



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	512201040001
School Name	Norwood-Norfolk High School
School Address	7852 State Highway 56, Norwood NY 13668
District Name	Norwood-Norfolk Central School District
School Leader	Robin J. Fetter
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	9-12	Total Enrollment	244	Title 1 Population	23%	Attendance Rate	95%				
Free Lunch	34%	Reduced Lunch	11%	Student Sustainability	87.7%	Limited English Proficient	0%	Students with Disabilities	12.3%		
Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes											
#Transitional Bilingual	0	#Dual Language	0	#Self-Contained English as a Second Language		0					
Types and Number of Special Education Classes											
#Special Classes	8	#Consultant Teaching	1	#Integrated Collaborative Teaching				0			
# Resource Room	9										
Types and Number Special Classes											
#Visual Arts	9	#Music	5	#Drama	0	# Foreign Language	6	# Dance	0	CTE	11
Racial/Ethnic Origin											
American Indian or Alaska Native	1.63%	Black or African American	2%	Hispanic or Latino	.81%	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	.4%	White	93.85%	Multi-racial	.81%
Personnel											
Years Principal Assigned to School	13	# of Assistant Principals	0	# of Deans	0	# of Counselors / Social Workers		1			
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	0	% Teaching Out of Certification	0	% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp.	1	Average Teacher Absences		7.8%			
Overall State Accountability Status (Mark applicable box with an X)											
School in Good Standing		Priority School		Focus District	x	Focus School Identified by a Focus District			SIG Recipient		x
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	75	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	97	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	83	4 Year Graduation Rate (HS Only)		82			
Credit Accumulation (High School Only)											
% of 1 st yr. students who earned 10+ credits	0	% of 2 nd yr. students who earned 10+ credits	0	% of 3 rd yr. students who earned 10+ credits	100	6 Year Graduation Rate		76.2			

Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA			
	American Indian or Alaska Native		Black or African American
	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
X	White		Multi-racial
	Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient
	Economically Disadvantaged		
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics			
	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		
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		
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.):

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS DESCRIBED BY THE SCHOOL:

1. Eighty percent of mentored students that were selected and assigned to mentors in September 2013 will make one-year academic growth by August 30, 2014.
2. Teachers will use DDI, creating interim assessments to evaluate student knowledge and refine teaching strategies and curriculum.
3. Teachers will use Chunking Content into Digestible Bites, the teaching strategy in Domain 1 from Marzano's Rubric, as a daily classroom practice to engage students.
4. Professional learning communities will work as a department to align curriculum and teaching practices by using DDI, common core curriculum, and writing samples to improve student learning.

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

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

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

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

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

3.5	Teachers implement a comprehensive system for using formative and summative assessments for strategic short and long-range curriculum planning that involves student reflection, tracking of, and ownership of learning.			X	
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 3: DEVELOPING				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: EFFECTIVE				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: DEVELOPING			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: DEVELOPING			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	E
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Debriefing Statement: The school leader effectively uses available resources in the school community, and the school leader has fully implemented the district’s Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) evaluation system. The system provides staff with frequent and ongoing feedback. The specific, measurable, ambitious, results-oriented, and timely (SMART) goals, as written in the School Comprehensive Educational Plan (SCEP) drives many school actions, while the school leader is working to develop evidence-based systems with and for staff. Because of these strategic decisions and actions, the school is able to put forward a focused and concerted effort to improve student achievement.

Strengths:

2.2 **The school has received a rating of *Effective* for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader ensures that the school community shares the SMART goals/mission, and long-term vision, inclusive of core values that address the priorities outlined in the SCEP.

- The school leadership are able to articulate the major goals in the SCEP as well as to demonstrate the usage in many classrooms visited. Data-Driven Instruction (DDI), implementation of Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), chunking, and the establishment of professional learning communities are all areas around which the school developed goals over the summer. As noted during the review of documents and interviews, the school leadership team revisits the SCEP on a regular basis to note progress or the lack thereof toward the established goals, and considers the need to readjust and reevaluate the plan to accommodate the students and staff. Though not all goals are precisely written as SMART, the goals express the processes and expected results. An example is the establishment of the school mentoring program, in which students who are behind academically are assigned to a teacher/mentor in the school who they can meet with every week to get guidance. The goal of “80 percent of mentored students that were selected and assigned to mentors in September 2013 will make one year academic growth (gain 5.5 credit hours) by August 30, 2014” meets the criteria of SMART goals. Other goals, such as the use of data to drive planning and instruction were less SMART, and more process oriented, “Teachers will use DDI (Data-Driven Instruction), creating interim assessments to evaluate student knowledge and refine teaching strategies and curriculum.” The SCEP is tied directly into school actions. Input, feedback and knowledge of the school goals, mission and vision is shared by almost all stakeholders with the school leader already working on ensuring parents are more actively involved in shaping some of the school goals.

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.

- Though the school is run on a very tight budget, having lost seven teachers over the past five years due to fiscal constraints, the school leader has tapped into many additional resources and processes to ensure that the school and student needs are being met. She has applied and received numerous

School Improvement Grants (SIG) which help the school foster several initiatives, including the push to add the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and corresponding professional development (PD). Also detailed by the school leaders, vertical teacher focus group and Student Support Group (SSG) was the “Elective Fair” in which students met with advisors to determine what classes they will need to take for certain vocations, colleges, and professions. This was also the main driver in assisting the school leadership in the development of the school master schedule. There is an informal extended learning program, which is voluntary for both students and teachers, where many students receive additional instruction for up to a half hour after the school day ends. In the high school over the last five years, the English language arts (ELA) department has lost one teacher (from four to three). Social studies has lost one teacher (from four and a half to three and a half), math has lost one teacher (from 4 to 3), as well as the loss of one science teacher, one technology teacher, one music teacher and a physical education teacher. The school leader articulated that these losses were not in conjunction with a corresponding decrease in student enrollment. This loss of human capital has resulted in a loss of elective classes for students and the addition of “singletons,” in which only one offering of an elective is provided, causing students to have to choose one elective over another due to scheduling conflicts. Also resulting from the positional cuts are larger class sizes. To help offset these losses, the school leader has strategically reached out to several community organizations, such as St. Lawrence University, who sends over tutors to work with some of the high school students, as well as Potsdam University, which has a student teaching program that partners with the high school. The Liberty Partnership Program runs through a federal flow-through grant, and offers additional tutoring through a certified teacher two days a week after school. Though the school leader has dealt effectively with the loss of several teaching positions, this attrition has had a negative impact on the school’s ability to offer the student body the breadth of coursework to meet the current and future needs of its students.

2.4 **The school has received a rating of *Effective* for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader has a fully functional system in place aligned to the district's Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) to conduct targeted and frequent observation and track progress of teacher practices based on student data and feedback.

- The school leader, vertical teacher focus group, and student support team (SST) could all articulate the adherence to the district APPR as well as the school leader’s frequent and on-going classroom visits, resulting in actionable feedback. The teachers are observed three times a year, as per the district contract. There is an effort, supported by the school leader, and teachers, which decreases the number of formal evaluations to two. There was a misunderstanding when the New York State Education Department (NYSED) first introduced APPR; the belief was that to be in compliance, the district needed to conduct three formal evaluations. If the number is reduced to two, both the school leader and vertical teacher focus group stated that a third meeting would take place, in which Data-Driven Instruction (DDI) would be discussed between the teacher and school leader. Currently, the school uses the Marzano Model for Domain 1, and all staff have received the packet, and reviewed it with the school leader individually, as well as during multiple faculty meetings. The vertical teacher focus group also stated that a walk through visit, which identifies areas of need, might trigger a formal observation. Typically, the school leader provides feedback on the same day that the visit is conducted. At the end of the year, the school leader meets with each teacher to discuss progress towards the school year goals, goals for the upcoming school year, and uses the

Marzano teaching rubric to connect these elements to a standard of practice. Lesson plans are collected periodically, and written feedback is provided on areas to improve. To further support the efforts to train teachers in effective processes, all teachers are sent to the Effective Teaching Workshop, and some are sent a second time, if it is deemed necessary, due to areas such as a lack of strategy usage. There is also a Teacher Improvement Plan (TIP), where the school leader meets with the teacher and lays out areas of concern that need to be improved upon. In some cases, teacher mentors are assigned to work with struggling teachers. The adherence to a consistent SCEP-aligned teacher evaluation system led to a common understanding of school-wide instructional expectations and a process in which feedback has a positive impact on teacher performance.

Areas for Improvement:

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).

- Although the school does have systems in place, based on best practices that support professional development (PD), the effectiveness of these systems is not regularly monitored, as there is a lack of protocols and processes to do so. The school has put forth initiatives in DDI, but there is no system in place to measure its effectiveness, nor fidelity of its usage, to determine if its existence and usage are helping students learn better. When the school leader was asked what percentage of teachers use DDI in classrooms, the response was that it was the expectation, but the percentage of classes using DDI on a regular basis was not provided with any data to support her response. The STAR assessment is given to each grade three times a year, but the school leader was unable to articulate any data from this assessment to demonstrate that any school initiative was having a positive impact on teacher effectiveness or student achievement. There was evidence to indicate that the STAR was being used to level books for students, but there was no data to support that this leveling was having a positive impact on student achievement. The school developed a Focus Team, who worked on the development of the SCEP and its goals, and the team discusses this plan several times a year to determine if it is still meeting the needs of the school community, and if changes need to be made. The lack of evidence-based systems obstructs the school improvement process, as it does not provide the school leader and staff with a means to measure what works and what does not work for the school community.

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
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Debriefing Statement: There is provision for professional development and access to pedagogical support toward the implementation of aligned CCLS to SMART goals taken from New York State Content Standards. Teachers are developing lesson plans and protocols, which include DDI protocols. Consequently, teachers are beginning to use data to align the curriculum to assessment, leading to improved student achievement. The impact on improving student achievement is yet to be fully realized.

Strengths:

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

- The school is implementing an aligned CCLS curriculum, which is supported by PD, school leaders, and various systems. The school has bought into the CCLS and it fully uses the EngageNY website to access curricular modules, as they are being developed by the State. The school professional learning communities and DDI teams, which sometimes are the same, provide regular information, strategies, and support for teachers in implementing CCLS. The school leader also meets with professional learning communities, DDI teams, and teachers individually to review progress towards CCLS and to provide training and support in doing so. There has been Board of Education Cooperative Services (BOCES) training in the adoption of the ELA and Algebra modules, and there was evidence that the math modules have been modified to meet student needs. A review of documents revealed that there is a plan to ensure the targeting of goals to meet the needs of students. The superintendent's email message is forwarded to all staff members; in this way, "best practices" are relayed to teachers. Some staff members have attended national and New York State training sessions, and have provided turnkey training upon their return, where they highlighted differences between the old and new curriculums through gap analysis. Ninety-five percent of staff agree or strongly agree that the curriculum has well-done units and lesson plans, while 58 percent of the staff believes that their curriculum is aligned to the CCLS. Some challenges exist in CCLS implementation because the State is developing some areas, such as Geometry, and these are provided to schools just as the school year begins. Sixty-four percent of classrooms visited by the review team contained elements of the CCLS and 59 percent contained shifts. The ongoing implementation of the CCLS has focused the school towards the alignment and merger of subject matter and improved instructional strategies.

Areas for Improvement:

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.

- Though many lessons viewed by the review team contained elements of DDI protocols, there is a gap between the presence of DDI, and its alignment to the CCLS and their corresponding shifts. According to the school leader, although many teachers are collaborating, by developing unit and lesson plans based on DDI, through participating in professional learning communities, there is still a steep learning curve. "Much of this is in transition as we adopt the common core and the modules are updated on EngageNY." Staff agrees, with 42 percent stating that they have "sufficient knowledge of CCLS and able to integrate into my instruction." The school leader added that "with the adoption/adaption of the modules, teachers are discovering that there are gaps in instruction; however, more time is needed to address these gaps. There are plans for the school to purchase "as

the budget allows” new literature and supporting materials for all classes that are better aligned to the CCLS. The school leader emphasized, “We have implemented DDI to evaluate learning and make adjustments. With experience and time, this will become more effective.” In the vertical teacher focus group, the teachers all conferred that they work with the department heads to determine if the assessments were in alignment with NYS Modules and CCLS. Based on that data, teachers decide what needs to re-taught. The teachers in the vertical teacher focus group also spoke to the CCLS/Modules being taught, stating that they realized while teaching the modules that there were gaps in student knowledge of what was being taught and what was being assessed. This has resulted in a greater emphasis on the modification of curriculum. The review of documents confirmed that all core teachers, and many non-cores, are participating in the DDI instructional process. Though DDI is not being implemented in a way, which influences all instructional and curricular decisions, the process is becoming a more regular part of the school planning process.

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.

- The school leader acknowledges that there have been some struggles when creating interdisciplinary units. “As we adopt the common core curriculum and use the modules in Engage NY, we are concerned that, at times, the literature does not easily lend itself to the social studies curriculum. Prior to this, the social studies and English courses were aligned with literature supporting the curriculum. However, we have incorporated shifts in all subject areas based on the ELA and math.” In the PLC meeting notes, there is documentation of grade nine core teachers who have Friday lunch meetings to discuss interdisciplinary connections with *Of Mice and Men*, integrating social studies, art, and English. Other interdisciplinary pairings include English and social studies to teach the French Revolution, *Animal Farm*, and *The Crucible*. This was corroborated by the vertical teacher focus group, who detailed interdisciplinary meetings and planning across the school. The school leader and staff are developing partnerships in the absence of formal plans, and are in the process of developing interdisciplinary curricula plans targeting the arts, technology, and other enrichment subjects, such as robotics and environmental science with colleges in the area. Of the 22 classes visited by the review team, four of them exhibited evidence of interdisciplinary planning and implementation, and 41 percent of staff agree or strongly agree that they have sufficient knowledge of CCLS and are able to integrate the CCLS into their instruction. The implementation of interdisciplinary planning is still in its early stages at the school. Therefore, it is not providing opportunities for students to experience the interconnectedness of the curriculum and the world.

3.5 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** Teachers implement a comprehensive system for using formative and summative assessments for strategic short and long-range curriculum planning that involves student reflection, tracking of, and ownership of learning.

- Though DDI has been implemented, as well as the Marzano model for formative and summative assessments, evidence supporting instructional and curricular changes based assessments is limited. Likewise, student ownership of learning is not a prevailing occurrence. Formative assessments were

noted in half of the classrooms visited by the review team, though the review team noted that re-teaching or modifying the materials was not done regularly. While 89 percent of staff believes that they give students regular and precise feedback throughout lessons, only 44 percent of students agree or strongly agree that they receive helpful feedback from their teachers. The teachers use E-Doctrina, which is an interim assessment, standards-aligned, which provides teachers with an item analysis of student competency in certain skills. The STAR is also administered three times a year to gauge each student reading level and skill set. According to the school leader, teachers post grades within three days. “Most teachers share summaries of grades regularly with students....Rubrics are used for writing assignments and projects and shared with students prior to assigning works.” According to the vertical teacher focus group, rubrics are being used in some classes, and students substantiated this in the student interview. Though there is evidence to support the use of assessments as a means of determining student ability and knowledge, the lack of pedagogical modification based on data hinders the school’s ability to provide targeted individualized instruction to its students.

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 are making progress with creating and teaching units and lessons that are appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), but need to increase the amount of higher order and complex thinking skills that are included in each lesson and unit. Classroom cultures are positive, and school-wide behavioral practices are used throughout the school where teachers have fostered a respectful, compliant school environment, in which all stakeholders feel safe.

Strengths:

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

- The school leader has set expectations, and corresponding supervision to ensure that the teachers prepare their lessons to address student goals and needs. The school leader states and teachers confirm that they have had PD in data driven instruction and that DDI meetings are held by departments, often times through professional learning communities. The school leader also detailed how she meets with each teacher several times a year to review lesson plans and discuss student data, and their application to the planning process. The vertical teacher focus group confirmed both the meetings with their respective departments as well as with the school leader. The review of documents included DDI meeting notes and agendas throughout the school year. The school leader and committee on special education (CSE) Chair state that teachers have had on-going PD in meeting academic needs of students in areas such as creating modifications, co-teaching, and working with students coming from homes of poverty. The vertical teacher focus group also confirmed this. Classroom visitations by the review team also found evidence of teachers using plans and objectives in 16 out of 22 classrooms visited. The teacher leaders who facilitate the PLC and DDI are beginning to work with groups of teachers to use data to establish short- and long-term

goals for students through periodic and scheduled meetings. They stated that they have been working on this for the past six months. Evidence of goal setting is found in the student-mentoring program, but is not widespread throughout the departments. While 83 percent of staff members state that they review student data on a daily/weekly basis to plan instruction, only 49 percent of students agree or strongly agree that in class “students work together in different ways.” The school review team noted nine instances of DDI in the 22 classrooms visited (41 percent). The recent school adoption of DDI and the modification of lessons to meet student needs allow better-tailored instruction to meet the needs of a larger percentage of learners.

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

- The school has created a climate and culture conducive to learning, while differentiated instruction and other strategies used to promote tailored lessons for student needs is a school-wide expectation. In all 22 classrooms visited, the behavior in each was positive and free of negative behavior. The school leader stated that this is so ingrained in the staff and students that “no one really thinks about it (good behavior in the classroom) anymore. It is an expectation.” During the classroom visits, each classroom and hallway had behavioral expectations posted, and during every classroom visitation, all classrooms evidenced 100 percent of student participation/engagement in the classroom lessons and activities. Students and teachers demonstrated respectful behaviors, such as greeting each other by name, asking if additional help was needed, and looking at the teacher during lessons. Teachers were observed asking students if they had more or different questions in 18 out of 22 classes, and in an Algebra class, the teacher varied the level of questioning, based on the individual learner. One teacher asked students to see her after class if they had certain circumstances at home that would prevent them from completing a student/family homework assignment. The school’s drive to meet the needs of its learners is creating opportunities for students to succeed.

Areas for Improvement:

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

- The school has adopted the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), and, while the implementation of the CCLS and shifts is not regularly administered or monitored, it is evident that the majority of teachers use them regularly. During review team classroom visits, 13 of the 22 classrooms observed (59 percent) showed that teachers are using the CCLS, materials, and shifts in their lesson plans and instructional practices. In the staff survey, 59 percent of staff agree or strongly agree, “They prepare lessons that purposefully include specific elements of CCLS,” and 71 percent of staff state that they implement CCLS elements such as close read, text-based evidence, and writing from sources. However, only half of the classrooms observed contained evidence of higher-order thinking or related strategies and are using complex grade-level texts for instruction based on classroom visitations. During the vertical teacher focus group interview, the teachers

spoke of chunking materials, and of creating lesson plans, which were relevant and had real world applications. The PLC folder contained detailed meeting minutes centering on posting lessons objectives (16 of 22 classrooms visited had posted objectives), chunking material and formative assessments. The implementation of CCLS and shifts is uneven and not leading to consistent academic progress for students.

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

- The school regularly uses summative or formative assessments, though the application of these assessments to plan for instruction, or to advocate for student ownership of learning, is not regularly done. Only two of 22 classes visited by the review team used grouping as an instructional strategy. While teachers gather formative assessment data through quizzes and by monitoring student work during lessons (in 17 out of 22 classes), little evidence was noted that showed this data being used to adjust grouping of students. While the student survey stated that 25 percent of teachers sometimes use rubrics to provide feedback to them, all seven students in the student interview reported that they approach teachers to gain feedback and get extra help. This contradicts the staff survey in which 77 percent of staff believes that they use a variety (greater than 10) of formative assessments and 89 percent of staff state that they actively check for understanding, engaging students at different points throughout the class. The lack of assessment usage to drive curriculum and instructional strategies impedes the school’s ability to teach to every learner.

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: Although the school lacks many formalized structures and systems pertaining to student social and emotional developmental health, the review team found that the school was safe, with classrooms and common areas free of negative student conduct.

Strengths:

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

- The school provides several support systems, both school-based and community-based, which support the ranging social and emotional development of its students. The school has a mentoring program, which pairs students with staff members who provide on-going support to up to three students, on a weekly basis. This program services approximately 25 percent of the student body, with the explicit expectation that 80 percent of its participants gain a minimum of 5.5 credit hours each year they are mentored (SCEP goal). The school leader, as well as most staff members, is in the

corridors in the morning, greeting students as they enter the school. According to the vertical teacher focus group, students who seem a “little off” are pulled aside and asked if they are all right, and may be referred to a counselor if they are not doing well. The school is in the process of adopting a child study team, which would provide a formalized system for student referrals, involving school leaders, teachers, staff, support staff, and families into evidence-based discussions when a child is not functioning well socially, emotionally, or academically. In the meantime, teachers in the vertical teacher focus group stated that when a child needs additional supports, they usually refer that child to the counselor, and are “coached” on the next step in the process. Though the school automatically generates a letter to parents when a child begins to miss more than an average of two days a month, data is not typically used in a systematic way, which would automatically trigger a school response. The school leader and counselor meet weekly, and review student data, such as referrals, attendance, and grades of some students to note progress, and use this information to plan “next steps” in the referral process. The school leader acknowledged that not all staff members use data to identify students who may not be having their social and emotional needs met. According to the vertical teacher focus group, this is an area, which is discussed by most staff, but not by all. In a May 2013 student survey, 72 percent of students agree or strongly agree that they have people to go to if, they are having a problem and that they have guidance in planning their future and 79 percent of students agree or strongly agree that the teachers treat them with respect. However, a comprehensive, systemic process to monitor its students’ social and emotional needs has not yet been adopted by the school; multiple informal processes are effectively used to ensure student health and well-being.

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.

- The school provides several programs in which data is used to refer students, though there are gaps in the application of data systems to identify students with social and emotional needs. The SST works with the school leader and staff to review long-term profile, standardized testing, school performance (report cards, Regents), as well as data from school tool, which is an online system for parents to get academic and behavioral information in regards to their child. The team also reviews medical records, attendance, psychological reports to determine what best supports are needed to provide the proper care and attention to its student body. The SST acknowledged that currently these systems function in a fragmented manner, and they have discussed with the school leader some systems to provide a more formalized approach to students’ social and emotional care, through the development of a child study team, which would gather all of the student referrals and information in an organized way, and make decisions accordingly. The Committee on Special Education chair also discussed the desire to add a part-time social worker, who would be shared with another district to alleviate costs. She believes that this new position would be a bridge builder between families and schools, or families and resources. Though the school provides some overlapping data and processes to identify students who have additional social and emotional needs, the formation of a well-known structure and corresponding systems could create an environment whereby a standard of service and care would be established.

Areas for Improvement:

5.3 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school articulates and systematically promotes a vision for social and emotional developmental health that is aligned to a curriculum or program that provides learning experiences and a safe and healthy school environment for families, teachers, and students.

- Both the school and community organizations offer many programs to promote a safe and healthy environment for school stakeholders; however, there is not a clearly articulated system, or curriculum, aligned to meet this end. Though some members of the school community talked about Positive Behavioral Intervention Services (PBIS), as a means to establish behavioral norms and school operations, every school staff member does not formally support PBIS within the school. The school leader stated that teachable moments are used to address social issues inside the classrooms, as well as the code of conduct, which stresses appropriate behavior. Though there is no formal curriculum that addresses social and emotional health, the health curriculum does address social and emotional issues. The school works with local agencies to support student issues, such as smoking cessation, Person In Need of Supervision (PINS), which assists the school and families with student attendance issues. It also provides staff with a variety of workshops to address student needs, such as PBIS, poverty training and a unique training through the Hospice Program, which trained staff in grief counseling after a suicide deeply, affected the community in November of 2013. Many of the staff interviewed stressed that over 20 staff members attended that voluntary Sunday training. A group of school leaders and teachers attended poverty training, and they shared the information garnered through a turnkey training process. Though the aforementioned components of social and emotional health are addressed through a variety of resources, the lack of a strategic school vision and corresponding plan to meet these students needs allow some student needs to go undetected and unmet.

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 vision.

- Although, students, staff and parents, described the school in a positive manner, there is a lack of ownership and enthusiasm concerning the school vision and culture by the majority of students. In a survey given to school stakeholders in May of 2013, only 22 percent of students agreed “that the school is upbeat and positive”, and 20 percent of the students state that “they like being at school”, while 37 percent agreed that “they feel welcomed at the school.” During the Parent Interview, when asked if parents feel welcomed, responses were “Yes and no” and “It could be more open.” One parent stated that the school wants help but “doesn’t always want to know what you have to say.” Thirty-three percent of students surveyed agreed that, “I am encouraged to share my opinion and thoughts about school.” The school leader stated that she wants teachers to send positive postcards home with regularity, so that some communication home from the teacher is seen as a positive thing. The school leader and the vertical teacher focus group that kids need to know you care about them. The graduation rate last year was “around 90 percent” which was an increase over the previous year (81 percent). The school has added college prep programs in evenings for

parents: three to four in the fall and in the spring for juniors and seniors. To celebrate the success of academic achievers, the school holds a “Dessert Night” where the top 10 percent of the students in each class, and their parents, are rewarded with treats, served by the teachers. In regards to enrichment and extracurricular activities, 68 percent of students stated that they are involved in at least one club or organization and 86 percent agreed, “That they have the opportunity to participate in athletics and sports.” Though these opportunities exist for the vast majority of students, students and parents believe that they are not true partners in the school decision-making process and this limits the school’s ability to use both the talents and support of these stakeholders.

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

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: The school fulfills its mission and ensures that communication with students and their families is regular, ongoing, and uses a variety of methods, which foster high expectations for student academic achievement, although the sharing of and conversations surrounding some forms of student achievement data are limited. While the school collaborates with several community organizations to provide information and supports for students and families, partnerships between the school and families to promote family engagement are not sufficiently developed.

Strengths:

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

- The school leader ensures that the families receive regular and on-going communication to detail the school events, accomplishments, and all related information. Much of the correspondence and communication with parents reinforces school commitment to raising academic achievement. There are also many events at the school to inform parents of academic areas of importance. The school uses a website called “School Tool” in which the parents can access their child’s grades, attendance, referrals, and other information in real time. Though the school leader does not have information on the number of parents who use this site, she believes that its use has contributed to the decrease in parent attendance for the twice- held Report Card Day/Night. Another website developed for parents by the guidance department provides high school, college, and career information to parents. The school holds a college night, where parents and students learn about colleges, programs; the guidance department holds annual meetings with families to discuss educational options after graduation. Guidance counselors also meet regularly with members of the senior class to assist in the college application process and possible scholarship opportunities. The SUNY (State University of New York) “roadshow” visits the school each fall, where the representatives of New York State colleges and universities inform students about their programs. Seniors attend a Gateways job and career fair in which they present resumes and participate in mock job interviews, and various branches of the military come to the school to talk about career opportunities with the students. “Dessert Night” rewards the top 10 percent of academic achievers

and the school has tried to bring parents into the school, albeit unsuccessfully, with a “Pizza Night.” There is also a Freshman Orientation for students and their families in which both expectations and opportunities are laid out. The school listens to the views of parents and takes on board comments to strengthen links between the home and school for the benefit of students.

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

- The school reaches out to families in order to provide information and resources to compliment students’ strengths and to supplement their needs. Parents were able to articulate that they are able to interact and work with staff in order to “identify student needs.” Teachers “communicate students’ progress” to families and parents credited the school for having tutors in the building four days a week. Additionally, the parents articulated that the school has a communication system in place with regular emailing, newsletters, and a parent web site. School staff have participated in activities reaching out to parents and 82% of staff agree or strongly that they “actively engage families in conversations around students’ needs/progress.” Positive postcards are being sent home this year for the first time to families to acknowledge and celebrate positive student success. Sixty-four percent of staff agree or strongly agree that as a school, “we are effective in maintaining the home connections,” and 73 percent of staff agree or strongly agree that, “our quality/frequency of communication with families is sufficient.” During the vertical teacher focus group meeting, one teacher stated that he uses new technology to send texts to his students reminding them of assignments and upcoming school events, while other teachers stated that the school leadership expects them to communicate regularly with their students’ families. Though the school leader and community searches for ways to further engage its families, it has increased its outreach efforts, in an effort to foster greater cooperation and support with its stakeholders.

Areas for Improvement:

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.

- Though the school community partners with families and community agencies on a frequent basis, there is no formalized plan to help parents in ways to support their child’s learning and growth, and there is no current PD plan to teach staff members how to develop partnerships with families and community agencies. Current partnerships are facilitated mostly through an ad hoc system whereby partners, who have the resources to help the school and community, meet the school needs. Similarly, the school staff is encouraged to go out of their way to work with families and collaborate with agencies when the partnership makes sense. According to a staff survey administered in May of 2013, 50 percent of staff stated that they agreed or strongly agreed, “They have successfully built the school/home partnership.” An example of the school collaborating with a local university is the school relationship with Clarkson University Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) program, where students meet once a week to work with members of the university to design a robot, culminating in a competition. Some training for parents include the Committee on Special

Education, and on-going academic and college nights, where the school and other organizations educate parents on opportunities at the high school as well as after graduation. A Parent Teacher Association (PTA) member noted that her son had a bullying experience, and that the school took care of the situation immediately. The staff noted that several members attended training on the impact of poverty, and then provided turnkey training. Though the needs of the families and community seem to be met by school efforts, there is no formalized, systematic plan to ensure that the staff and families are fully trained with no gaps left to chance.

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

- The school shares some forms of information with families, however, several pieces of academic data are not shared. Parents interviewed by the review team did not understand the relevance of the data, and did not know how to interpret it. Though the school holds meetings with parents to review grades, it does not communicate STAR reading data, which is administered three times a year, and identifies student reading levels. It does not inform parents of the results of the E-Doctrina interim assessment scores, which are administered in English and math several time a year, and serve as an interim assessment. There is a formal mentoring program, which uses data to track student progress, and communicates this information to families. In addition, School Tool, the online student informational portal, allows parents to get their child's grades in real time. During the parent interview, interviewees stated that the school emails parents with updates on an on-going basis, sends home newsletters with regularity, holds multiple parent nights. In addition, both the school leader and most teachers call the parents at home to relay information pertaining to their child, and to invite them to upcoming events. The school also has a Parent Liaison, currently a voluntary position, which reaches out to families, communicating with them on important school information and linking families to school and community resources. Though the school makes efforts to communicate data and other important pieces of information to its school community, there is no system in place to gauge its effectiveness and, as a result, families are lacking data or other information, which could contribute to their child's well-being and academic success.

Recommendations:

Tenet 2: School Leader Practices and Decisions

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the concepts in the Effective column of Tenet 2 the school should:

- 2.5: The school should do an inventory of all of its systems and programs, determine why each exists, and set up an evaluation system to determine if these programs are effectively helping its stakeholders in the way in which there were intended.

Tenet 3: Curriculum Development and Support

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the concepts in the Effective column of Tenet 3 the school should:

- 3.3: Provide staff with on-going training on data-driven instruction (DDI), and identify teachers whose methodology and implementation could be emulated by other teachers through a pilot program. Continue to coordinate professional learning communities with DDI discussions.
- 3.4: Schedule formal planning time for the core teachers to meet with non-core teachers to develop units together; that integrate literacy and makes interdisciplinary connections among all subject areas.
- 3.5: Have teachers write their formative assessments into their lesson plans, planning for students who will grasp the material within the prescribed amount of time, and for those who will need it to be retaught.

Tenet 4: Teacher Practices and Decisions

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the concepts in the Effective column of Tenet 4 the school should:

- 4.3 Ensure that all teachers plan for and ask challenging questions so that students' learning is enhanced and their knowledge and understanding assessed.
- 4.5: Have teachers cite the use of data in their unit and lesson plans, which take into account E-Doctrina, STAR, and other forms of summative and formative data. Have teachers include a corresponding action plan, taking this data into account, which details the modification of curriculum and instructional strategies, based on stated data.

Tenet 5: Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the concepts in the Effective column of Tenet 5 the school should:

- 5.3: Through a school-based team made up of students, parents, teachers, community groups, and school leaders, develop an articulated mission and system, which supports student social and emotional health.

- 5.4: Develop a School Pride Team, in which members of the school community discuss ways that would create more enthusiasm, pride, and ownership by the school stakeholders.

Tenet 6: Family and Community Engagement

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the concepts in the Effective column of Tenet 6 the school should:

- 6.4: Provide training for teachers and school staff that promote effective ways to form partnerships with parents and members of the school community.
- 6.5: Share all student data with parents, and explain its relevance to parents and engage stakeholders in conversation of how to interpret results. Discuss what the data means in terms of where their child is currently performing, and what the school and family can do together to move their child forward.