



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	12160160002
School Name	Sidney Elementary School
School Address	15 Pearl Street East, Sidney NY 13838
District Name	Sidney Central School District
School Leader	Robert Hansen
Dates of Review	March 25-26, 2014
School Accountability Status	Focus School
Type of Review	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet											
Grade Configuration	UPK-6	Total Enrollment	607	SIG Recipient	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Title 1 Population	school wide	Attendance Rate	94%		
Free Lunch	49%	Reduced Lunch	12%			Limited English Proficient	1%	Students with Disabilities	9%		
Number of English Language Learner Classes											
#Transitional Bilingual		0		#Dual Language		0					
Number of Special Education Classes											
#Self-Contained		4		#Consultant Teaching		3		#Integrated Collaborative Teaching			0
#Resource Room		0									
Number of Special Classes											
#Visual Arts	7	#Music	19	#Drama	0	#Foreign Language	3	#Dance	0	#CTE	0
Racial/Ethnic Origin											
American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	Black or African American	1%	Hispanic or Latino	6%	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	1%	White	89%	Multi-racial	4%
Personnel											
Years Principal Assigned to School	1		# of Assistant Principals	0		# of Deans	0		# 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.	23%		Average Teacher Absences	5%	
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	22%		Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	39%		Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	89%		6 Year Graduation Rate		

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		All Students
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Math			
	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		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		

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS DESCRIBED BY THE SCHOOL:

1. **Improve student achievement on state and local assessments across all grade levels and in all content areas.**
2. **Provide staff development in accordance with Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) as well as district and regional level assessments.**
3. **Align curriculum vertically. Ensure the rigor of the curriculum aligns with the rigor of state, local, and regional assessments.**
4. **Support CCLS implementation through professional development including instructional coaching and walkthroughs, focusing on instructional strategies and planning that are necessary for full CCLS implementation.**
5. **Enrichment opportunities will be offered in the summer of 2013 and 2014, as well as during the 2013-14 school year.**

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

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
2.2	The school leader ensures that the school community shares the Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Results-oriented, and Timely (SMART) goals/mission, and long-term vision inclusive of core values that address the priorities outlined in the School Comprehensive Educational Plan (SCEP).		X		
2.3	Leaders make strategic decisions to organize programmatic, human, and fiscal capital resources.		X		
2.4	The school leader has a fully functional system in place aligned to the district's Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) to conduct targeted and frequent observation and track progress of teacher practices based on student data and feedback.			X	
2.5	Leaders effectively use evidence-based systems and structures to examine and improve critical individual and school-wide practices as defined in the SCEP (student achievement, curriculum and teacher practices; leadership development; community/family engagement; and student social and emotional developmental health).			X	
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 social and emotional developmental health needs.			X	
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 5:				D	

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

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

School Review – Findings, Evidence, Impact and Recommendations:

Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions: Visionary leaders create a school community and culture that lead to success, well-being, and high academic outcomes for all students via systems of continuous and sustainable school improvement.	Tenet Rating	D
<p>Debriefing Statement: The school has established clear goals and a vision that is understood by the school community. School leaders are using resources strategically to create opportunities for student growth. However, the school is beginning to develop systems to monitor improvement efforts and to develop staff ownership the vision and hold them accountable for student success.</p> <p>Strengths:</p> <p>2.2 The school has received a rating of <i>Effective</i> 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).</p> <p>Overall Finding: The school has established goals and a vision that are driving school improvement efforts and activities.</p> <p>Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school has established clear, measurable goals for student achievement. The school’s SCEP establishes target reading levels based on the Fountas and Pinnell Literacy Benchmark Assessment system, with a goal of 85 percent of students within one level of the target and all students within three months of the target. The school also set targets for each grade on the state English language arts (ELA) and math assessments that would allow the school to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) with an overall goal of 65 percent proficiency, which would double the previous year’s performance. In addition, the school included a goal to have 20 percent of students achieve Level 4 in ELA and math compared to 7 and 6 percent respectively in the previous year. Finally, a specific goal for students with disabilities was also included in the SCEP, aiming for 60 percent achieving Level 2 or higher compared to 13 percent in ELA and 18 percent in math in the prior year.• The goal of measurably raising student achievement is well known by stakeholders in the school community. Teachers and parents understand the school is focused on raising academic achievement. The SCEP goals are printed on posters and displayed in hallways throughout the building. In addition, school leaders present to the school board data on student performance and the actions taken to ensure continued progress. Data is collected and compared to the region and the state with detailed charts showing the school’s rank. Interviewed teachers described specific learning targets, such as levels on the Fountas and Pinnell reading assessment and the number of high frequency Fry words they expect their students to learn by the end of the year.• School leaders have established clear priorities for achieving the goals that are understood by the school community. These include implementation of Common Core aligned curricula, use of formative assessments to inform planning, instruction, and intervention, and ongoing professional		

development (PD) to support rigorous and engaging instruction.

Impact Statement: The uniformly seen, heard, and known long-term vision is supported by goals that improve student achievement.

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

Overall Finding: The school leader is strategically using resources to bring about school improvement and increased opportunities for student success.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- School leaders have made strategic decisions to organize human resources in the school. They met over the summer to review staff members and place them in specific grades and subjects based on identified strengths and school needs, including the past performance of individual grades. The school had a large number of open teacher positions this year, and in grades five and six, all but one teacher is new. School leaders described a more active and deliberate role in the hiring process compared to past practices and worked to align hiring decisions to the needs and priorities of the school. The school added a second counselor position to support students and has an ELA coach and a math coach to support teachers. In addition, the school is using external resources. For example, Fountas and Pinnell assessments are administered externally to limit disruption to instruction, and substitute teachers cover classes for teachers so they can participate in professional development (PD) activities.
- The schedule has been organized to ensure teachers have time for planning and addressing individual student needs. Every student has an academic support period (ASE) during which teachers organizes students into small groups to receive targeted support or to go to the computer lab to work on self-paced learning programs. The school leader coordinated the schedule this year so lower grade teachers can have access to students during the daily physical education period and provide additional targeted support. Scheduling has been a challenge because the school shares some staff with the middle and high schools; as a result, not all grades have the same amount of common planning time.
- Recognizing that teachers are managing a number changes this year, the school leader said that he pays them for additional time devoted to developing pacing guides and common formative assessments (CFAs). Each teacher received about ten hours of paid workshop time over the summer to support planning for Common Core implementation and during the year, teachers are paid for grading their CFAs. PD and ongoing coaching from school and district staff, including a literacy specialist, support these activities.
- In response to identified shortages, the school invested in technology and computer-based instructional programs and resources in order to provide students with more individualized learning and to provide teachers with more opportunities to develop assessments and work with small groups of students. The Read 180 program is used for literacy intervention and students use self-paced programs, such as Compass Learning, Imagine Learning, and IXL in the computer lab on a regular basis. In addition, Right Reasons Technologies (RRT) and Test Whiz provide online resources,

such as item banks, to teachers for developing assessments. The school's popular robotics program is being expanded to offer more students the opportunity to engage in project-based learning.

Impact Statement: Available resources are aligned to the school's vision and goals and address the immediate needs of the school community by providing more opportunities for individualized small group instruction and intervention.

Areas for Improvement:

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

Overall Finding: The school has a system in place for monitoring and evaluating teacher performance and providing them with feedback, but is only beginning to hold teachers accountable for student performance.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- While there is a district APPR process based on the NYSUT rubric and formal observation protocols, the school leader shared that the school is developing its own parallel non-evaluative system for observing teachers and providing them with feedback. The school leader stated that by using a non-evaluative walkthrough tool, school leaders are able to foster the development of teacher practice and a document review demonstrated that leaders have conducted approximately 50 walkthrough observations. In addition, teachers shared that the walkthroughs and the subsequent feedback they receive from mentors is helpful. However, the review team found that the protocols for the walkthroughs and the feedback given are inconsistent as these are at an early stage of development.
- School leaders regularly review teacher pacing guides and CFAs and provide input into their development. They acknowledge these processes are a work in progress as they continue to provide teachers with training and feedback to improve planning and use formative assessments to drive instruction. Similarly, the school introduced new summative interim assessments this year in the form of RRT benchmarks, which will be used for measuring the student learning objectives (SLOs) of teachers in kindergarten through grade two. While the assessments used in the past were unreliable, the new benchmarks are more rigorous and school leaders are beginning to use results to monitor student growth and teacher effectiveness.

Impact Statement: Although the school is developing a system for observing teacher practice, administrators and staff are not consistently held accountable for continuous improvement, which hinders student success.

Recommendation:

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

- Establish a process aligned to the district's APPR, which results in the accurate assessment of teacher strengths and areas for growth and holds them accountable for increasing student performance; encourage teacher ownership of professional growth through reflective strategies, such as data analysis, peer observation, and self-observation as well as the sharing of impactful

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 leaders are developing evidence-based systems to examine and improve critical school-wide practices.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- School leaders are closely monitoring the implementation of Common Core-aligned curriculum through participation in planning meetings and review of pacing guides that teachers develop and submit. However, oversight is limited to ELA and math, with less attention to other subjects. In addition, the school is just beginning to leverage teacher leadership by identifying teachers to share best practices and to participate in additional PD and turnkey it for other staff members.
- School leaders are beginning to implement a walkthrough process to monitor classroom instruction and to drive improvement. Additionally, the school leader shared that an analysis of walkthrough and assessment data led to a change to the school's ELA program in the lower grades to emphasize guided reading in leveled groups in the middle of the school year.
- The school has used protocols to review some key practices. For example, school leaders undertook an assessment review process that found teacher-created assessments were not sufficiently rigorous. As a result, the school shifted from its past practice of quarterly assessments to using RRT benchmark assessments three times per year. School leaders stated that they are analyzing benchmark and Fountas and Pinnell data as well as reviewing formative assessment data and comparing results to past years. Further, the school leaders shared that they are using the results in decision-making about teacher placement, technology investment, curriculum and assessment development, and PD planning. However, the review team found limited evidence of the school using data to inform decisions about parent engagement and student social-emotional development.
- The school has invested heavily in computer-based instructional programs, which provide data about student performance. However, teachers raised concerns about the rigor and alignment of some programs and the review team found that school leaders have made limited use of available data to evaluate the efficacy of these programs. While school leaders and teachers reported that the Read 180 program has raised student achievement, there was little evidence of the impact of Imagine and Compass. In addition, school leaders stated that they are beginning to explore how effectively teachers are assigning specific learning objectives on these computer-based programs and acknowledged that teachers are just beginning to learn how to use these resources strategically.

Impact Statement: The inconsistent use of evidence-based systems limits the school's ability to measure progress toward critical school-wide goals and 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:

- Ensure that rigorous procedures are in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of systems to drive school improvement; ensure that weaknesses in the school performance are addressed in order to improve student learning and achievement.

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

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: The school is in the early process of developing and implementing Common Core-aligned curricula and working to address student needs. The school is focused predominantly on ELA and math with less emphasis on other subjects and cross-curricular connections. The school is collecting a range of data, but is not using the data to inform curriculum planning. Feedback to students is inconsistent. As a result, the school has not achieved its student performance goals.

Areas for Improvement:

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

Overall Finding: The school is focused on developing and implementing curriculum that will allow all students to achieve Common Core standards, but its efforts have not yet resulted in sustained improvement in student achievement.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school leader has established clear expectations for using Common Core-aligned curriculum, but the shift to more rigorous curriculum is a work in progress. The school leader stated that teachers are building their understanding of the standards, and how to use them, and teachers stated that they are grappling with CCLS-aligned curriculum and developing a common understanding of rigor. Further, teachers noted that aligning learning objectives to formative assessments is a new priority this year.
- School leaders stated that mid-year walk-throughs demonstrated limited focus on complex reading and writing skills being taught in classrooms, which led leaders to have teachers focus on guided reading and the instructional shifts.
- The school leader stated that a priority is differentiation through small group instruction, but the review team found limited evidence of differentiation during classroom visits. Teachers noted the expectation that they use small group instruction within their classrooms and during the ASE period, with every student experiencing some form of small group instruction at least once per day. Guided reading with leveled text, centers, and stations are used so teachers can work with small groups of

students while other students work independently. In addition, teachers all noted the use of computer-based learning programs that differentiate instruction and provide them with the opportunity to work with small groups. While these strategies were observed in use in classrooms, there was limited evidence of differentiated curriculum within centers and stations, limiting their ability to meet the needs of individual students.

Impact Statement: The curriculum does not consistently meet the needs of all students, which hinders student college- and career-readiness.

Recommendation:

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

- Continue to provide opportunities to develop teacher skills in planning and developing curriculum based on backwards design principles that align with Common Core standards and assessments. Establish a clear and common understanding of rigor to inform the selection of curriculum materials, including appropriate texts, problems, and tasks.

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 do not consistently develop unit and lesson plans that include DDI protocols and align to the CCLS to meet student needs.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school leader shared that staff developed ten-week units to organize the curriculum and teachers shared that there is a new process this year for developing monthly pacing guides for each grade and subject, aligned to the CCLS. Further, teachers reported that they break the standards down into sub-standards, which they prioritize for teaching and that district staff, coaches, and a literacy specialist all work with teachers to support this work. However, teachers shared that they were still developing their understanding of the new curriculum. As a result, the review team found that teacher lesson plans were not consistently aligned to the CCLS.
- A review of documents demonstrated that teachers do not consistently use data to inform their unit and lesson plans and meet student needs. Further, documents indicated that teachers are not incorporating a variety of complex materials or higher-order thinking skills that challenge and engage students into their plans.

Impact Statement: The inconsistent alignment of plans to the CCLS and DDI protocols hinders student 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:

- Continue to develop and adopt curriculum in all subjects that is CCLS-aligned, supports the

instructional shifts, and provides multiple access points for all students; ensure that planning and instruction reflects the use of complex learning materials and higher-order thinking skills.

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: Teachers do not consistently develop interdisciplinary curricula targeting the arts, technology, and other enrichment opportunities.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- Interviews with school leaders and staff demonstrated that the school is focused on ELA and math instruction. However, students stated that there was less time for science, social studies, band, and other subjects aside from ELA and math this school year. Discussions with teachers and a review of documents showed that while there are some examples of content from other subjects being incorporated into ELA and math, this was done informally and not as part of a strategic plan. Teachers shared that they have limited time to plan interdisciplinary learning together as they are focused on CCLS implementation. The school leader stated that he is aware of the need to improve interdisciplinary instruction, and is working on a plan to address this next school year.
- Classroom visits demonstrated that there is not a consistent use of technology to support and enhance student learning.

Impact Statement: Students do not have consistent opportunities to engage in cross-curricula activities that increase their understanding and 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:

- Enhance interdisciplinary connections across subjects to engage students and deepen their understanding of content. Ensure that best use is made of technological resources to enhance the quality of student learning.

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

Overall Finding: Teachers do not consistently use assessments for curriculum planning that involves student ownership of learning.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school is in the process of modifying its assessment program this year to set higher expectations for student learning that align with the CCLS. This involves shifting from quarterly assessments to benchmarks developed by RRT. Discussions with teachers, and a review of documents, demonstrated that teachers have access to a wide range of assessment data and that school leaders

expect that teachers analyze and use the data to inform curricular decisions. However, the review team found that teachers do not consistently use data to plan instruction to meet student needs.

- Students shared that they receive feedback from teachers in different ways. While some student stated that they never receive feedback or test scores from teachers, others stated that teachers use rubrics with them to evaluate learning. Further, the review team found that teachers do not consistently provide students with feedback that empower them to take ownership of their learning by providing students with clear next steps for improvement.

Impact Statement: The inconsistent alignment between curricula and assessment hinders student academic growth.

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 data is analyzed and used to inform curriculum decisions to meet student needs; develop clear expectations for providing students with actionable feedback and fostering student ownership of learning, such as through the use of rubrics.

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: The school has established an environment that is conducive to learning. Staff members are developing and beginning to use assessments to inform pedagogy, but do not consistently differentiate instruction and provide instruction that is consistently rigorous and engaging. As a result, students do not consistently experience high levels of learning and achievement.

Strengths:

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.

Overall Finding: The school provides an environment that is generally safe and conducive to learning.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The review team observed that students were respectful and friendly in public spaces and that the transitions between classrooms were smooth. Rules and expectations for learning were posted in most classrooms, and students complied with behavior expectations and rules. A review of documents demonstrated that few serious discipline issues have taken place this year and students stated that the school was a safe environment where they have access to supportive adults. Further, students stated that they could receive extra help if they need it, during elective classes, study hall, ASE, or lunchtime.
- During instruction, students were on task and teachers redirected students who were off task back

to the learning activity. The school leader stated that the adoption of the CCLS has made teachers less likely to send a student out of the classroom for behavior problems, as teachers feel increasingly accountable for student academic performance. The school has provided training in classroom management through an external consultant and access to a video library. In addition, teachers are beginning to implement classroom discussions to foster community and belonging.

Impact Statement: The learning environment provides students with the opportunity to learn and achieve.

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: Teachers do not consistently ensure that instructional practices are organized around plans that address student needs.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- Teachers are expected to create and submit monthly pacing guides that are informed by the results of CFAs and benchmark assessments. School leaders are working closely with teachers to ensure that these guides are rigorous, aligned to CCLS, and incorporate opportunities for re-teaching skills and content identified by assessments. However, classroom visits and discussions with teachers and school leaders showed that this is work in progress, as teachers are at different stages in respect to instructional planning and the use of data.
- The school is continuing to refine its guided reading program, which was introduced mid-year, to ensure that teachers meet the needs of all students by grouping them based on reading skills. Teachers have reorganized their literacy block to facilitate small group instruction. In addition, the school's literacy specialist pulls groups of students for guided reading based on Fountas and Pinnell reading levels, but teachers shared that this did not begin until March. School leaders and coaches continue to work with teachers on planning for effective implementation of the guided reading program, but the review team found that this work was inconsistent across the school.
- Teachers are learning to use computer-based programs to support student needs and goals. However, the review team found that not all teachers set specific goals for students that outline a pathway for learning that reflects their targeted needs.

Impact Statement: Teacher instructional planning practices and goal setting do not consistently promote high levels of student engagement and inquiry, 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:

- Ensure that teachers use data to inform instructional planning to meet student needs and to set clear and measurable goals for student learning.

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 do not consistently provide coherent CCLS aligned instruction that leads to multiple points of access for all students.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- School leaders and teachers shared the challenges of implementing the CCLS. As a result, the school leader is developing PD to support teachers in aligning instruction the CCLS and the instructional shifts.
- During classroom visits, teachers did not consistently use questioning techniques that challenged students to develop higher-order thinking skills, or provide students with rigorous learning activities. In some classrooms, the use of the state modules provided frequent opportunities for students to cite text to support and explain how they arrived at an answer and some students were challenged to demonstrate conceptual understanding. For example, in a math classroom, students had to explain why answers to a word problem were not correct. However, in many classrooms, questions were low-level and procedural.
- During classroom visits, the review team found that instruction did not provide multiple points of access for all students. For example, in some classes students finished tasks and then sat waiting for other students to complete the work while having nothing else to do.
- The ASE period is designed to provide targeted instruction to students based on individual needs, and school staff described this as a work in process. However, this period was not always maximized with rigorous instruction, as some teachers used it more as a study hall or recess opportunity. In addition, some students reported that computer-based instruction was not challenging. Similarly, although teachers used centers and stations to promote small group instruction, there was limited evidence of differentiated materials to engage students at appropriate levels.

Impact Statement: Instructional practices do not consistently lead to high levels of student engagement and achievement.

Recommendation:

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

- Ensure teachers use questioning techniques and tasks that challenge students to develop higher-order thinking skills; differentiate materials, tasks, and instructional methods to meet student needs.

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: Teachers do not consistently use data to inform planning or to foster student participation in their own learning process.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school leader shared that the assessment program is undergoing a change as the school moves from quarterly assessments to RTT benchmark assessments. The school is also participating in regional end of module assessments coordinated by the local BOCES that allow for regional comparisons. In addition, the school is administering the Fountas and Pinnell reading assessment three times per year to inform guided reading and intervention programs. Further, the computer-based programs provide additional data. However, discussions with teachers indicated that they are not clear on how to interpret and use the results of assessments to guide and inform instruction, and the review team found that that the teachers do not consistently use data to inform instruction.
- Teachers shared that the school expects them to develop and administer CFAs in ELA every two weeks and that teachers in grades three through six also must develop CFAs in math. As a new strategy, school leaders established common administration and scoring procedures to ensure reliability. As a result of this process, school leaders stated that teachers are beginning to better understand the rigor expected by the CCLS. Teachers in grades three through six conduct a formal item and standards analysis and are expected to use these results to create an instructional plan for their ASE period. However, school leaders noted that additional training is needed on how to use this data.
- Discussions with teachers and students and a review of documents demonstrated that teachers do not consistently set goals for students or monitor student progress. While some students shared that teachers use rubrics to help students know what to strive for and to self-assess their work, this practice is not consistent across the school. Further, students stated that teachers do not always provide them with feedback that guides them on what they need to work in improve their work.

Impact Statement: A lack of data-driven instruction and clear developmental feedback hinders student learning.

Recommendation:

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

- Continue to implement the CFA and RRT benchmark assessments with attention to alignment to the CCLS and the school’s curriculum.
- Continue to provide PD and support for teachers in the use of data to inform instruction, particularly with respect to planning differentiated small group instruction; provide students with timely and developmental feedback to help them take ownership of 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 systems and programs in place to address the social-emotional needs of students and provides teachers with some training and support in this area. While the school has community partnerships, it has not fully engaged parents in meeting the social-emotional needs of students. In

addition, the school does not have a strategic approach to using data to address student social-emotional needs. As a result, the school has not maximized resources in meeting the needs of all students.

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.

Overall Finding: The school leader establishes systems to support student social and emotional developmental health.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- Students and parents stated that students have adults that they can talk to if needed. The school leader shared that he hired an additional counselor this year to provide more support for students and students stated that the counselors and teachers were available to help them.
- The school-based intervention team (SBIT) shared that the team addresses behavior and academic issues by reviewing data, observing students, and consulting with adults who know the children. Student support staff said that they frequently consult teachers about their students and follow-up on referrals from both teachers and parents. Teachers are aware of the referral procedures and some noted that the SBIT uses strategies to address student social emotional-needs, including behavior systems and incentive programs. However, one teacher stated that the SBIT was only concerned with academic issues. Teachers and counselors work closely through frequent informal communication about students and their needs. For example, the review team observed counselors consulting with teachers about a student whose parent had been hospitalized.

Impact Statement: The implemented systems effectively address barriers to student social and emotional development health, which improves academic success.

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 articulates a vision for student social and emotional developmental health that is aligned to a curriculum or program.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school leader shared that the school adopted the Olweus Bullying Prevention program last year and the review team found that materials and resources were evident throughout the building that stressed character and good behavior. For example, hallways were named after character traits, such as "Responsibility Road," and a girl wore a shirt that said, "I stand against bullying." In addition, teachers facilitate weekly class meetings during homeroom to discuss issues of character and social-emotional development, though some students who participate in chorus or band have to miss this opportunity. Parents shared that there are anti-bullying assemblies and an

empowerment program called Girls on the Run. Interviews with staff and a review of documents demonstrated that the school provides Olweus training for staff and external consultants provide training for teachers on effective classroom management.

- Though the school does not have a formal Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) program, school leaders encourage the use of strategies to support positive behavior and a range of practices to encourage positive behavior were observed throughout the school. For example, many classrooms had class awards posted outside their door. Further, morning announcements are used to recognize students based on the number of books read and to share a brief life-skills strategy. In addition, grade six uses a token economy system involving “cool cash” to reward good behavior.

Impact Statement: Students learn in a safe and healthy school community, which improves student success.

Areas for Improvement:

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: All stakeholders do not consistently work together to develop a common understanding of the importance of their roles in supporting student social and emotional developmental health.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school has a school-based health clinic operated by the Bassett Health Care Network that provides physical, mental, and dental health services. Services are free for families without insurance. The school support staff, including the school nurse, maintains a close working relationship with the Bassett clinic. In addition, the county has placed caseworkers at the school to facilitate connections to outside agencies and community organizations. These caseworkers monitor students of concern, conduct home visits, and connect students and families to resources in the community. The school also has relationships with, and refers students to, Liberty Resources, Farnham Family Services, and the Child Advocacy Center. Further, the school has also established additional partnerships to address social-emotional health issues, such as the DARE program through local law enforcement.
- While the school has a parent organization and a goal of the SCEP is to establish a building level team that includes parents in decision-making, the review team found limited evidence of a formal plan that includes parents in supporting student social and emotional developmental health.
- Teachers shared that they understand their role in referring students to support staff and school leaders, and that clear systems are in place. However, the review team found that beyond the referral process, teachers do not have a clear sense of their own role in addressing the social emotional needs of students. For example, teachers reported that social emotional issues are not considered when forming small groups for instruction. Teachers also stated that the use of homeroom time is at their discretion and that while some teachers use it for community building, this is not a consistent practice throughout the school. The school leader shared that the school is working to implement weekly community meetings this year as part of ongoing development of the

Olweus program.

Impact Statement: Not all school stakeholders are actively involved in meeting student social and emotional developmental health needs, which limits student success.

Recommendation:

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

- Establish clear expectations for the roles of all stakeholders in developing the social-emotional health of students.

5.5 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader and student support staff work together with teachers to establish structures to support the use of data to respond to student social and emotional developmental health needs.

Overall Finding: The school does not have a consistent approach to collecting, analyzing, and using data to identify and meet the social-emotional needs of all students.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- Student support staff stated that they collect and use data in a variety of ways. For example, the school nurse reviews health records and communicates with parents and teachers about identified issues; the SBIT reviews data, observes students, and collects information from parents and teachers to develop strategies; and counselors confer regularly with teachers about their students. However, the school is in the beginning stages of formalizing these meetings and processes. Moreover, while the school has clearly articulated academic goals and systems for measuring academic growth and achievement, there is limited evidence of these practices in regard to student social and emotional developmental health.
- Teachers shared that while the SBIT was formalized this year, teacher understanding of its function and role is inconsistent. Student support staff indicated the SBIT is designed to address both academic and behavior issues, but some teachers thought the team only focused on academic issues. In addition, the SBIT is working to increase teacher involvement by helping teachers to implement strategies in their classroom to address student needs.
- The special education staff uses data to monitor student growth. For example, functional behavior assessments (FBAs) and behavior improvement plans (BIPs) are used to set goals and are regularly reviewed and updated. Similarly, students in special education have individualized education programs (IEPs) that outline social-emotional goals that are reviewed during annual meetings to determine whether needs are being met by the strategies in place. However, the review team found that teachers were not clear on the goals and strategies in the IEPs and were not using these to meet student needs.

Impact Statement: The inconsistent use of data to support student social and emotional developmental health limits student success.

Recommendation:

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

- Ensure the use of data to support student social and emotional developmental health. Continue to establish the SBIT and develop a common understanding of its role by all stakeholders, including the sharing of data regarding progress and achievement of social-emotional goals.

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 does not consistently communicate to families high expectations for student learning. The school has limited opportunities to support families in helping their children succeed. The school does share information with parents about their children’s performance, but does not have a strategic approach toward using data to address student and family needs. Consequently, not all families are empowered to support student growth and achievement.

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 does not consistently ensure that regular communication with students and families fosters high expectations for student achievement.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school uses a number of methods to communicate with parents, including meetings and events, newsletters, the school and district websites, and phone calls. Parents stated that daily planners provide them with information about homework, which they must sign. Social media is also used to share information. Parents stated that most communication from the school was in regard to administrative issues, such as construction projects, emergency drills, and after-school programs, with limited information on student academic success.
- Parents shared that the school is focused on implementing the CCLS, but felt that families were unclear on how to support their children as a result of the new standards and curriculum. While one parent shared that the school sent home a newsletter with ideas to support their children’s success, another parent stated that she has to go on YouTube to figure out how to help her child. A teacher did say that she provides parents with information about the EngageNY website so they can access the module’s problems and answers.

Impact Statement: Inconsistent relationships between families and the school limit 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:

- Enhance communication strategies to effectively communicate the school's academic expectations with parents. Create opportunities to engage parents in understanding the school's curriculum and provide them with strategies for supporting their children's learning.

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 opportunities to engage staff and families in reciprocal communication in order to support student achievement.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- School staff indicated that parent engagement is an area for improvement and that the school needs to evaluate its strategies for communicating with parents based on parent feedback. Teachers said that there is high attendance at parent-teacher conferences, but that informational events for parents had low attendance.
- The school uses a variety of tools to communicate with families and translates the communication into appropriate home languages.
- Parents shared that they do not have a clear understanding of the CCLS, and expressed concern with the instructional shifts. As a result, parents indicated that they would like more information about the curriculum and expectations for students. School leaders stated that they are developing plans to address this need.

Impact Statement: Limited reciprocal communication between the home and school limits student success.

Recommendation:

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

- Increase parent engagement in academic discussions that focus on collaborative identification of student needs and strategies to meet them. Ensure the use of parent feedback in evaluating the school's communication strategies in order to strengthen the connection between home and school.

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 does not consistently partner with families and community agencies to provide training to support student success.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school provides some training opportunities for parents on supporting student learning, such as the Family Resource Network. In addition, the school planned a session on the CCLS, but no parents signed up for it. However, student support staff stated that there is good attendance at special

education meetings.

- Teachers have been provided PD on instruction, however there is limited evidence of PD for teachers on how to develop and sustain partnerships with families and the community to support student learning.

Impact Statement: Not all students benefit from a robust and focused home-school connection, which hinders student success.

Recommendation:

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

- Increase opportunities for families to learn how they can support their children's success and provide training to staff to help them effectively build home-school connections that support student achievement.

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 does not consistently share data in a way that promotes dialogue with families in order to support student success.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- Parents stated that they receive regular report cards and progress reports from the school, which include grades and some test scores with charts. In addition, parents noted that data is provided and discussed during conferences. However, parents shared that some data is not easy to understand, such as printouts from the Imagine Learning program.
- While the school shares academic data with parents, the review team found limited evidence of the school sharing data with parents related to student social and emotional developmental health.

Impact Statement: The school community does not consistently empower families to take action to support student 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:

- Ensure that the school provides parents with clear student data in order to empower families to advocate for appropriate services for their children.