



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	32100000045
School Name	Thomas C. Giordano Middle School/X045
School Address	2502 Lorillard Place Bronx, NY 10458
District Name	NYC CSD 10
School Leader	Anna Maria Giordano
Dates of Review	March 25-26, 2014
School Accountability Status	Focus School
Type of Review	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet for 10X045

School Configuration (2013-14)					
Grade Configuration	06,07,08	Total Enrollment	797	SIG Recipient	N/A
Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes (2013-14)					
# Transitional Bilingual	N/A	# Dual Language	N/A	# Self-Contained English as a Second Language	N/A
Types and Number of Special Education Classes (2013-14)					
# Special Classes	N/A	# SETSS	N/A	# Integrated Collaborative Teaching	N/A
Types and Number of Special Classes (2013-14)					
# Visual Arts	7	# Music	N/A	# Drama	N/A
# Foreign Language	8	# Dance	N/A	# CTE	N/A
School Composition (2012-13)					
% Title I Population		88.1%	% Attendance Rate		91.0%
% Free Lunch		91.7%	% Reduced Lunch		5.0%
% Limited English Proficient		18.3%	% Students with Disabilities		19.3%
Racial/Ethnic Origin (2012-13)					
% American Indian or Alaska Native		0.3%	% Black or African American		13.1%
% Hispanic or Latino		81.9%	% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander		1.5%
% White		3.2%	% Multi-Racial		N/A
Personnel (2012-13)					
Years Principal Assigned to School		7.34	# of Assistant Principals		4
# of Deans		1	# of Counselors/Social Workers		3
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate		1.4%	% Teaching Out of Certification		15.8%
% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Years of Experience		12.9%	Average Teacher Absences		6.1
Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools (2012-13)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4		11.7%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4		9.2%
Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (4th Grade)		N/A	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (8th Grade)		36.8%
Student Performance for High Schools (2011-12)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4		N/A	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4		93.1%
Credit Accumulation High Schools Only (2012-13)					
% of 1st year students who earned 10+ credits		N/A	% of 2nd year students who earned 10+ credits		N/A
% of 3rd year students who earned 10+ credits		N/A	4 Year Graduation Rate		N/A
6 Year Graduation Rate		N/A			
Overall NYSED Accountability Status (2012-13)					
Reward			Recognition		
In Good Standing			Local Assistance Plan		
Focus District		X	Focus School Identified by a Focus District		X
Priority School					

Accountability Status – Elementary and Middle Schools

Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA (2011-12)			
American Indian or Alaska Native	N/A	Black or African American	No
Hispanic or Latino	No	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	N/A
White	No	Multi-Racial	N/A
Students with Disabilities	No	Limited English Proficient	No
Economically Disadvantaged	No		
Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics (2011-12)			
American Indian or Alaska Native	N/A	Black or African American	No
Hispanic or Latino	No	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	N/A
White	No	Multi-Racial	N/A
Students with Disabilities	No	Limited English Proficient	No
Economically Disadvantaged	No		
Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science (2011-12)			
American Indian or Alaska Native	N/A	Black or African American	Yes
Hispanic or Latino	No	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	N/A
White	N/A	Multi-Racial	N/A
Students with Disabilities	No	Limited English Proficient	No
Economically Disadvantaged	No		

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS DESCRIBED BY THE SCHOOL:

1. Enhance the consistency of teaching strategies and instructional tasks that promotes higher level thinking so student work and discussions engage students as owners of their own learning ... in nearly all classrooms, questioning was entirely teacher led and students were not required to refer to text or use academic language.
2. By June,2014, 100% of teachers including those of ELL and SWD's will implement common core curriculum (CCLS) aligned units of study integrating multiple resources to promote rigor and questioning as evidenced by a 80% increase in Danielson

component 1d, demonstrating knowledge of resources in lesson planning and implementation seen in the informal and formal observation cycles.

3. By June, 2014, teachers will engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning which will result in an overall annual 20% increase in post-tests.
4. By June, 2014, MS 45 will increase its implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) as evidenced by a 7% decrease in all types of student referrals as evidenced by the School-wide Information System (SWIS).
5. Middle School 45 will partner with families and community agencies such as Flame and Beacon to promote and provide professional development to support student success as evidenced by 50% of parents signing up for Engrade and a 10% increase in participation at workshops sponsored by the Parent Coordinator and/or PA by June, 2014.

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:			E		

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

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

	OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 3: D			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:		E		

School Review Narrative:

Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions: Visionary leaders create a school community and culture that lead to success, well-being, and high academic outcomes for all students via systems of continuous and sustainable school improvement.	Tenet Rating	E
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Debriefing Statement: The school leaders and assistant school leaders have created and shared goals and a long-term vision with most, but not all members of the school community. Effective procedures are in place for monitoring the quality of instruction, and the school leader makes strategic decisions regarding the use of resources to meet the needs of the school community. Structures and protocols are in place to monitor the work of the school in its efforts to raise student achievement.

Strengths:

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

Overall Finding:

The school leader and assistant school leaders have made strategic decisions to reorganize the school program to meet the needs of the students. The school leader has brought human resources to the school to support these decisions and has been able to use capital resources to support student learning.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- Interviews by the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) with the school leaders indicate that a number of strategic decisions have been made that have resulted in improvements in meeting the needs of students and staff. The school leader reported that these decisions came about as a result of an analysis of weaknesses in the use of data to determine programmatic needs. The school leader noted the addition of a Focused Instruction (FI) period once a day when students in need of assistance go to small group instruction. In addition, the school leader made resource decisions so that the large numbers of identified English Language Learners (ELLs) are placed in smaller classes to allow for additional support and differentiation of instruction.
- The school leaders have made effective use of data to restructure grade six teachers into teams to provide for an additional period of common planning time that includes interdisciplinary teachers to add to the enrichment of lesson planning and instruction. A full-time technology teacher was also added to the staff to enrich learning opportunities. The school leader reported that the teacher plans with and supports staff in all classes and supplements the use of the i-Ready program, which assists in the development of both formative and summative assessments. A Learning Technology Grant was obtained by the school leader that allowed for the purchase of both laptop computers and iPads for both general and FI classes. Additional allocation of resources for technology includes the school's purchase of 28 SMART Boards. School leaders reported that the staff has received training on the use of this technology.
- As part of the effort to use collected data to make adjustments in the school's program to meet

student needs, the school leaders reported the creation of El Mundo De Aurora (EMDA) Academy for bilingual and gifted students. School leaders also noted the addition of two sections of English as a Second Language (ESL), English language arts (ELA), and one section of ESL mathematics, with smaller numbers of students. The school leader has also made the decision to eliminate one assistant principal (AP) position this year and to use resources to hire two additional teachers to build instructional capacity.

Impact Statement:

The school leader's strategic decisions regarding the allocation of resources address the needs of students, which promotes academic achievement.

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

Overall Finding:

The school leaders have an articulated and functional plan that is aligned to the district's Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) that provides frequent observations and timely, actionable feedback to staff that is designed to improve teaching practices based on student data and the Danielson rubric.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- Interviews with teachers and school leaders and documents reviewed by the IIT indicate that lesson observations are carried out on a regular basis and in accordance with the schedule. Interviews and documents also show that teachers are provided with timely feedback after the observations and that the feedback identifies aspects of instruction that work well and areas that need improvement. Areas for development become the focus for future observations.
- Interviews with the school leaders indicate that information from the observations is used to identify professional development (PD) needs for individuals and groups of teachers and to identify areas for additional support, guidance or counseling. School leaders reported that information from lesson observations also led to several programming changes made early this year. Interviews and examination of documents indicate that the school leader monitors the evaluation process to ensure that it is carried out with fidelity and consistency.
- Interviews conducted by the review team also indicate that meeting time is provided for consultants from CMP3 Math to work with the mathematics department to ensure alignment of plans to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and to demonstrate effective ways of gathering student formative and summative data to impact instruction. A literacy coach is provided from the Network through the Middle School Quality Initiative (MSQI) to assist ELA teachers in the alignment of their plans and instruction to the CCLS. Each AP reports to the school leader weekly on the observation cycle, the feedback that is provided to each staff member, and how each teacher is making improvements.

Impact Statement:

Through the implementation of this system, both teachers and school leaders are held accountable for

continuous improvement, which positively impacts student achievement.

2.5 The school has received a rating of *Effective* for this Statement of Practice: Leaders effectively use evidence-based systems and structures to examine and improve critical individual and school-wide practices as defined in the SCEP (student achievement, curriculum and teacher practices; leadership development; community/family engagement; and student social and emotional developmental health).

Overall Finding:

The school leader requires the staff to use evidence-based systems designed to provide information to the school leadership team (SLT) that is needed to improve individual staff instruction and school-wide practices.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school leader reported to the IIT that she has focused on monitoring the work of the school in order to target areas for improvement. The school leaders monitor New York City's Advance system in order to select teachers who are rated effective or highly effective and to provide time for them to assist other teachers, either as coach/mentors or as LabSite instructors. Some of these teachers have been asked to perform mutually agreed upon intervisitations. She also reported that ongoing analysis of benchmark assessments as well as analysis of summative data at the conclusion of units of study has provided information important for regrouping students. In an effort to improve monitoring, the SLT reviews teaching and learning rubrics to ensure the normative value of teacher assessments.
- The school leaders indicated that to identify and improve school-wide practices that impact student social and emotional developmental health, the school uses the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program and evidence from analysis carried out by school leaders in class and throughout the school. They note that these initiatives have reduced the number of behavioral incidents and are contributing to the creation of an environment that is conducive to learning. School leaders regularly monitor the impact of the program not only for its contribution to social success but also for its impact on academic success. To improve community and family engagement, the Remind 101 program has been developed to assist parents by reminding them of school activities and important assessment dates. School leaders reported that this initiative has been monitored and has provided evidence that indicates an improvement in family engagement.

Impact Statement:

The school leader has used evidence-based systems and a data-driven approach to school improvement that enhances the school's ability to make measureable progress toward meeting critical individual and school-wide goals.

Areas for Improvement:

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

Overall Finding:

The school leaders have developed and articulated specific, measurable, ambitious, results- oriented and timely (SMART) goals, along with a school mission for student academic achievement. Although they are known and understood by staff and students, not all parents are aware of all the goals.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The SMART goals that have been created are shared with the staff; however, the IIT found through the examination of documents that these goals have not been all been effectively disseminated or discussed with families to enable them to support fully the goals.
- Staff and student interviews conducted by the IIT indicated that most of these stakeholders are aware of the goals for improved behavior through the implementation of the PBIS program, the increased alignment to the CCLS, analysis of data on student referrals, and improvement in instruction and academic achievement. Staff members were able to discuss the improved use of data to ensure the establishment of norms that are indicative of high-level work and the use of established rubrics and assessments to examine student work. However, parent interviews indicated that while participants were aware of the behavior improvement programs, not all parents were aware of the various instructional initiatives and the CCLS. School leadership has attempted to improve parental involvement.

Impact Statement:

Because not all stakeholders are aware of all the school goals, the school leader’s ability to improve achievement is minimized.

Recommendation:

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

- Seek additional methods of communicating with all families in order to more effectively share the school’s vision and goals and monitor the progress of these efforts.

<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>
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Debriefing Statement: The school leaders and some teachers ensure that the curriculum used to support the CCLS includes goals, pacing calendars, assessments and modifications in most core subjects. However, lesson plans vary by teacher in the areas of differentiation for all learners, as does the use of formative and summative assessments. Inconsistency of actionable feedback to students limits the transfer of ownership of learning to students, which minimizes their ability to progress.

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:

Although the school leader is in the process of developing and instituting a plan for the full implementation of curricula aligned to the CCLS, staff's inconsistent use of the standards does not meet the needs of all students.

Evidence/Information that lead to this Finding:

- The school leader reported that she is developing a plan to fully implement the CCLS. The plan includes the provision of on-going PD, materials, and classroom guidance. The school leader has begun this process, has provided resources to sustain mathematics and ELA coaches, and has added other consultants and literacy coaches to support staff. Focus classes have been established to provide CCLS- based curriculum in a smaller setting. They are adapted each six-week cycle. In addition, the Wednesday morning professional learning communities (PLCs) meetings provide time for collaboration in planning. Thursday morning PLC meetings provide common time to assess student work and the effectiveness of both the program and the instruction in an effort to provide curricula that meet the needs of students.
- However, the review team found that evidence from planning materials and lesson observations indicate that not all teachers are effectively implementing CCLS. Approximately half of the classes observed by the IIT aligned planning and delivery to CCLS and used the instructional shifts.
- Observations of 35 classrooms by the review team indicated that only two-thirds of the teachers were providing differentiation of instruction activities to meet the needs of all students. The school leader and teachers reported during interviews that the school is in the process of regrouping grades seven and eight based on the successful grade six model that is being used this year. The intention is for this model to provide a structure for vertical teams to meet during a common planning period to improve instruction to meet the needs of all students.

Impact Statement:

The school's inconsistent implementation of curricula does not consistently meet the needs of all students, which limits college and career readiness.

Recommendations:

In order for the strategies and practices of the school to achieve an effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school leader should:

- Use a distributive leadership model to ensure that a systematic plan is used to support staff in the alignment of instruction with the CCLS and the CCLS shifts; ensure that goals in the lessons are developed to address the needs of all students by continually monitoring implementation of the curricula.

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 use lesson plans that include data-driven instruction (DDI) protocols and align to the CCLS.

- Review of unit and lesson plans by the IIT indicate that although teachers included the CCLS for the lesson, the planned instruction was teacher dominated and lacking in structures to provide for student input, discussion, and reflection. The review team found that DDI protocols were planned for in approximately half of the lessons.
- Teachers have common planning time two times per week in order to adjust units and lessons that align to CCLS and use data for content planning. The school leader uses consultants to support school leaders and staff in planning units aligned to CCLS. Document review by the IIT indicated that the school has developed units across three core areas while the science department is developing units at a slower pace. Rubrics, which were on bulletin boards in each classroom, provided evaluation of student work, but did not include actionable feedback for most students and were not used effectively by teachers. Most lesson plans examined did not include an identification of scaffolded skills necessary for meeting the needs of subgroups or sufficient materials required for instruction aligned to the needs of ELLs.

Impact Statement:

Limited planning based on DDI protocols and practices as well as inconsistent alignment of lesson plans to the CCLS minimizes student academic achievement.

Recommendations:

In order for the school's strategies and practices to align to an effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school leader should:

- Develop protocols and systems for the review of all lesson and curriculum plans to ensure consistent alignment to CCLS, rigor in the use of data, assessments, and instruction. Ensure that planning and implementation provide clear expectations for DDI, and develop protocols for the review of rubrics in each classroom to ensure both clear evaluative standards and the inclusion of feedback that will guide student progress.

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 provide comprehensive interdisciplinary curricula for students.

Evidence/Information that Leads to this Finding:

- During interviews with teachers and through the analysis of planning documents, the IIT found that interdisciplinary partnerships in technology, social studies, science, and art are developed on an informal basis and integration of interdisciplinary lessons are inconsistent. Technology and art teachers are included in the content area meetings to encourage the use of curricula in the content areas; however, formal planning is not added to the agenda or recorded in the minutes.
- Culminating projects or student work on display do not generally support an interdisciplinary approach. Of the 35 classrooms observed by the review team, approximately one-half involved interdisciplinary connections that provided enrichment opportunities for all students.
- In some lessons, such as social studies, mathematics, and science, teachers developed strategies to connect these areas to technology; however, the agendas of grade level and subject area meetings do not include reference to interdisciplinary planning or to the consistent use of technology in lessons. Observations during the IIT review indicated that many teachers do not regularly use technology as a tool for enhancing student learning.

Impact Statement:

Students are not consistently provided with opportunities to engage in thoughtful, cross-curricular work, which limits their ability to be academically successful.

Recommendations:

In order for the school's strategies and practices to align to the effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school should:

- Develop an interdisciplinary curricula that provides enrichment opportunities within and across all grade levels and subjects; ensure that teachers regularly develop innovative strategies to connect enrichment curricula to subject specific curricula

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:

Although staff has begun to administer benchmark assessments, they have not consistently aligned the curriculum to the assessments to improve instruction or provided pertinent feedback to students.

Evidence/Information that Leads to this Finding:

- Although assessment data is used in planning units, lesson plans examined by the IIT indicated that they inconsistently incorporated student reflection or higher order thinking skills. Most lesson plans reviewed by the IIT did not indicate modifications in the instructional process based on data collected during prior lessons or assessments. There is limited evidence from observations and planning documents that teachers use data and other assessments to inform curricular decisions or to make adjustments to curriculum and lesson planning. Of the 35 classes observed by the review

team 51 percent did not display evidence of attempts to gather formative assessments.

- Less than half of the 35 classes visited by the IIT demonstrated evidence of student self-tracking and interviews with teachers and students indicated that providing feedback based on data is infrequent in some classes. Many teachers do not routinely use data to outline what students need to address in their learning in order to improve achievement levels.

Impact Statement:

Inconsistent alignment between the curriculum and assessments and limited feedback given to students minimizes student ownership of their work and academic achievement.

Recommendations:

In order for the school’s strategies and practices to align to the effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school should:

- Ensure that data is used to make curricular decisions and adjustments and provide students with ongoing feedback on data that will support student ownership of learning and allow opportunities for reflection and improvement.

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: Inconsistently developed individual lesson plans, informed by a variety of student data, do not provide the structure necessary for intellectually engaging rigorous instruction. Some lessons include the CCLS instructional shifts, tools for student expectations, and individual student goals. However, the inconsistent implementation of lesson strategies aligned to data does not lead students to purposeful actions, which lead to intellectual safety and higher levels of academic achievement.

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 are not consistently analyzing and using data to align plans and instructional practices to develop challenging and achievable goals for all groups of students.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- School leaders are in the process of ensuring that all staff have a working knowledge of the use of student data necessary to plan for instruction that is intellectually engaging and that will lead to improved student achievement. However, this is at an early stage, and observations of teachers and

review of lesson plans by the IIT showed that only half of the classes demonstrated use of DDI to organize lesson plans or to match activities to the differing needs and abilities of students.

- The school leader has allocated resources to assist in ensuring that staff has a CCLS- aligned curriculum in most subject areas. These resources include Expeditionary Learning in ELA and Connected Math Program 3 (CMP3) for mathematics. The social studies department has created several CCLS units of study, and the science department has two units per grade level. However, the IIT found that not all staff have demonstrated that they use strategies that are designed to meet the needs of all students.
- Teacher interviews indicated that planning of annual, unit, and daily plans is done mainly in PLC meetings held each week. The SLT attends those planning meetings; however, the plans examined by the review team do not reflect strategies that address the needs of all students and are mainly restatements of formal unit plans. Discussions with teachers and school leaders indicate that rigorous procedures are not fully in place for teachers to set long and short-term goals for students.

Impact Statement:

Teachers' inconsistent instructional practices and goal setting procedures do not promote high levels of student engagement and inquiry for all students, which limits high levels of student achievement.

Recommendations:

In order for the school's strategies and practices to align to an effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school should:

- Develop a plan to review all lesson plans to ensure that all student learning needs are taken into account and that student data and strategies required to deliver the lessons are effective; ensure that students are provided with challenging academic goals.

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

Overall Finding:

Teachers are not consistently developing lessons that are aligned to the CCLS, incorporate rigor, higher order questioning, and high levels of text and content complexity.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- Interviews with the school leader indicated that the APs have been directed to review all lesson plans and to ensure that staff are beginning to align planning to CCLS. However, not all staff are clear on how this is to be done and how to assess alignment. The school leader has provided weekly grade level and subject area conferences that are designed to emphasize the implementation of the CCLS. The weekly grade level and subject area meetings have begun to focus on the use of end of unit assessments as a method for analyzing content rich material and providing multiple points of access for all students, However, the review team found that this is not accomplished on a

consistent basis.

- Lesson observations by the IIT indicated the integration of higher order questioning only in one third of lessons. In the majority of lessons, questions were low level, with expectations of limited and simple answers. Most teachers did not push students to give extended answers that tested their knowledge and understanding. In approximately one half of lessons observed by the review team, the learning materials were basic and did not offer a higher level of complexity to challenge students and to promote discussion.

Impact Statement:

Because of inconsistent instructional practices, not all students are provided with rigorous learning opportunities, which limit student engagement and achievement.

Recommendations:

In order for the school's strategies and practices to align to the effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school should:

- Ensure that instruction consistently includes the use of higher order questioning and learning materials that challenge and motivate all students.

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

Overall Finding:

School leadership and staff have initiated programs designed to create a safe learning environment responsive to student needs; however, not all staff have responded to the individual needs of all students or provided a sense of intellectual safety.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- During student interviews with the review team, not all students indicated that they feel safe in answering questions. Some participants reported that they felt that if they answered incorrectly, other students might ridicule them and that not all teachers consistently address this infraction.
- The school has introduced the PBIS program and has made this a school-wide initiative. Teacher prepared bulletin boards, both in classrooms and in the hallways, show PBIS concepts, cumulative charts, and data that demonstrate progress and encourage continued improvement. During interviews with teachers, parents, and students, all participants indicated that they were aware of the PBIS program and expectations; however, some students pointed out that not all students feel safe all the time.
- Although behavior in classes is often compliant, the needs of students are not always consistently met, and this at times leads to some dissatisfaction with the learning process. Instruction is often teacher led and this restricts the opportunities for students to engage in discussions or to share and challenge each other's views or perspectives or those of the staff.

Impact Statement:

The school leadership has initiated the PBIS program, and data indicates progress in improving school safety issues. However, not all students feel safe and teachers do not consistently provide a learning environment that is responsive to student needs and perspectives, which limits student progress.

Recommendations:

In order for the school's strategies and practices to align to the effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school should:

- Ensure that students consistently learn in an intellectually safe learning environment where they can share ideas, values and perspectives in an open and respectful way. Provide PD on classroom management and ensure that behavioral expectations are applied consistently for all students.

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

Overall Finding:

Staff is in the process of using data and assessments to inform and adjust their instructional strategies and groupings of students; however, the use of data and assessments has been inconsistent and does not always provide timely and pertinent feedback to students to increase academic achievement.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- During classroom observations, the review team found that students were sometimes grouped without the use of data to form or adjust the groups. Staff in five classes grouped students according to student preference. These groups did not always function with a specific purpose and sometimes exhibited disruptive behavior.
- During interviews, some teachers stated that they do not always track formative or summative data or use data to make instructional changes to meet the needs of all students. It was also noted in teacher interviews that ESL teachers and teachers of ELLs did not consistently use specific data found in the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) to form groups of students or to adjust planning.
- Some students, during interviews with the IIT, indicated that they did not often receive feedback that increased their self-reflection or engaged them in higher- order thinking skills. Some teachers returned work to students without comments or specific, next steps indicating how to improve their work.

Impact Statement:

Teachers inconsistently use data to inform student grouping and provide limited feedback to students, which hinders student participation in their own learning and academic progress.

Recommendations:

In order for school strategies and practices to align to the effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school should:

- Include assessment and data use in the weekly grade level and subject area planning meetings as part of the agenda in order to develop instructional strategies that will lead to higher levels of achievement; Ensure that data is used to inform planning, student grouping, and targeted and actionable feedback to students to enable them to improve their work.

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: While the school leadership has invested resources, adopted programs, and created experiences that foster relationships and partnerships, not all stakeholders are able to articulate their role in building a safe learning environment that supports the social and emotional developmental health 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 with staff has established a system by which each student is known by an adult who monitors student well-being. The school uses programs and practices for referral that provide support for individual social, emotional and developmental health and academic success.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school leader has established overarching systems of support delivered by deans, guidance counselors, a psychiatric social worker, and four APs, to sustain student social and emotional developmental health. In addition, the school leader has promoted partnerships with community organizations that provide additional support to both students and families. Organizations, such as Beacon, Fordham University and the Montefiore Clinic also provide support for students at various levels of intervention.
- The school leader ensures that staff know and follow the referral procedures for students in need of social and emotional support. Discussions with students and staff indicate that there is a well-established procedure in place so that all students are well known by a designated adult. This procedure covers all, and not just “at risk” students. Students reported to the review team that they would readily approach the designated adult if they had any concerns.

- The school leader indicated that the parent coordinator reaches out to parents whenever their assistance is required. Additionally, the guidance counselors have instituted an open door policy in which parents may come to school at any time to consult with staff.
- The school leadership has introduced the use of Concern Slips, which have multiple parts, and are completed by staff whenever they encounter instances of student concern. School leaders, guidance counselors, and the dean follow-up, and records are maintained in the main office.

Impact Statement:

The systems the school leader has implemented address the barriers to students' social and emotional health, which promote 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.

Overall Finding:

Although the school leader has implemented a curriculum that focuses on student social and emotional health, additional PD and training are needed for staff to ensure the development of a safe and healthy school community.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- Although the school has implemented PBIS, discussions with students indicate that the program is not always implemented consistently. During interviews with teachers, some participants reported to the review team that not all teachers consistently use the program or report all instances of misbehavior.
- Interviews with staff indicated that they would welcome additional PD focusing on the implementation of PBIS and to ensure that they consistently provide a learning environment in which all student needs are met and where students are intellectually safe.

Impact Statement:

The inconsistent use of PBIS and limited PD for staff minimize the development of a safe and healthy school community and student success.

Recommendations:

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

- Ensure that all components of the PBIS are understood, recorded and acted upon and that students are provided with a safe and healthy learning environment; provide additional PD for staff to ensure that they are equipped with the skills needed to support and meet the social and emotional needs

of all students.

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:

Not all stakeholders are aware of their specific roles or work together consistently to meet the social and emotional developmental health needs of students.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- During interviews with the review team, the school leader stated that she has directed the in-house technology staff member to provide ongoing workshops on how to use ENGRADE for all families, since the beginning of the year; however, not all families participate in this training. Some participants during the parent interview discussed the need for families to better understand the role they can play in improving the school environment and their child's academic and social success.
- Teachers reported that they understood their role in providing an environment that is safe and conducive to learning; however, not all teachers feel they are supported consistently when dealing with student social and emotional developmental health issues. However, observations by the review team indicate that not all teachers consistently exercise their role in providing an environment that recognizes and meets the needs of students that nurtures effective learning.
- Interviews with students indicate that some students feel that more students should be held accountable for inappropriate behavior that impacts adversely on the learning of others. Some participants reported that that some students should be more responsible for meeting behavioral expectations rather than adults imposing a code of discipline.

Impact Statement:

Because not all stakeholders are aware of their specific roles and responsibilities in building a safe learning environment, the school's ability to address the social and emotional developmental health needs of students is limited, which hinders student success.

Recommendations:

In order for the school's strategies and practices to align with the effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school leader should:

- Ensure that the school regularly and rigorously reinforces the roles all stakeholders are expected to play in ensuring that the school is a safe learning environment.

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 use data consistently to address student social and emotional developmental health needs.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school leader has established systems and structures to enable teachers to use data to support student social and emotional developmental health needs. The school leadership requires teachers to use the PBIS program and system of data collection in order to maintain data on the referral system. However, discussions with teachers and analysis of documentation indicate that not all teachers use this data to identify student needs or to track progress. In addition, because not all teachers implement PBIS consistently, the available data is not always accurate in identifying specific student needs. The IIT also found that the use of data relating to social and emotional health is not generally aligned with academic data to meet student needs.
- The student support staff stated that students feel free to discuss any social and emotional developmental health needs they have and that individual staff, including psychologists and guidance counselors, maintain logs of student needs. Students reported that they feel that there is at least one adult in the school that they could turn to in the event of need. Students stated that the guidance staff or the psychologists were always available.

Impact Statement:

The inconsistent use of data to respond to students’ social and emotional developmental health needs limits students’ opportunities to become academically and socially successful.

Recommendations:

In order for the school’s strategies and practices to align with the effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school leader should:

- Ensure that all available data is used to identify and meet the social and emotional needs of students and track the progress students make in relation to strategies or interventions.

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

E

Debriefing Statement: The school communicates its high expectations for students and welcomes reciprocal communication with constituents. The school has established partnerships that provide various services and opportunities to meet the needs of families and students. However, data is not shared in a way that enables all parents to advocate for their children’s needs.

Strengths:

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

Overall Finding:

The school leader has structures in place that are designed to provide families and students with an awareness of the school's high expectations for student achievement.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school leader reported to the IIT that one of her goals has been to keep both students and families aware of students' incremental scores and to keep parents and students informed of graduation expectations and the process for movement to high school. Analysis of the minutes of the parent coordinator concerning the Parent Association (PA) meetings indicates that parents have had numerous opportunities to learn about school expectations and the role of parents in their children's success. The school has used surveys to reach out to parents to improve parental involvement and to evaluate how well the school is doing in establishing partnerships with families. The school accepts comments and suggestions from families for improvement and builds this information into its communication strategies with parents and families.

Impact Statement:

The school's plan to communicate with parents concerning the school's high expectations for student learning results in partnerships with families that foster academic success that students need for college- and career-readiness.

6.3 **The school has received a rating of *Effective* for this Statement of Practice:** The school engages in effective planning and reciprocal communication with family and community stakeholders so that student strength and needs are identified and used to augment learning.

Overall Finding:

The school has provided parents with multiple opportunities to establish reciprocal communication needed to support student achievement.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The review team's examination of the parent coordinator binder indicated that a monthly newsletter is sent home to all parents informing them of all school events. The newsletter is translated into Spanish, the predominant language of many school constituents. The parent coordinator provided the IIT with other examples of communications that are sent to parents in Spanish and English. The parent coordinator also noted and the review team found that all telephone calls, newsletters and flyers, are also sent in the language selected by the family.

- The school newsletter informs parents of the availability of on-line programs in order to allow opportunities for parents to access student data and progress information. During the parent meeting, participants stated that the access codes for these on-line programs were distributed during parent teacher conference night and parents are informed of the monthly PA meetings.
- During the large student group meeting, the small student group meeting, and the student support staff meeting, participants reported expressed that teachers make phone calls to the homes of students to resolve different situations as they occur. Parents also stated that they can communicate with the school at any time.
- The school leader reported that the school monitors the effectiveness of its communication with parents and addresses concerns and issues that arise, which was confirmed by participants during parent interviews.

Impact Statement:

The school provides multiple opportunities for reciprocal communication to ensure that families can support their child's academic achievement and social and emotional growth.

6.4 **The school has received a rating of *Effective* 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 provides workshops for parents in a variety of areas that promote the ability of parents to support student achievement.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- The school leader stated to the review team that parents have been provided with workshops that focus on the ways families can support the social and emotional developmental health of their children. The school leader has partnered with the Montefiore Clinic to assist families in need of support. The clinic provides support on a regular basis as well as training for parents. Parents reported to the IIT that they maintain contact with the school support staff whenever needs arise at home. Parents also stated that they have benefitted from support from the school through workshops and information evenings on how they can support their child's learning. Parents indicate that they welcome these offerings and also state that staff is open and accessible to requests that parents may have regarding advice and strategies to assist in student learning and achievement.
- School staff indicated that they have received training from the school and community organizations to help them build strong partnerships with parents. These offerings have aided in building connections between home and school.

Impact Statement:

The school has provided training for parents and staff through different programs in order to help both parents and teachers provide necessary supports for all students. As a result, students benefit from a robust and

focused home-school connection.

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

Overall Finding:

The school shares data with parents about their children’s progress; however, the data is not understood by all parents.

Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:

- During the parent focus meeting, participants noted that ENGRADE is the place to visit on the Internet to see their children’s progress. A parent stated that since she does not have a computer at home, she goes to the local library where she is able to access these websites. Data is also shared through standard means of communication, such as report cards, progress reports, phone calls, and graduation in doubt letters. An examination of the monthly calendar of events found in the parent coordinator’s binder indicates that parents have been encouraged to use ENGRADE and ARIS to be informed of their children’s progress. However, some parents stated that they experience some difficulties understanding and interpreting the data and would welcome further guidance so that they can better advocate for their child’s success.
- In the parent interview and the support staff interview, participants noted that although communication is sent home in a variety of ways, improving parent participation in PA events and other meetings held at the school is needed. School and parent leaders indicate that they continue to discuss and try new ways to encourage the participation of all parents.

Impact Statement:

Because data is not consistently shared in a way that enables parents to identify and advocate for their child’s needs, student achievement is limited.

Recommendations:

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

- Ensure that additional opportunities are provided for parents to be able to access and interpret data in order to better understand how to advocate for services for their children.