



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	421800010048
School Name	Lincoln Middle School
School Address	1613 James Street, Syracuse, New York 13203
District Name	Syracuse City
School Leader	Kevin Burns
Dates of Review	January 23-24 2014
School Accountability Status	Priority School
Type of Review	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet																						
Grade Configuration	6-8	Total Enrollment	569	SIG Recipient	<input type="checkbox"/>	Title 1 Population	85.4%	Attendance Rate	95.1 %													
Free Lunch	79.8 %	Reduced Lunch	5.6 %				Limited English Proficient	13.5%	Students with Disabilities	16.5%												
Number of English Language Learner Classes																						
#Transitional Bilingual	0		#Dual Language		0																	
Number of Special Education Classes																						
#Self-Contained	3		#Consultant Teaching		3		#Integrated Collaborative Teaching			0												
#Resource Room	2																					
Number Special Classes																						
#Visual Arts	1		#Music		1.5		#Drama		0		#Foreign Language		1		#Dance		0		#CTE		0	
Racial/Ethnic Origin																						
American Indian or Alaska Native	1.8%		Black or African American		53%		Hispanic or Latino		11.6 %		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander		6.5%		White		25.1 %		Multi-racial		1.8%	
Personnel																						
Years Principal Assigned to School	2		# of Assistant Principals		1		# of Deans		0		# of Counselors / Social Workers			3								
Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	0%		Teaching Out of Certification		1%		Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp.			6%		Average Teacher Absences		14.9 %								
Credit Accumulation (High School Only) and Performance Rates																						
% of 1 st yr. students who earned 10+ credits	N/A		% of 2 nd yr. students who earned 10+ credits		N/A		% of 3 rd yr. students who earned 10+ credits		N/A		4 Year Graduation Rate			N/A								
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	N/A		Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4		N/A		Science Performance at levels 3 & 4		N/A		6 Year Graduation Rate			N/A								

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

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS DESCRIBED BY THE SCHOOL:

1. Implementation of the Common Core and access for all students

2. Academic Rigor:

- Teacher/Student Questioning
- Close Reading
- Text Dependent Questions
- Collaborative Conversations

3. Data-Driven Instruction

4. Building-wide Best Practices:

Lesson Plans on Desk, Posted and referenced Agenda and Objective, DIN, Check for Understanding throughout lesson, Interactive Word Walls, Anchor Charts created and referenced, Agenda and Objective reviewed at the close of class and the teacher should be stationed at the door as your students exit the classroom.

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

School Review Narrative:

Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions: Visionary leaders create a school community and culture that lead to success, well-being, and high academic outcomes for all students via systems of continuous and sustainable school improvement.	Tenet Rating	D
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Debriefing Statement: The school leader has a clear vision and he is implementing an action plan to drive school development. Although staff and students understand the school’s vision for academic and social emotional outcomes for all students, families are less clear about the goals that have been set. The school has developed systems and procedures to improve key areas, such teaching and student behavior, which are beginning to have an impact, as evident in the calm school culture; however, there is still further work to be done. The collection, analysis, and use of data to monitor progress, and to set goals for school improvement, are not fully developed. As a result, the school does not consistently demonstrate how well it is doing to reach the targets that have been set.

Strengths:

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

Areas for Improvement:

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

- The school leader has created vision and mission statements, as well as goals, which address priorities outlined in the SCEP, and is working to ensure that the school community becomes aware of these. The school leader stated that he is in the process of beginning to share the vision with staff, students, and families. A document review, and staff interviews, demonstrated that the school leader has shared the vision with staff, including memos to support building best practice. Additionally, while the staff reported that the school leader has done a good job communicating the vision with parents through assemblies and parent nights, attendance at these events was low. As a result many families have had limited exposure to the school’s vision and mission statements, which limits their capacity to support the school. The school leader reported that there is a school-wide focus on raising student achievement through introducing the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and developing secure systems to manage behavior. A document review confirmed that SMART goals and a detailed plan for improving student behavior are in place. However, the school leader stated that the use of data and creating a data-driven mission, outlined in the SCEP, were at an early stage of development across the school. The school leader explained to the review team how he uses grade meetings to help meet the goal of improving teacher practice. This was confirmed in the grade six teacher meeting, where teachers shared their strategies for implementing the school’s instructional focus for January, which was to improve closure of lessons.

An inconsistent awareness of the school's vision, and a developing use of data, limits the achievement of the school's SMART goals and hinders student success.

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

- The school leader inconsistently makes strategic decisions to organize programmatic, human, and fiscal capital resources. The school leader shared that he uses systems, developed by the school district, to address the needs of the school community, but the review team found limited evidence of how the leader leverages these systems to meet the specific academic goals of the school. While the leader stated that the district makes decisions regarding the hiring of staff, he said that he has articulated particular staffing needs to the district, and advocated for the removal of underperforming staff. For example, the school leader told the review team how he worked with the district to find and appoint a technology teacher. He also described how he counseled out, or put in place support programs to manage, underperforming teachers. As a result, during the last year, four teachers have left the school. However, the review team found that the school leader has been less clear in organizing resources to meet the school's goals for improving student academic outcomes. For example, during the school leader interview, he outlined the after-school expanded learning time program that is in place, and reported that over 250 students are registered in the program. However, he indicated that there have been difficulties recruiting and maintaining staff to run the program. While interviews and a document review showed that the school leaders make some strategic decisions regarding resources to support students, such as considering subgroups when scheduling teaching partnerships, this was not consistent across the school. Further, while the school leader raised issues concerning the district making fiscal decisions for the school, he did not give the review team clear examples to demonstrate how he had communicated the funding needs of the school's academic goals to the district. The school leader does not consistently address the needs of the school community in regards to human, programmatic, and fiscal capital resources, which hinders progress toward SCEP goals, and student academic growth.

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.

- The school leader inconsistently applies a system of teacher observation and feedback aligned to the district's APPR process. The school leader shared with the review team that the observation process includes looking at specific aspects of teacher practice, such as the use of an agenda, objectives, anchor charts, word walls, the Do It Now (DIN), and the closure of lessons, which he monitors through both walk-throughs and formal observations. The school leader additionally shared that school leaders observe underperforming teachers more frequently, and that instructional coaches work with all teachers by coaching them to improve their performance in areas of weakness identified during observations. However, the review team found that the school leader does not track teacher practices through a detailed analysis of student data. Although teacher observations align to established criteria, the review team found that verbal and written

feedback to teachers does not consistently give clear recommendations for improvement. Additionally, document review demonstrated that the school leader's use of observations to build a comprehensive record, and track the performance of teachers over time, is limited. The review team examined the teacher observation records and confirmed that an observation schedule was in place; however, the records were not comprehensive as they included only 11 classroom observations and walk-throughs for October and November 2013. Likewise, a majority of the observation sheets reviewed were not dated, and only contained brief analysis, while not specifying what feedback was given to teachers to enable them to improve. Furthermore, in the school leader interview, the leader stated that while he has conducted approximately 150 walk-throughs, he did not keep a copy of the written record for many of the observations. During the vertical teacher meeting, staff shared with the review team that the feedback teachers receive from the school leader is brief. For example, one teacher stated that she had received between five and eight walkthroughs this year, but that the only feedback the school leader provided was stating to the teacher, "looks good." A review of the school professional development (PD) plan showed that there are school-wide focus areas that connect to the teacher observation records and to the teacher rubric. In the vertical teacher meeting, a new member of staff reported that she had received coaching on higher-order questioning skills, as this had been an identified area of weakness during her observation. However, the English as second language (ESL) teachers told the review team that the PD offered did not connect to the goals of their students. Although systems are in place to monitor the quality of teaching, the limited use and collection of teacher observation data limits the ability of the school leader to track teacher practice, link PD to observations, and hold teachers accountable for continuous improvement, which hinders student academic achievement.

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).

- The school leader does not consistently use evidence-based systems and structures to examine and improve individual and school-wide practices. While the school leader shared that the school tracks data on the number of formal and informal referrals for behavior incidents, the review team found that the school leader has not put in place a school-wide system to consistently monitor and review instructional practices and measurable progress towards school-wide goals. Math and ELA coaches informed the review team that they are collecting data to track student progress and as a way to measure the impact of their work with teachers and students. However, coaches shared that there is limited whole-school analysis of achievement data. As a result, the mathematics coach stated that she has recently networked with colleagues in another middle school to learn about data-driven instruction and is "on a learning curve." Additionally, she shared that she has introduced a commercial assessment program to determine student chances of passing the state assessments, however, the program does not allow for whole-school analysis and is not aligned to the CCLS, so does not give an accurate picture in regards to the assessment expectations. The lack of consistent evidence based systems and structures, limits the school leader's ability to measure progress toward critical school-wide goals.

<p>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.</p>	<p>Tenet Rating</p>	<p>D</p>
<p><u>Debriefing Statement:</u> The school uses the district approved ELA curricula and the state approved mathematics modules that support the CCLS. Though teachers regularly meet with one another to discuss students and instruction within their grades and content areas, classes inconsistently align their instruction to the CCLS or promote the CCLS shifts. Additionally, interdisciplinary learning opportunities, which incorporate the arts and technology, are limited. Although teachers are reflecting on, and discussing, the academic and social emotional growth of students, teachers do not consistently tailor their plans to meet student needs. As a result, students do not consistently experience a curriculum that leads to college- and career-readiness.</p> <p><u>Strengths:</u></p> <p>All ratings for this Tenet are either Developing or Ineffective and, therefore, comments are listed under Areas for Improvement.</p> <p><u>Areas for Improvement:</u></p> <p>3.2 <u>The school has received a rating of <i>Developing</i> for this Statement of Practice:</u> 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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school leader is to beginning support the quality implementation of a systematic plan of rigorous and coherent curricula aligned to the CCLS; however, the work is inconsistent across the school. While the review team examined a PD plan and weekly memos that detailed the school’s strategies for implementing instructional rounds, department meetings, , and PD opportunities, the review team found limited evidence of CCLS aligned instruction during classroom visits. During the school leader interview and the vertical teacher meeting, the school leader and teachers stated that every week there is one department meeting where teachers across grades, within a given subject area, meet to review CCLS-aligned unit assessments in ELA and mathematics, and to make instructional decisions. In addition, staff reported that there are two grade-level meetings per week, where teachers from various subject areas within the same grade discuss topics, which include the implementation of the curriculum. However, while the review team observed one of these meetings in which there was a short discussion where teachers shared effective strategies to promote the closure of lessons, these discussions lacked depth and did not focus on implementing the curriculum to meet the needs of all students. Interviews with teachers confirmed that other meetings followed this pattern. An analysis of the PD calendar and meeting minutes indicated that the school offers teachers PD to discuss and reflect on their CCLS-aligned curriculum. However, classroom visits demonstrated that teachers do not consistently implement the practices learned during PD. The school’s lack of uniform systems and structures to ensure all teachers consistently create CCLS-aligned instructional activities that promote college- and career-readiness, limits student academic success. 		

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

- Teachers inconsistently use student achievement data to adjust unit and lesson plans aligned to the CCLS and the instructional shifts. While teachers had prepared a lesson plan in all of the 43 classrooms visited by the review team, those plans did not consistently demonstrate DDI protocols or align with the CCLS. For example, all four music lesson plans reviewed included instructional strategies that referred to the CCLS shifts, such as using text-based evidence, academic vocabulary, and grouping. Similarly, social studies and ELA lesson plans reviewed also referred to the CCLS. Further, two ESL teachers were observed aligning their literacy lessons to the CCLS. However, in mathematics and science classes, only half of the lesson plans reviewed aligned to the CCLS. Additionally, out of the nine special education classrooms visited, only three teachers had lesson plans that incorporated individual student needs and addressed how teachers would meet those needs during the lesson. While a Spanish teacher had referenced the use of literacy shifts in her plan, she told a member of the review team that she was just trying to be pro-active in using shifts, even though the school had not provided her with the same level of PD that core teachers had received. Some teachers told the review team that they track students using the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) and the AIMSWEB assessment tool, which measures reading and math performance. When asked how they differentiate their instruction for students who are of higher ability levels, teachers told the review team that they give students something additional to work on if they finish early. Additionally, they stated that students could sit and highlight parts of their own work that they think represents a level three or four, and that students can write down why their work is at that level. One teacher stated, “I give them independent study, or they can help out in class by looking things up for me or creating an anchor chart, since there isn’t a lot of such students”. The inconsistent application of the CCLS and DDI protocols across the school, limits students’ growth and academic success.

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.

- Teachers informally and inconsistently collaborate with one another around the creation of interdisciplinary learning opportunities that include the arts and technology. The school leader shared with the review team that while there was no formal plan currently in place for teachers to collaborate to create interdisciplinary curricula, he was developing a plan to address this in the future. The review team observed several limited examples of collaborative teacher partnerships in action that centered on interdisciplinary curricula. For example, during the vertical teacher interview, the library media specialist stated that she meets monthly, or bimonthly, with certain subject-area teachers to discuss how she can support their curriculum using the existing curriculum for library media specialists. Additionally, during the grade six meeting, the review team observed teachers discussing the specific performance of a struggling student in a science classroom and reflecting on reading strategies that they could reinforce to support him within, and outside of, his ELA class. Further, a music teacher described his attempts to connect his lessons to the ELA

curriculum and explained that he uses ELA vocabulary such as theme, evidence, and text-based. Finally, in an art class, students moved to a technology room to use computers to research portrait photography. However, these efforts were inconsistent across the school. For example, an ELA teacher said that although she had tried to collaborate with social studies teachers to adapt books about the Second World War, there were no opportunities to develop this work. Inconsistent opportunities across the school for students to engage in cross-curricula activities limit their ability to be academically successful.

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.

- Teachers do not have a fully comprehensive system for using formative and summative assessments to set goals for students and assist them in taking ownership of their learning. While discussions with school leaders and teachers, as well as a document review, demonstrated that teachers have a system for analyzing data to make curricular decisions, the system was not comprehensive in that teachers do not use formative assessments during instructional planning meetings. In addition, teachers do not cross-analyze data from the various assessments that the school uses. The ELA coach reported that teachers use rubrics to score and analyze student work, and that the school is still trying to work out how to look at data by using spreadsheets, benchmarks, and midterm assessments. The review team found little evidence of the use of achievement data to plan instructional activities. For example, in a review of six lesson plans for science and mathematics, none included student achievement data or notes on student performance tied to the instructional activities. In some lessons, teachers are beginning to use formative assessment. For example, in a small number of lessons that included ELL students, the teachers checked for student understanding and then had students review the DIN objective with a partner. The school leader and teachers informed the review team that the process of involving students in reflecting on, and tracking, their own learning is at an early stage. In the small group student meeting, a grade six student reported that in science, the teacher asks students questions at the beginning of the lesson and then checks with individual students to see if they understand how to do the task. Further, the student stated that the teacher then collects notebooks and grades them to show students how they are doing and what to do to improve their work. However, interviews with teachers, students, and a review of documents demonstrated that this practice is not consistent across the school. Rather, the review team found during the classroom visits that most teachers do not give clear feedback to students that tell them specifically what they need to do to improve. Further, students shared that their notebooks are not regularly graded and that teachers do not often give them specific comments to help them improve. The lack of a fully comprehensive system to align the curriculum and assessment hinders student academic achievement.

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 in the process of developing research-based instructional practices. Although teachers use differentiation and targeted instruction in some classrooms, instruction is predominantly whole-group or lecture style. Additionally, materials and assignments are the same for most students. Teachers are in the beginning stages of using summative and formative assessment data to inform instruction. Furthermore, higher-level questioning occurs inconsistently across classrooms. As a result, some students are not deeply engaged in learning or do not have sufficient access to the CCLS.

Strengths:

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

Areas for Improvement:

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

- Teachers do not consistently use instructional practices and strategies organized around unit and daily lesson plans to address all student needs. In the majority of classes visited by the review team, instruction was whole-class, without differentiation for individuals or groups of students. Additionally, the review team did not find evidence that teachers have established short- or long-term goals for students to engage them in their own learning process. While a document review of lesson plans in math and science classes showed that three out of eight plans identified specific formative assessment measures, no plans identified unit assessment data. The ESL teachers informed the review team that they group students according to their English proficiency level, with a target goal of improving student language proficiency. However, they stated that the PD offered at the school to support teachers in developing high levels of student engagement and inquiry does not connect to their work. During eight of the ten classrooms visited by the review team that included students with disabilities, teachers did not use specific strategies or vary instructional groupings to meet the diverse needs of students. While in one resource room, the teacher separated the students into groups working on similar skills, in another resource room all five students were working on the same skill. Additionally, the review team found little evidence of student grouping in general education classes. For example, in fifteen science, mathematics, and health classrooms visited, only three included small group or partner work. Further, students shared with the review team that they would like more individualized work, and that for some of them the work is too easy and for others the work is too difficult. Although there is some evidence of planning for individual student needs and providing specific interventions for students, the lack of consistency across classrooms limits student engagement, which hinders student success.

4.3 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* 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.

- Teachers do not consistently provide coherent instruction aligned to the CCLS that leads to multiple

points of access for all students. A document review, and discussions with teachers, demonstrated that the majority of teachers are writing lesson plans based on a whole-school format that references the CCLS, such as listing higher-order questions. However, not all plans or instruction consistently align to the CCLS. For example, in the classrooms visited by the review team, teachers did not ask open-ended questions that invited student thinking. The review team found evidence of some social studies teachers beginning to highlight the key shifts required by the CCLS, such as asking students to write from multiple sources, providing multiple points of access for all students, using primary sources, close reading, academic vocabulary, higher-level questions, and deep processing. However, the review team did not observe these practices in many of the other classrooms visited. For example, in eight mathematics and science classrooms, there were only two lessons where the teachers asked higher-level questions. Furthermore, a document review of the school's instructional rounds highlighted that teachers were not asking higher-level questioning to prompt student thinking. Inconsistent instruction that aligns to the CCLS and provides multiple points of access for all students, limits student engagement and achievement.

4.4 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** Teachers and students work together to implement a program/plan to create a learning environment that is responsive to students' varied experiences and tailored to the strengths and needs of all students.

- The school is in the developing stages of creating a learning environment that is intellectually and physically safe for all students. The school leader told the review team that he has shared the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) system that the school is using with students, staff, and families. Additionally, a document review demonstrated that there is a building discipline plan in place to support a safe learning environment. Likewise, staff reported, that the PBIS team developed a matrix for behavior expectations for different areas of the building, with quarterly meetings to revisit expectations for students and staff. However, staff said that although students know the expectations regarding behavior, they do not all follow them. In the support staff meeting, staff shared that the school leader has improved behavior in the school building. However, during the student interview, three of the six students said that poor behavior in lessons interfered with their learning. A grade six student said that when a student misbehaves teachers remove them from the classroom. While another student further stated that, "they are put in the back in science, but they still mess about." Students in both the small and large student groups commented that, at times, it is hard to ask questions in class because other students will bother you. One student stated that another student implied that she could not read well and that the teacher did not handle the situation. Support staff told the review team that they attend grade level meetings to help teachers to support student success and well-being. They follow the "two by ten" strategy, to help teachers develop their skills in working with tier two students identified as being at-risk for behavior problems. The school has a learning environment that is not consistently responsive to student needs, which limits the intellectual and physical safety for all students, and hinders their success.

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).

- Teachers are developing practices to inform planning and foster student participation through formative and summative data. During interviews with the review team, teachers stated that they track student SRI and AIMSWEB data and use this data to tier their students accordingly. ESL teachers told the review team that the school uses the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) scores to place ESL students in beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels. However, overall, there was limited evidence of teachers adjusting student groups or using differentiated instructional strategies in the majority of classrooms visited. For example, in a lesson where students used computers to create a PowerPoint presentation, teachers gave all students the same task with no scaffolding. Some students struggled to use the program, while a few students found the task too easy. The review team conducted a review of six lesson plans and found that none of the plans included student achievement data or notes on student performance tied to instructional activities. Of the six lesson plans reviewed, one lesson plan identified students by name that were not meeting the instructional objectives, and included the action and intervention the teacher would take in order to meet the individual student needs, such as matching them to a specific partner. While three of the lesson plans included an exit ticket assessment, these were basic tasks, such as a low-level question, that would not help to inform future instructional decisions. During classroom observations, teachers did not consistently give accurate feedback to students. The review team noted that teacher feedback tended to include either repeating aloud what the student had said, or saying, “good”, “yes”, and “nice.” In one classroom, when students said that they needed help, the teacher looked at the question the student was working on and summarized the answer for students to record, rather than helping students to think it through for themselves. A document review of student work also demonstrated that teachers give limited data-based feedback to students. Inconsistent use of data-based instruction that is timely and purposeful, and feedback that does not foster student ownership of their learning, hinders student academic achievement.

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
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Debriefing Statement: The school environment has recently improved under the current leadership due to the implementation of standardized behavior expectations and procedures throughout the building, as well as consistent communication of the school’s vision. However, there remain some concerns regarding consistent student safety. The school is in the process of refining systems and procedures to address student social and emotional health needs. Due to the inconsistent use of data to monitor school practices, procedures used to support students are sometimes reactive rather than proactive. As a result, it is difficult for staff to determine if the social and emotional needs of all students are being met.

Strengths:

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

for Improvement.

Areas for Improvement:

5.2 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader establishes overarching systems and understandings of how to support and sustain student social and emotional developmental health and academic success.

- The school leader is developing overarching systems to support student social and emotional developmental health and academic success; however, the work is presently inconsistent across the school. While the school leader stated that he assigns each grade six student to an adult who monitors their social, emotional, and academic progress, this practice is not uniform across the school. The school leader shared with the review team that there is a referral process in place for identifying and responding to student social and emotional developmental health needs and that this process is supported by specialists in the community. Further, a review of documents, and interviews with the school leader and staff, demonstrated that the school uses a number of systems and partnerships to manage student behavior and social-emotional health. These include pre-referral intervention strategies, referral to the school-based intervention team with a behavior focus (SBIT B), using a check-in/check-out strategy, daily reports, and working with the Huntington Family Centre and external PBIS coaches. A review of the agendas from staff meetings in October through December 2013, included items such as understanding the PBIS system, pre-referral intervention strategies, how to interpret referral data, and developing incentives for students, such as a raffles to encourage students to be on time to school. Discussions with the staff indicated that although data on the needs of students is available, delays between the time the data is collected and shared limit their ability to provide appropriate intervention strategies to better support student needs. In addition, staff also stated that they have some concerns about the accuracy and the reliability of this data. However, support staff shared with the review team that teacher response to student needs is often reactive, rather than proactive, as teachers do not consistently access, or effectively use, the available data. While systems for referral and support are developing, the lack of consistent use of these systems by all staff limits the school's ability to address barriers to student social and emotional health, which hinders academic success.

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.

- While the school has systems that outline expectations for behavior and student social and emotional development, stakeholders do not consistently implement these structures. The school leader shared that the PBIS team put in place a reward and incentive program, and developed a matrix for behavior expectations throughout the building based on PBIS. Additionally, the school leader shared there is a program for grade six to teach social and emotional skills to students, along with strategies for teachers to use. Further, support staff work with students in grades seven and eight on college and career planning and goal setting. However, the review team found that the implementation of these systems and expectations was inconsistent across the school. The school

leader stated that training is in place to build adult capacity to support student social and emotional health, and a document review confirmed that PD on referrals and social emotional needs did take place. However, the review team did not find evidence for how the school leaders effectively monitor the implementation of learned behavior support strategies, or what impact PD is having on classroom culture. An inconsistent use of systems, aligned to a systematic vision for student social and emotional developmental health, limits student opportunities to learn in a safe and healthy school environment, which hinders academic achievement.

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.

- All stakeholders are developing a common understanding of their roles in creating a school community that is conducive to learning and fosters student social and emotional health. Staff interviews demonstrated to the review team that there is an inconsistent view among stakeholders regarding their roles in the social and emotional developmental health of students, and that while safety is improving in the building, there are still areas in need of improvement. The school leader shared that he is aware of this and is devising a plan to ensure that all staff are clear about the roles they play in student social and emotional developmental health. Student support staff stated that students who require intense interventions are at times disruptive and have a detrimental impact on the learning of others. Evidence from discussions with school leaders and staff indicate that there is a lack of clarity regarding the role of parents in relation to student social and emotional health. Only one parent came to the parent meeting, which limited parent input regarding their roles. In addition, the review team found that the school did not distribute the parent survey. Not all constituents are able to articulate their roles in creating a safe learning environment that meets student's needs, which hinders student success.

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.

- While the school has an established structure that supports the use of data, questions regarding the reliability of this information limits the staff's ability to use it to respond to student social and emotional developmental health needs. While the school leader and staff shared with the review team that the school collects data, evidence from discussions and documents demonstrated that the quality of the data is inconsistent. For example, a member of the support staff told the review team that they look at incident reports but do not feel that the data is accurate. Furthermore, discussion with staff and a document review demonstrated that data from the systems is not easy accessible. For example, during the support staff meeting, staff reported that attendance data between the eSchool and Cognos programs do not align, and that although this is a district-wide issue, they use observational data to monitor student classroom attendance instead. Teachers shared that if they have not seen a student for three or four days, they notify the social worker who will make a phone call to the home. Structures to support the use of data to respond to student social and emotional developmental health needs are limited, which hinders student academic

success.

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 is a welcoming place for most families. However, it lacks a plan to provide opportunities for all parents to engage in the understanding of data, goal setting, and student academic achievement. While teachers consistently reach out to parents, school-wide communication needs improvement. In particular, the school lacks strategies to ensure that parent communication is translated into various languages. As a result, not all families are fully engaged in supporting the academic, social, and emotional development of students to enable them to reach their full potential.

Strengths:

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

Areas for Improvement:

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

- The school does not consistently ensure that regular communication with families and students fosters high expectations for student academic achievement. The school leader shared with the review team that he is developing a plan to ensure that the school communicates expectations for student achievement in a more effective way to families. While a document review, and interviews with the school leader and staff, demonstrated that the school provides opportunities for parents to participate in the school community, the review team found that the school does not monitor the effectiveness of these opportunities, or adjust communication to ensure it is successful. A document review demonstrated that the school conducted an open house orientation in August 2013, in which 59 families attended, that covered topics on the school's schedule, academic, and extra-curricular opportunities. In addition, 19 parents signed up for the PTO during the orientation. While the school newsletter lists ESL connections, and school, sports, and orchestra events, the review team found that some information was out of date. In addition, the review team found that these communication channels do not make clear, or reinforce, the school's expectations regarding student achievement. While the school leader stated that he is committed to a stronger partnership with parents, there was no evidence that the school is evaluating its communication with families. As a result, the limited relationship between families and the school hinders student college- and career- readiness.

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.

- The school engages in limited reciprocal communication with family and community stakeholders to identify and meet student needs. Through interviews with the school leaders, staff, a parent, and students, the review team found that there are limited formal structures and opportunities for families and community stakeholders to engage with and advocate for student programming. Furthermore, those opportunities are particularly limited for families whose first language is not English. For example, the review team did not find evidence of materials translated into other languages in the school, or in the reviewed monthly newsletters. While the school leader and staff interviewed shared that they provide translation services at school events, the school does not translate regular school communication into languages understood by non-English speaking families. Further, teachers and students shared that some teachers attach a note to important communication from the school, informing families that they should get the document translated. The school leader did share that they brought in a district provided translator for the summer parent open house. Student support staff reported that they have a plan to make communication more accessible to these families by using high-level ELL students to translate communications between home and school. Teachers stated that a cultural day that the ESL department ran last year is being implemented school-wide this year in an effort to bring in ELL parents to share their cultural and language heritage. Additionally, ESL teachers shared that nationality workers visit the school once a week and the teachers stated that they communicate with families using these nationality workers when available. Limited reciprocal communication between the school and all families hinders parent’s ability to support their children’s academic and social emotional growth.

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

- The school community does not partner with families and community agencies to provide training to support student success. The review team found little evidence that the school provides training for parents to support student success. Further, the school leader informed the review team that the school does not offer any formal training for staff on developing partnerships with families or the community. At the grade six teacher meeting, the social worker explained to staff that she had found funds to provide a future spaghetti dinner and training for parents on how to access the parent portal. A school leader who was present at the meeting offered additional funding for this effort. Students do not currently benefit from a robust and focused home-school connection, with planned opportunities to develop parent skills to support student success, which limits student growth.

6.5 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* or 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 does not consistently share data with families to support their ability to advocate for appropriate services for their children. Discussions with school leaders demonstrated that although the school has made some efforts to enable parents to access information regarding their children’s achievement, these efforts are not consistent. Documents and meetings with staff demonstrated that the school does not provide information on student achievement in an easily understood

format, or translate this information into appropriate languages for families. This reduces the opportunities for parents to support the work of the school. The school leader shared with the review team that he provided some information regarding student achievement at the orientation and open house meetings, but evidence demonstrated that the school does not regularly provide specific information on individual student achievement. In addition, the school does not use available data to analyze the needs of families, or to put into place a formalized plan to meet and address these needs. The school community does not consistently empower families to support student learning, which hinders student 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:

- 2.2: Ensure that there is a data-driven mission that is connected to the long-term vision. Develop the collection, analysis, and use of data to monitor progress, set goals for school improvement, and demonstrate progress toward achieving targets. Reach out to parents, including non-English speakers, to ensure that they understand the vision and mission statements.
- 2.3: Articulate to the district the need for appropriate funding based on strategic planning aligned to school-wide goals.
- 2.4: Improve systems and procedures to hold teachers accountable by placing greater emphasis on analyzing student achievement data as a measure of effective teaching. Ensure that teachers are given detailed feedback following classroom observations, with an emphasis on what they can do to improve their instructional practice, and keep a comprehensive written record of dated observations, so that teacher performance can be tracked over time.
- 2.5: Develop systems to embed a data-driven school culture. Focus on providing professional development for school leaders and instructional coaches to enable them to establish comprehensive systems to track student progress. This should include developing skills in collecting and analyzing student achievement data to enable leaders to plan strategically to raise achievement.

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:

- 3.2: Establish systematic procedures to monitor the implementation of the CCLS. Review the content and structure of grade level meetings to ensure that teachers have detailed discussions that support the implementation of the CCLS shifts.
- 3.3: Provide PD for teachers on how to implement CCLS shifts with a focus on higher-level questioning and strategies for supporting critical thinking. Provide PD for teachers to enable them to understand how to plan for, and incorporate, activities that promote a progression of sequenced and scaffolded skills for all groups of students into lessons.
- 3.4: Develop and embed a comprehensive plan to promote teacher partnerships and create interdisciplinary curricula opportunities for students.
- 3.5: Establish systems to involve students more effectively in monitoring their own learning. Provide PD for teachers on formative assessment. Review lesson planning to place a greater emphasis on incorporating assessment opportunities. Communicate with other local schools to explore strategies that they are using to track student progress, such as benchmarks and mid-term assessments.

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:

- 4.2: Ensure that teachers work with students to create individual short- and long-term goals to involve students in their own learning. Use assessment data to plan differentiated lessons that meet all students' needs, including students with disabilities and ELLs.
- 4.3: Ensure that all lesson plans are properly aligned to the CCLS, and that teachers follow those plans to consistently reflect the CCLS shifts in their instructional practice. This should include a whole-school focus on improving higher-order questioning in all lessons.
- 4.4: Review behavior expectations to ensure that all students comply with the PBIS matrix to improve the school's learning culture and safety. Adjust school-wide instructional practice so that students feel safe and confident in answering questions and joining in discussions.
- 4.5: Provide PD for teachers on using formative and summative assessments and on giving data-based feedback to students.

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:

- 5.2: Establish systems to ensure that data collected in relation to student social and emotional developmental health is accurate and is quickly and accurately entered into a school-wide electronic recording system. Analyze the data at regular intervals to determine trends and highlight issues, and use this information for strategic planning and the allocation of resources
- 5.3: Audit the PD that staff has attended on student social and emotional developmental health. Based on this audit determine what further training is required to build capacity and target key areas. Establish procedures to monitor future PD with a focus on encouraging staff to share information and skills gained from training with colleagues.
- 5.4: Ensure that all stakeholders develop a common understanding of the importance of their roles in promoting student social and emotional developmental health.
- 5.5: Determine what data needs to be collected concerning student social and emotional health needs. Ensure that all staff can easily access reliable electronic data to improve their capacity to support students.

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:

- 6.2: Survey parents to find out what they think needs to be done to increase their involvement in the school community. Based on this, develop an action plan to support comprehensive parent involvement. Monitor future parent involvement to determine what strategies are effective, and adjust the plan accordingly.

- 6.3: Improve communication and partnerships with families whose first language is not English. Ensure that school communication is translated into all appropriate languages.
- 6.4: Survey parents to determine what training they would like to have in order to assist them in supporting student success.
- 6.5: Review strategies for sharing data with parents to ensure that it is clear and accessible to all parents, including those who do not speak English.