards. While some plans are based on data, teachers inconsistently use data to guide instruction.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school leader reported that he provided PD opportunities for all staff to help staff understand the importance of data-driven dialogues as they work together to address the needs of all students. However, a review of documents and lesson observations demonstrated that teachers inconsistently use data to guide instruction across content areas. The school has adopted a common lesson plan format that many teachers use. However, there is no indication on the plans reviewed how data were used to

develop those plans. For those lesson plans reviewed that were on a template that included an area for re-teaching strategies, there were no strategies listed. In some classrooms visited, teachers used modules from *EngageNY* and, therefore, instruction was closely aligned to the CCLS. However, reviewers noticed that most teachers inconsistently incorporated the instructional shifts, including using complex texts.

Impact Statement:

The inconsistent use of data to guide instructional decisions diminishes opportunities for student growth in meeting the demands of the CCLS.

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 teachers are using data to inform their unit and lesson planning

3.4 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader and teachers have developed a comprehensive plan for teachers to partner within and across all grades and subjects to create interdisciplinary curricula targeting the arts, technology, and other enrichment opportunities.

Overall Finding:

The school leader and some teachers are beginning to form partnerships to develop Interdisciplinary units and lessons targeting the arts, technology, and other enrichment opportunities. However, staff lacks a formal plan to ensure all teachers participate in interdisciplinary planning.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- A review of documents showed that some teachers are developing interdisciplinary units targeting the arts and other enrichment opportunities within and across grade levels and subjects. The school leader reported that teachers of art, music, technology are beginning to use strategies from PD on the CCLS to include more literacy and math into their lessons. One example of this is an art project where students designed monsters and built them from clay. Each figure depicted something the students might be frightened of and included written paragraphs explaining how the design of the monster represented the fear. Some core content teachers are incorporating the arts into their lessons. For example, a social studies lesson on the Shang Dynasty included an article on the age of bronze and the artwork made from bronze during that time. Although occasional lessons are interdisciplinary in nature, there was no evidence of overarching, interdisciplinary curricula. The school leader reported that he is examining the master schedule to make changes to provide time for vertical team meetings to allow teachers more time for collaborations. However, the current schedule does not provide all teachers the opportunity to participate in interdisciplinary planning.
- The school leader reported that he is proposing the development of a credit bearing manufacturing class as an elective in the middle school, which will give students an opportunity to earn high school credits before entering grade nine. Currently teachers minimally use technology in their lessons. During visits to classrooms reviewers found that while some teachers used SMART Boards, most used the SMART Boards in place of blackboards or as screens for PowerPoint slides.

Impact Statement:

Teachers are beginning to collaborate to plan interdisciplinary lessons; however, the lack of a formal plan to ensure all teachers explicitly develop interdisciplinary curricula limits students' exposure to curricula targeting the arts, technology, and other enrichment opportunities, which hinders increased students academic achievement.

Recommendation:

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

- Develop a comprehensive plan for teachers to meet and plan interdisciplinary curricula, especially targeting the arts, technology, and other enrichment opportunities

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:

Teachers are engaging in formative and summative assessments but lack a comprehensive system to consistently use assessments and data to plan and/or revise curricula. As a result, students are not engaged in reflecting on their learning.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- One of the priorities of the school leader is to foster data-driven dialogue about teaching and learning. Although teachers are collecting data from their assessments, any dialogue they have about results is not part of a comprehensive system to guide the development or revision of curricula. The school leader shared that teachers are in the process of creating assessments that require higher-level thinking on the parts of students. During classroom visits, reviewers observed mainly low level questioning and students filling in worksheets. In addition, a review of several lesson plans showed that assessment prompts listed are also low level and will not result in actionable information for the teacher, for example "teacher circulation from person to person" or "we will observe student activity."
- During interviews with students reviewers discussed in class assignments and assessments. One student shared that the class work does not prepare students for life. All other students interviewed agreed with this comments. Other comments by students included "it's not about learning stuff; it's about getting good grades." Students interviewed also shared that they spend a lot of time in class focused on getting ready for tests. The students also shared that they do not talk with teachers about their grades and learning. One student commented, "Sometimes I don't even know what I'm doing, but I just do it to get a grade." During class visits, reviewers saw few examples of teachers providing feedback to students to encourage students to take part in their own learning.

Impact Statement:

Teachers inconsistently use assessment to inform their curriculum or provide feedback to students that allows them to take greater ownership of their learning, which hinders student achievement.

Recommendation:

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

- Develop a comprehensive system for teachers to use assessment data to inform curriculum planning.
- Monitor teachers use of assessments and feedback to ensure that they engage students in reflecting on their learning and taking ownership for their success.

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
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Debriefing Statement: The culture of the building is generally positive with a school-wide behavioral intervention program in place. While there is evidence of CCLS expectations across grade levels and content areas, implementation is inconsistent. Lessons and instructional practices are rarely executed in ways that support sub-groups of students. Data is not consistently utilized to inform instruction. Instruction rarely demands higher order thinking. As a result, students minimally engage in their learning, which hinders academic progress.

Strengths:

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

Areas for Improvement:

4.2 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** School and teacher leaders ensure that instructional practices and strategies are organized around annual, unit, and daily lesson plans that address all student goals and needs.

Overall Finding:

Some teachers are using instructional plans and practices that are informed by data and meet the needs of students but these practices are inconsistent across the grades.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- School leaders and teachers are collecting data around student achievement. The school leader reported in interviews that data-driven dialogues and planning are a priority and teachers receive PD on this topic. However, discussions with teachers as well a review of documents demonstrated that teachers inconsistently use data to drive instructional decisions. During classroom visits, the review team saw minimal evidence of differentiation of instruction aimed at meeting the needs of all students in the class. At a grade level meeting, where teachers were to discuss the student goals for raising grades to passing, a team of teachers spent most of the meeting recording failing grades on a spreadsheet and very little time on discussing strategies to address high rates of student failure. In addition, the meeting ended with no decisions or action steps established.

Impact Statement:

The lack of consistent use of data to inform unit and lesson planning results in, instructional practices that do not target the needs of students to help them meet their academic goals.

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 teachers understand how to use the data they collect to inform their instruction.
- Develop and implement supports/interventions to address failing students

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

Overall Finding:

Teachers are beginning to align lessons with CCLS; however, teachers across the school do not consistently implement CCLS practices in lesson delivery. In the majority of classes, students are compliant but not engaged. Instruction and questioning are low-level and not challenging for students.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- During class visits, the IIT found that some teachers incorporate instructional shifts such as using complex materials but most teachers are asking low-level questions. Reviewers saw few examples of instruction differentiated for different levels of learners. In classes with English Language Learners (ELLs), no efforts were made to support their developing language. Reviewers noted that in classes with co-teachers, teacher used practices such as underlining vocabulary words and finding the definition, which did not promote higher-level thinking. The desks in some classes were arranged in groups. However, students in the group did not engage with one another around their work.
- During the vertical teacher meeting, teachers said they have PD that addresses the CCLS and some teachers work with coaches. Teachers also reported that they are beginning to monitor progress and identify gaps but believe their involvement in several new initiatives affects their ability to implement and monitor the CCLS practices with fidelity.

Impact Statement:

Teachers inconsistently use instructional practices and strategies that foster higher-level thinking in students, which reduces opportunities for students to engage in their learning to achieve greater 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:

- Monitor instruction to ensure that teachers are incorporating appropriately aligned CCLS, including instructional shifts, in their lessons. Ensure teachers' lesson provide multiple points of access for all

students.

- Continue to provide CCLS training focusin on topics such as differentiated instruction and higher-order questioning.

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:

Although school leaders and staff are in the process of designing programs and supports to create a responsive learning environment, the current learning environment does address all students' strengths and needs.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school has a long-standing behavioral plan in place Patience, Kindness, Academic excellence, Working together, and Safe and in control (PAWS) This program uses incentives such as tickets for individual students to redeem for prizes and rewards for classes such as field trips or other activities. Parents and the older students shared that when grade six students come to the middle school they are very enthusiastic about PAWS but their interest wanes as they move through the grades. Some students say they feel safe at school and that if they had some problems they would know an adult to contact. Although most students were compliant during classroom instruction, reviewers found few example of students actively engaged in their lessons
- While students in both the large and small student focus groups said they feel comfortable asking questions in class, they shared that that some other students did not. They said some students feel embarrassed because some teachers get angry if students do not understand the material. One student shared that some teachers "don't treat students of lower ability like they should be treated." The school leader and teachers reported that they are aware of the demographics of their school and are in the process of addressing the needs of various sub-groups by tailoring some learning activities to their needs but acknowledged that staff is still working to ensure that these practices are consistent across all grades and content areas..

Impact Statement:

While some teachers acknowledge and support diverse groups, not all students consistently feel intellectually and physically safe at school.

Recommendation:

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

- Ensure teachers plan and implement lessons that address students varying needs.
- Ensure teachers implement consistent behavior expectations school-wide. Provide opportunities for students to become more aware of diverse groups.

4.5 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** Teachers inform planning and foster student participation in their own learning process by using a variety of summative and formative data sources (e.g., screening, interim measures, and progress monitoring).

Overall Finding:

Some teachers are beginning to use data from assessments to inform their planning. However, students are not often receiving feedback so they are not active participants in their own learning.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- Evidence from a review of documents showed that teachers are collecting assessment data from tests and from on-going classroom assessments. However, during classroom visits, reviewers found limited evidence of teachers using the data to drive instruction. Some teachers used checks for understanding such as asking students to do “thumbs up” if they understood the material. While some students cooperated and put their thumbs up, down, or sideways, teachers seldom acted on the information by rephrasing or further explaining the work. The predominant method of administering formative assessment was for the teacher to circulate around the room and stop to help or question students individually. Students in the focus groups shared that teachers do not usually review assessment results with students. For example, students reported that they took benchmark assessments such as the Acuity test at the beginning of the year and again in January but teachers did not discuss the results of these assessments with them. Although there are some limited examples of teachers providing written and oral feedback to students based on tests and their work, these practices are inconsistent and the quality of feedback is limited because it does not clarify to students the exact steps that need to be taken to bring about improvements in their work or academic performance.

Impact Statement:

Teachers are collecting some data on student achievement from tests and classroom assessments but teachers inconsistently discuss the data collected with their students or provide quality feedback, which hinders student engagement and increased student achievement.

Recommendation:

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

- Develop a comprehensive plan to ensure teachers use a variety of ways to assess their students formatively
- Ensure that teachers share assessment data with students and help them identify next steps in their learning.

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

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement:

The school has a number of programs and processes for identifying and supporting the social emotional needs of

students. Student support staff collaborates with teachers and school leaders to create individualized plans to support student well-being and are beginning to coordinate with community partners to strengthen support opportunities. Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) implementation promotes positive behavior through rewards and incentives and encourages positive character traits through a teacher delivered curriculum. However, inconsistent implementation of the incentive program is limiting its optimal effectiveness. Although the school community is safer, and more orderly than in the recent past, the school environment is not always conducive to learning.

Strengths:

5.3 **The school has received a rating of *Effective* 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 staff has programs that align to the vision and provides positive learning experiences for students that support a healthy school environment.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school has many programs including the school's PAWS program, the six Pillars and the PBIS program to support and foster student social and emotional developmental health. The school's vision statement includes the following "...our shared experiences with diversity cultivate lifelong understanding and acceptance. Respect, integrity, and fairness foster our safe learning environment." The staff reported and a review of documents confirmed that the school implements PBIS in conjunction with the PAWS program and the six pillars character program. Posters around the school reinforce the principles behind these programs. There is a character education program as part of PBIS, which is delivered by classroom teachers and aims to educate students about the six pillars. Each month a different character trait is highlighted. When reviewers were in the building, the trait of fairness was displayed throughout the building.
- Teachers and staff members receive lessons along with a calendar for when teachers should teach the lessons. The SST provides PD to the teachers to help them implement the lessons. The parents in their focus group reported that they believe the school is going in a good direction. Teachers agreed that the culture of the school continues to improve and is much better than it was several years ago.

Impact Statement:

The school promotes programs that align with the school's vision for student social and emotional developmental.

5.5 **The school has received a rating of *Effective* 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:

Data are continually collected, analyzed, and applied by the school leader and student support team to support student needs.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The student support team provided many examples to the reviewers regarding the structures in place to address student needs. For example, RTI meetings take place every week. The Team consists of the math teacher, the ELA teacher, the social worker from the district, school psychologist, guidance counselor, and parent when appropriate. Academic and behavioral data are used to plan strategies and interventions for students. Grade level teams and/or parents can refer students to the RTI Team. Students who are not responsive to the interventions are referred to the Committee on Special Education (CSE.) In addition, counselors meet with every team once a week. A daily message board alerts staff of which students staff will discuss at the meeting. Additional on-going meetings include data meetings every Monday morning with the school leader, “High Flyers” meetings four times per year to discuss those students with Tier 3 interventions, and the Truancy Abatement group, which meets every fifteen weeks.
- The Instructional Support Team (IST) meets once a month. Staff facilitates various support groups for students, such as anger management, organizational skills, Safe Dates, the girls group, and the boys group every eight to ten weeks. IST staff members track the effectiveness of these groups by administering pre- and post-tests on what the students have learned. Student support staff, including the school nurse, the district’s Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) coordinator, and the school resource officer (SRO) all track data to monitor how behavior and academics are improving. In an effort to evaluate these systems, the guidance department administers a survey each year to track what the school staff thinks they are doing well. The PBIS committee also administers a survey to track their progress and sends a monthly newsletter to parents, which addresses past and upcoming events and offers a breakdown of behavioral data.

Impact Statement:

The school staff uses data to address student developmental health, which increases students’ chances of being academically and socially successful.

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 leader is in the process of establishing overarching systems to address student social and emotional health. Together with the SST, he uses data to direct dialogue about students. Staff is supported in the use of PBIS. Although some students receive support, there is less support for students who are not manifesting obvious behavioral issues.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- While the school leader has many structures in place to ensure that at-risk students receive support, the students who are not overtly “at-risk” of demonstrating behavioral issues, including ELLs and students with disabilities receive less attention. For example, students take part in a “check and connect” system where they must check in with an adult who monitors their work and activities each day. However, there is not a system or program to ensure all students has a designated adults who knows the student well and monitors his or her academic success. Procedures are being developed to meet the social and emotional needs of students but there is a way to go to ensure that they cover all aspects of social and emotional developmental health and that systems of referral are consistently applied across the school.
- The school leader ensures that all staff is involved in furthering the principles of PBIS and that they deliver the monthly lessons on character traits as outlined in the six pillars the school has adopted. Additionally, teachers participate in the PAWS program to incentivize students to “do the right thing” by rewarding them with tickets and chances to win trips and other prizes like an ice-skating party. Students, teachers, and parents shared with the review team that PAWS is well-received by grade six students who have just come to the middle school. Seventh graders are still somewhat interested in the competition, but by the time students are in grade eight the program has lost its appeal and students are no longer engaged. Teachers inconsistently administer the recognition program. For example, some teachers hand out tickets for when students provide a correct answer while other teachers give tickets only when students accomplish difficult tasks. The students in the focus group recognized this and concurred that the program is often unfair.

Impact Statement:

The systems in place are effective in addressing the barriers to academic and behavioral success that “at-risk” students face. However, not all students are yet benefitting from being known well by a designated adult.

Recommendation:

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

- Expand the “check and connect” system to ensure that each and every student, including ELLs and students with disabilities, has the benefit of a designated adult to help monitor and reinforce the student’s academic success
- Revisit and revise, if necessary, the protocols surrounding the PAWS program

5.4 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** All school stakeholders work together to develop a common understanding of the importance of their contributions in creating a school community that is safe, conducive to learning, and fostering of a sense of ownership for providing social and emotional developmental health supports tied to the school’s vision.

Overall Finding:

The school leader is in the process of engaging all school stakeholders in addressing the social and emotional developmental health of all students.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- Through the PBIS program, classroom teachers deliver monthly character education lessons, which have been prepared by the student support team. Teachers understand the referral process and volunteer to be on several committees including the RTI team and the Site Council, for example. The student support team provides PD to the staff during staff meetings so everyone is well-versed in the processes and procedures being used to support students. During the vertical teacher focus group teachers said in the absence of an interventionist, they monitor students within their own teams and work together to come up with successful strategies for the student. Teachers reported noticing improvements in students' behavior and grades. The school leader shared that he is reluctant to suspend students for minor offences, believing that being in school is the most important thing. He is working with teachers, the dean, and the SRO to use methods to de-escalate situations rather than immediately punish students.
- When students in the large student group were asked if they felt comfortable going to someone at the school if they had a problem they agreed that they would go to a guidance counselor and/or a teacher if they had a good relationship with that teacher. They also agreed, however, that some teachers had favorites in the class and that students who got good grades could "get away with more before they got in trouble." Students said there were still fights in school about once a week but they do not get involved.
- Parents interviewed by the review team shared that the school leader is an asset to the school, maintains good communication with them, and is approachable by parents and students alike. However, parents did not specifically share what role they played in supporting students' social and emotional developmental health.

Impact Statement:

Many members of the school community recognize the importance of their role in achieving the goal of creating a safe learning environment. While several systems are in place, the inconsistent contributions of some stakeholders results in not all students' social and emotional needs being met.

Recommendation:

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

- Review discipline procedures with staff to ensure consistency
- Provide PD in de-escalating tense situations/classroom management.

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

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: Family members feel welcome at Geneva Middle School. The school uses a number of mechanisms to communicate pertinent school information. However, school communications with parents in languages other than English is minimal and not all families have been empowered to understand and use data to advocate for appropriate support services for their children. Consequently, not all parents are able to fully

support their child's education.

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:

The school leader recognizes the need for regular communication with families and is in the process of reviewing current outreach to families. However, school staff does not yet ensure all families receive consistent communication about the school's expectations for student achievement. .

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- School staff communicates with parent in different ways including sending mailings of quarterly reports cards, five-week interim reports, and RTI reports giving information about interventions taking place. The school staff also sends homes to families of students with disabilities mandates about special education and schedules with timelines. School staff are required to call home twice a quarter to give updates on at-risk students.
- The school leader reported that staff is improving communication with non-English speaking families and is developing a plan to communicate the school's academic goals to these families. The school staff translates Individual Education Plans (IEPs) into Spanish as needed. However, reviewers found limited evidence that staff is specifically sharing expectations for high student achievement with families.

Impact Statement:

Staff has not ensured that all families are aware of the school's expectations for student achievement, which limits some families from supporting their children to achieve at higher levels.

Recommendation:

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

- Monitor and evaluate current communication methods with families and adjust where needed.
- Develop and implement a plan to ensure school staff consistently communicates the school's expectation for student achievement to all families.

6.3 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school engages in effective planning and reciprocal communication with family and community stakeholders so that student

strength and needs are identified and used to augment learning.

Overall Finding:

The school is developing a plan to ensure reciprocal communications with families. However, the school does monitor communications to ensure all families can consistently engage with the school.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school's Site Council, consisting of three to four teachers, the school leaders, and six to seven parents, has designated family involvement as their focus for this year. Early in the school year the school held an ESL night where fourteen parents, more than half of the ESL families came to school for dinner and the opportunity to talk with teachers. The school staff has scheduled a Family Fun Night for students and their family members to play games and enjoy the pool. The school leader reported that all families were invited but that ESL families also received special phone calls. The school leader recognizes that transportation to the school may be a problem for some parents who live within the Geneva city limits. He and other staff have made the effort to hold meetings at one of the housing projects where many of the families live, rather than expect them to come to the school building. The school has a family liaison position available and the school leader has made the district aware that he wishes to fill that position with an individual who is Spanish speaking in order to foster communication with the Hispanic families in the school. However, current translation services are minimal. For example, not all documentation and correspondence sent to families is translated into the languages of the community that the school serves.
- Reviewers found limited evidence to indicate that the school staff monitors communication. Evidence from discussions with parents and school leaders indicate that the school has yet to evaluate the effectiveness of the systems and tools it uses for communicating with parents.

Impact Statement:

The school is creating a plan to ensure reciprocal communication with families. However, limited modes of communication and inconsistent monitoring, hinders some families from supporting their child's academic and social success at optimal levels.

Recommendation:

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

- Develop a plan to use multiple tools, translated into languages represented in the school, to engage families in their child's education.

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

Overall Finding:

The school is beginning to hold events where parents can learn about ways to support their children's academic achievement. However, parent involvement is still low. Although teachers receive PD in areas that will help them support students, teachers have minimal opportunities to participate in PD that promotes ways to foster family

engagement.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school has many partnerships with community agencies. In an effort to have families understand the opportunities available to their students, the school staff invites many of these agencies to have an information table at open house night, ESL night, and during Family Fun Night. Some of the partners include Sylvan Learning, Hobart College, and the Local Community Center. Although these partners provide enrichment and academic support to students, reviewers found limited evidence of partnerships focused on trainings for parents.
- The student support team shared with reviewers that they value parent input and invite them to anything pertaining to their child such as the RTI Team meetings and the Truancy Abatement committee. The student support team organizes information programs for parents and students as they move from grade five to the middle school and from grade eight to the high school. The team makes home visits if they feel it would be easier to meet parents in their homes than to have them come to school. They also provide workshops that feature tips for parents, including strategies they may wish to use to help their children in school. Although there are several offerings for parents, attendance and engagement are not yet at a high level.
- There are few successful strategies that teachers are using to ensure that parents continue to be engaged in and support their child's academic success. Discussions with teachers indicate that they have not benefited from PD specifically designed to equip them with skills to build sustainable partnerships with families.

Impact Statement:

Although the school has offers some workshops and activities to support families, the lack of formal plan to provide PD to all staff on promoting family engagement diminish opportunities for students to benefit from a strong home-school connection.

Recommendation:

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

- Share strategies with teachers on how to create and sustain family engagement

6.5 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school shares data in a way that promotes dialogue among parents, students, and school community members centered on student learning and success and encourages and empowers families to understand and use data to advocate for appropriate support services for their children.

Overall Finding:

The school shares data with families about student learning. However, not all families are empowered to take action to advocate for their child.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school shares data in the form of student report cards, interim reports, and state assessment results.

In addition, parents receive results from any screenings or psychological testing that is done with their child. The student support staff meets with parents to explain these tests and teachers are available to discuss student progress with parents. The parents in the focus group said that communication is much better this year than in the past and that teachers get back to them with much more consistency than before. They also shared that some of their friends say that they really do not know what is going on at school most of the time. Some parents are empowered and others are not. Some parents reported they are not consistently provided with guidance and support on interpreting and understanding the data that the school shares with them.

Impact Statement:

Although some parents reported that they receive and understand data, the school does not consistently share data in a manner that empowers all parents to advocate on behalf of their child. As a result, some parents are limited in their ability to work in partnership with the school to increase their child's chances of 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:

- Develop a plan to ensure that all parents understand the data that is shared with them and the implications for their child's academic achievement.