



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

**DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)**



<b>BEDS Code</b>	412300010024
<b>School Name</b>	Thomas R. Proctor High School
<b>School Address</b>	1203 Hilton Avenue, Utica, NY
<b>District Name</b>	Utica City School District
<b>School Leader</b>	Steven A. Falchi
<b>Dates of Review</b>	April 8-9, 2014
<b>School Accountability Status</b>	Focus School
<b>Type of Review</b>	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet												
Grade Configuration	9-12	Total Enrollment	2691	SIG Recipient	<input type="checkbox"/>	Title 1 Population	68%	Attendance Rate	91.9 %			
Free Lunch	64.8 %	Reduced Lunch	5.7%				Limited English Proficient	16.4%	Students with Disabilities	16.8%		
Number of English Language Learner Classes												
#Transitional Bilingual	1	#Dual Language		0								
Number of Special Education Classes												
#Self-Contained	71	#Consultant Teaching		13		#Integrated Collaborative Teaching			33			
#Resource Room	27											
Number of Special Classes												
#Visual Arts	20	#Music	12	#Drama	0	#Foreign Language	54	#Dance	0	#CTE	18	
Racial/Ethnic Origin												
American Indian or Alaska Native	<1%	Black or African American	25%	Hispanic or Latino	16%	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	19%	White	40%	Multi-racial	<1%	
Personnel												
Years Principal Assigned to School	7	# of Assistant Principals		5		# of Deans		0		# of Counselors / Social Workers		12
Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	0%	Teaching Out of Certification		0%		Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp.		<1%		Average Teacher Absences		12/day
Credit Accumulation (High School Only) and Performance Rates												
% of 1 <sup>st</sup> yr. students who earned 10+ credits	16%	% of 2 <sup>nd</sup> yr. students who earned 10+ credits		80%		% of 3 <sup>rd</sup> yr. students who earned 10+ credits		97%		4 Year Graduation Rate		70%
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	63%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4		23%		Science Performance at levels 3 & 4				6 Year Graduation Rate		74%

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

**SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS DESCRIBED BY THE SCHOOL:**

1. To provide a safe learning environment that supports the social and emotional developmental health needs of all students.
2. To engage in ongoing data-driven decision making as it pertains to lesson planning, daily instructional practice and student assessments, with a focus on rigor and student engagement.
3. To implement the Common Core Learning Standards and literacy based strategies across all content areas.
4. To increase parent involvement to strengthen the home/school connection.
5. To utilize the APPR process to increase the accountability for student learning and student outcomes across all content areas.

**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	
	<b>OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 2:</b>			<b>D</b>	

**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	

	<b>OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 3:</b>			<b>D</b>	
<b>Tenet 4 - Teacher Practices and Decisions:</b> 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.					
<b>#</b>	<b>Statement of Practice</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>I</b>
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	
	<b>OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 4:</b>			<b>D</b>	
<b>Tenet 5 - Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health:</b> 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.					
<b>#</b>	<b>Statement of Practice</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>I</b>
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	
	<b>OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 5:</b>			<b>D</b>	

**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	
	<b>OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 6:</b>			<b>D</b>	

**School Review – Findings, Evidence, Impact and Recommendations:**

<b>Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions:</b> 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.	<b>Tenet Rating</b>	<b>D</b>
<p><b>Debriefing Statement:</b> The school has a vision for improvement focused on safety and the use of data to improve teaching and learning, but has not achieved full recognition and buy-in from all stakeholders. School leadership is making strategic decisions in many areas, but has not yet ensured the needs of all students are met. The school has a system in place for observing and evaluating staff, but it does not effectively drive improvement and staff accountability. The school is collecting academic data to support improvements in teaching and learning, but does not have a systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating family engagement and social and emotional development programs and practices. As a result, the school has not attained continuous improvement and achieved rigorous goals for student success.</p> <p><b>Strengths:</b> All ratings for this Tenet are either <b>Developing</b> or <b>Ineffective</b> and therefore, comments are listed under <b>Areas for Improvement</b>.</p> <p><b>Areas for Improvement:</b></p> <p>2.2 <b>The school has received a rating of <i>Developing</i> for this Statement of Practice:</b> The school leader ensures that the school community shares the Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Results-oriented, and Timely (SMART) goals/mission, and long-term vision inclusive of core values that address the priorities outlined in the School Comprehensive Educational Plan (SCEP).</p> <p><b>Overall Finding:</b> The school leader has a clearly articulated vision for school improvement that is not known by all stakeholders and is not driven by measurable goals.</p> <p><b>Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• While school leaders are focused on improving school culture and student performance, their strategies are not driven by clear, measurable targets for improvement. In its 2013-14 SCEP, the school reflected on its plan from the previous year, noting, “Although the plan was comprehensive in nature, the activities need to be prioritized with measurable goals and quantifiable targets.” However, the plan for this year also lacks measurable goals and targets for school improvement. In addition, the review team found that the school’s goals tend to focus on inputs rather than outcomes and there are no goals related to demonstrable student achievement or growth.</li><li>• When asked about school goals and priorities, teachers gave broad answers, such as “college preparation” and “helping kids find a purpose.” Only an English as a second language (ESL) teacher responded with a measurable outcome, “getting students to move up one level on the NYSESLAT.” Documents revealed that one department’s goals were to reduce stress by simplifying the format of quarterly tests and restructuring procedures and protocols. However, these are strategies rather than goals. Parents understand that the school is focused on “life and career readiness,” but also said they are unfamiliar with any specific school goals.</li></ul>		

- The school developed and adopted a vision statement, “To provide a high quality education that is accessible to all students in a safe and orderly environment so that they have the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to be college and career ready” that was posted throughout the building. In addition, the school leadership has articulated clear priorities for this year, which include creating a safe learning environment, aligning curriculum and instruction to the Common Core, and using data to inform teaching and learning. While there is consensus among staff of the importance of school safety, it was not evident that all staff equally embraced those strategies designed to improve instruction. For example, teachers did consistently state that the use of data is a priority, and some had mixed feelings about the expectations for administering common benchmark assessments.

**Impact Statement:** The absence of measurable goals and the inconsistent ownership of the school’s vision hinder student success.

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

- Establish clear and measurable goals for student outcomes to enable the school to focus its improvement efforts and measure progress regularly; continue to enhance stakeholder understanding and ownership of the school’s vision for improvement.

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.

**Overall Finding:** The school leaders do not consistently make strategic decisions to organize programmatic, human, and fiscal capital resources.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- The school leader shared that there have been a series of funding cuts over the past few years, including this year, that have made it necessary to reduce staff and programs. The school leader has strategically adjusted his leadership structure to maintain small teams of assistant principals (APs), counselors, and social workers to each work with a specific group of students in academies. The grade nine academy was targeted with additional team members to provide extra support based on the identified needs of students transitioning into high school. The school lost one AP this year and will lose another next year. As a result, the academies will shift to grade teams next year. The school has also made strategic use of parent liaisons who conduct home visits, build relationships with students and families, and troubleshoot problems from the community that affect the school. Further, the school leader secured funds for some departments to work on planning over the summer, but acknowledged that more planning time is needed for all departments to develop curriculum.
- The school leader indicated that despite budget cuts, he has prioritized with the support of the district the maintenance of programs that foster college- and career-readiness, such as advanced placement (AP) courses, 25 dual-credit courses through articulation agreements with local higher education institutions, and the school’s Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (JROTC) program. In addition, while extended learning time (ELT) funds have been cut, the school leader prioritized using

available funds for new summer orientation programs designed to support at-risk students as they transition to the school, and invested in Plato, an online program for credit recovery. Finally, the ESL department is implementing and piloting programs, such as a bridge program for new students, and co-teaching classes with staff in the science department.

- School leaders identified a number of resources that are not being maximized, including aspects of the schedule and the library, but have not made strategic decisions to address all of these issues. For example, periods are 37 minutes and although some classes benefit from double periods on a block schedule, these short periods limit instruction. School leaders and students stated that the homeroom period at the beginning of the school day has a limited impact, as it did not serve an academic or advisory purpose. As a result, the school is considering changes to the schedule next year to make better use of this time. In addition, a planning committee is exploring ways to use the library and its staff next year to support at-risk students.
- Students and parents stated that there is a lack of access to curriculum materials, and that the school has large class sizes and overcrowding. Students stated that in some classes not all students have books or desks. Further, some students noted limited supplies in science classes and said that they have to fund their own projects. Additionally, parents indicated that there are not enough textbooks available for their children.

**Impact Statement:** The school is not consistently using resources strategically to meet the immediate needs of all students and to support academic success.

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

- Continue to make strategic adjustments to staffing; enhance systems to identify and support students who are not succeeding; develop a schedule that maximizes learning time and utilizes all available human capital to raise student achievement; evaluate the efficacy of new programs to ensure that they meet student needs.

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

**Overall Finding:** The school has a functional APPR process in place, but it is not effectively driving improvement in instructional practices.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- The school leader has a system in place aligned to the district's APPR, and is conducting observations and instructional walks to evaluate teachers and provide them with feedback. Documents indicated that pre- and post-conferences are occurring, and that the school adopted the NYSUT rubric for observations. While the school had an initial training on Staff Track, which facilitates collection of data and communication with teachers, full implementation is not planned until next year. A review of observation documents demonstrated a clear focus on instructional practices, such as questioning, feedback to students, and checks for understanding. However, in some cases,

evaluators cited general evidence rather than individualized teacher practice.

- The school's APPR and instructional walk process provides limited actionable feedback that would help a teacher improve. Most of the documentation is descriptive, rather than evaluative, and examples of feedback indicated the use of guiding questions rather than the identification of specific areas for growth and direct suggestions. Moreover, while the NYSUT rubric is an organizing tool for observations, immediate feedback regarding levels on the rubric is not provided to teachers, which limits their understanding of where they need to improve.
- The school is using teacher improvement plans (TIPs) inconsistently to drive improvements to instruction. Some TIPs describe what teachers are doing, while others are specific and note clear areas for improvement, including student engagement, assessment, and student interactions.

**Impact Statement:** As a result of inconsistent procedures, administrators and staff are not consistently held accountable for continuous improvement.

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

- Develop a professional culture that encourages the use of observations and formative feedback to improve instructional practices; continue to provide school leaders with professional development (PD) to enhance their skills in providing actionable feedback to teachers.

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

**Overall Finding:** The school leader does not consistently use evidence-based systems to examine and improve critical school-wide practices.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- The school has heavily invested in a ten-week benchmark assessment system, with school leaders conducting audits of the assessments and scoring practices. Protocols are in place for teachers to review the results and conduct a benchmark analysis. Teams of teachers who teach the same course subsequently complete and submit a Ten-Week Benchmark Assessment Group Reflection document. School leaders are using results to monitor curriculum development and inform coaching and PD planning. In addition, the student learning objective (SLO) process is in place as part of the APPR, but in some cases school leaders misidentify teachers for improvement plans. The school is not rigorous enough in evaluating the impact of its numerous college- and career-readiness programs.
- Given the large size of the school and staff, a number of structures are in place to monitor the implementation of strategies related to the academic program. The leadership team is comprised of the principal, APs, department chairs, and AIS facilitators and the team meet regularly to review academic data, curriculum, and instruction. The faculty advisory committee provides teachers with an opportunity to share and discuss concerns. At the time of the review, the school-based inquiry

team, which included school leaders and teachers, was studying library utilization and examining library standards and Common Core expectations to determine how to maximize library use to benefit at-risk students. However, in the absence of clear and measurable outcome goals, these structures are focused primarily on implementation issues rather than impact.

- The school does not have a systematic approach to monitoring parent engagement or the social-emotional needs of students. The school’s SCEP includes the goal of increasing by five percent parent attendance at major school events. However, systems for collecting and aggregating data related to parent involvement were not evident.
- The school has systems in place for identifying incoming grade nine students who are at-risk, which include communication with the district middle schools and an analysis of grade eight assessment data. However, the review team did not find evidence of systems for monitoring student social-emotional needs.

**Impact Statement:** The inconsistent use of evidence-based systems limits the school’s ability to measure progress toward critical school-wide goals and hinders student achievement.

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

- Establish school goals that can be measured and that facilitate progress monitoring in all areas of school practice, including social and emotional development and community and family engagement; establish and enhance systems for collecting data and evaluating individual programs to ensure resources are maximized; enhance opportunities for sharing and discussing data and information across the school.

**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.

<b>Tenet Rating</b>	<b>D</b>
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**Debriefing Statement:** The school is in the process of implementing a curriculum aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), although lesson plans do not effectively incorporate student needs. There is an emphasis on literacy across the curriculum, but the school does not have a systematic approach to building connections across subjects. Teachers are beginning to embrace data-driven practices, but it does not yet effectively lead to differentiated instruction or foster student ownership of learning. As a result, the school has not yet achieved high levels of student performance.

**Strengths:**

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

**Areas for Improvement:**

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

the needs of students.

**Overall Finding:** The school is in the process of developing and implementing CCLS-aligned curriculum that meets the needs of all students.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- School leaders and teachers acknowledged that some departments were further along in developing coherent, rigorous curriculum aligned to the CCLS than others. The English and ESL departments are the furthest along in developing curriculum, while other departments are just beginning. Funds were allocated last summer for the social studies, business, and math departments to work on curriculum mapping and the school has used some of its PD days to support and provide time for planning.
- Teachers described curriculum planning as works in progress as they adjust to the CCLS and changing Regents exams. Teachers noted some resources were provided to assist them in this work, including a curriculum-mapping template, but also pointed out that some resources have been slow to arrive in some subjects. For example, geometry only had one module available.
- The curriculum does not consistently reflect student needs. For example, the school has a large number of academic intervention services (AIS) and Regents prep courses for students in need of additional support, such as those who have not passed Regents exams required for graduation. However, the review team found that the curriculum was not adapted for students who had taken the Regents multiple times without passing. In some classrooms visited, teachers had analyzed data to determine specific skills and content that students had not mastered, but there was limited evidence of differentiated curriculum beyond re-teach materials. The ESL department has created a nuanced curriculum to meet the needs of English language learners (ELLs) with four levels of classes for beginner students and three levels of classes for intermediate students. Similarly, differentiated curriculum was observed frequently in special education classes where students have individualized education programs (IEPs); however, curriculum did not consistently meet the needs of students across the school.

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

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

- Continue the curriculum-mapping process to ensure CCLS alignment in all subjects; review and revise curriculum regularly based on student performance data that includes disaggregation by subgroups and identifies specific needs of students who have not passed Regents exams, such as coursework required for graduation; continue to provide PD and resources to support collaborative curriculum planning.

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

**Overall Finding:** Teachers do not consistently develop and ensure that unit and lesson plans include DDI protocols and align to the CCLS to meet student needs.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- The school has adopted a lesson plan template that teachers are using. While curriculum materials, such as texts were generally challenging and grade appropriate, a review of lesson plans found that teachers do not consistently use these materials to develop higher-order thinking skills. Some lesson plans, for example, focused on developing procedural skills rather than conceptual understanding. Teachers have adopted the state’s curriculum modules, which include CCLS-aligned text and tasks, but these are not yet available for every subject, such as geometry.
- While the lesson plan template includes a section for differentiation, a review of lesson plans found that there was little evidence of teachers adapting curriculum or plans to meet student needs. For example, while some teachers selected specific material to re-teach, this material was not changed or adapted from the original plans. In addition, while some classrooms had stations planned, the materials were the same for all students.
- The school uses ten-week common assessments for all courses, and teachers shared that school leaders expect them to use the results to plan the subsequent ten weeks. However, some teachers shared that this limited their pacing and ability to meet student needs. Further, discussions with teachers and a review of documents demonstrated that many teachers were unclear how to use this data to plan to meet student needs.

**Impact Statement:** Inconsistent unit and lesson planning hinders student academic achievement.

**Recommendation:**

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

- Ensure that teacher lesson plans align to the CCLS and meet the needs of all students based on data.

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

**Overall Finding:** The school does not have a comprehensive plan for teachers to partner within and across grades and subjects to create interdisciplinary curricula targeting the arts, technology, and other enrichment opportunities.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- The school and district have made literacy across the curriculum a priority, as evidenced by classroom visits, interviews with school leaders and staff, and a review of documents. However, the review team found that the school does not have a systematic approach toward integrating interdisciplinary learning across subjects. While some departments are informally creating interdisciplinary curriculum, such as the ESL department that developed a quarterly project for

students to build literacy skills across disciplines, teachers shared that there is no formal process, and that teachers have limited time to plan cross-curricula connections.

**Impact Statement:** Students do not consistently have multiple opportunities to engage in thoughtful cross-curricula activities and this hinders student success.

**Recommendation:**

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

- Develop a plan for creating curricular connections across subject areas; create opportunities, including time and training, to support cross-discipline dialogue and partnerships.

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

**Overall Finding:** Teachers do not consistently implement a comprehensive system for using assessments to plan curricula and to involve students in the ownership of their learning.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- The school has a structured ten-week benchmark system. Teachers engage in individual and course analysis of data and action planning. However, a review of action plans from multiple departments demonstrated that teachers do not consistently use the data to make curricular decisions.
- Teachers do not consistently provide students with clear feedback. Students stated that teachers do not explain go them what they did wrong and what they need to do to improve their learning.
- While teachers used a variety of formative assessments, such as questioning, bell ringers, exit tickets, white boards, and thumbs up/down strategies during classroom visits, clear systems for using this information to inform curriculum were not evident across the school. For example, some teachers checked for understanding for only a few students in the class, while other teachers monitored the understanding of all students.

**Impact Statement:** The lack of a comprehensive assessment system to both inform lesson planning and provide actionable feedback to students is a barrier to student ownership of learning and academic success.

**Recommendation:**

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

- Ensure that data is used to inform instruction; establish norms for providing all students with actionable feedback to develop their ownership of learning.

<p><b>Tenet 4 - Teacher Practices and Decisions:</b> 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.</p>	<p><b>Tenet Rating</b></p>	<p><b>D</b></p>
<p><b><u>Debriefing Statement:</u></b> The school has developed systems for using data to inform instructional planning. However, teachers are not effectively using data to meet student needs or to provide consistently rigorous and engaging instruction. The school has established a physically and intellectually safe environment for learning. However, teachers do not effectively incorporate student voice and perspectives, or consistently use feedback to foster student ownership of learning. Therefore, not all students are achieving at high levels.</p> <p><b><u>Strengths:</u></b> All ratings for this Tenet are either <b>Developing</b> or <b>Ineffective</b> and therefore, comments are listed under <b>Areas for Improvement</b>.</p> <p><b><u>Areas for Improvement:</u></b></p> <p>4.2 <b><u>The school has received a rating of <i>Developing</i> for this Statement of Practice:</u></b> 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.</p> <p><b>Overall Finding:</b> Teachers do not consistently organize instructional practices around unit and lesson plans that meet student needs.</p> <p><b>Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school has a benchmark assessment system in place, but the use of data to inform instruction and goal setting is not consistently applied through the formal action planning process. For example, during a department meeting, teachers created action plans based on data, but did not discuss how to modify lessons plans and create concrete targets and goals for students. However, the review team found that the special education department was using mandated goal setting and progress monitoring as part of its IEP process.</li> <li>• School leaders are monitoring the action planning and lesson planning processes through a review of documents, observations, and classroom walk-throughs. However, a review of action plans and lesson plans demonstrated that the teachers primarily use data to identify topics for re-teaching, but do not plan lessons with modifications to meet student needs. While lesson plans include a section for differentiation, there was limited evidence of planned differentiation or differentiated instruction during classroom visits. Further, lesson plans were not adapted to meet the needs of at-risk sub-groups of students.</li> </ul> <p><b>Impact Statement:</b> Instructional practices do not consistently meet the needs of all learners and this hinders student achievement.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the Effective rating on the DTSDE rubric, the school should:</p>		

- Provide PD in the areas of data-driven instruction and differentiation; monitor implementation of differentiation through targeted instructional walk-throughs and observations; ensure that teachers set ambitious student goals based on data.

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

**Overall Finding:** Teachers inconsistently deliver engaging and rigorous lessons aligned to the CCLS.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- Classroom visits demonstrated that the rigor of instruction varied across the school. While in some classrooms teachers used high levels of text and questions to prompt student thinking, this was not consistent across classrooms. Many teachers answered their own questions without providing adequate wait-time for students and tasks were low level, such as in one class where the teacher was showing students how to enter numbers into a calculator, but there was no discussion by students on what the numbers or results represented.
- The review team found that instruction during classroom visits was not consistently engaging. For example, in many classes teachers used whole group instruction and some students sat with nothing to do while waiting for other students to complete tasks. Moreover, in a number of classes, students were off task or gave up and sat there after struggling with the material during independent learning. On one occasion, a student was sleeping without repercussions. In addition, while student groupings were used in many classes, there was limited evidence of differentiated materials, tasks, or pedagogy to meet student needs. While some lesson plans indicated differentiated materials would be used, the review team did not find evidence of adapted materials during classroom visits.
- While some classrooms had multiple adults, there was little evidence of all adults scaffolding learning to meet student needs. While integrated co-teaching (ICT) teachers planned for team and parallel teaching, this only took place during instruction in a few classes, while in others one teacher conducted the lesson while the other merely circulated and provided limited support to individual students.

**Impact Statement:** Instructional practices do not consistently lead to high levels of student engagement and achievement, which hinders student success.

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

- Ensure all teachers in all subjects effectively differentiate instruction; increase the use of higher-order questioning and provide more opportunities for student discourse; maximize the use of multiple adults in the classroom by providing explicit expectations and training for use of co-teaching strategies.

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:** Teachers do not consistently create a learning environment that is responsive to student needs.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- The review team found that students were generally respectful in public spaces, such as hallways and the cafeteria. The school leader shared that he has invested heavily in a large security staff that were consistently visible throughout the building and in hallways during transitions. Students stated that the school is safe and that the rules are very clear. Parents similarly stated that their children feel safe in the building.
- Students said that the school is diverse, but that not all students are comfortable speaking up in class. ESL staff noted that the transition from ESL to general education classes is challenging for students. During classroom visits, the review team found that not all teachers addressed behavior issues consistently, which hindered some student learning.
- While the school celebrates student cultures through events, such as an International Night, students said their culture and heritage were not part of the curriculum. However, ESL department teachers shared that they use inter-disciplinary quarterly projects, such as the creation of poetry books and advertisements that build on prior knowledge and cultural experiences to engage students.

**Impact Statement:** The school environment is conducive to learning, but is not consistently responsive to student experiences or tailored to meet their needs, which hinders student success.

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

- Ensure that teachers use strategies that engage all students and acknowledge their diverse needs.

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

**Overall Finding:** Teachers do not consistently use assessments to plan instruction or foster student participation in their own learning process.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- The review team found that teachers do not consistently provide students with feedback to foster ownership of their learning. In one class, a student asked a question, then immediately answered it himself and the teacher praised him for answering the question on his own. Students shared that some teachers provide them with rubrics to self-assess their learning. While the ESL department has created a series of levels to help students understand where they are in terms of literacy proficiency, and the special education department uses goals setting with IEP students, the review team found limited evidence of teachers giving students clear and specific feedback that informs

students of the next steps they must take to improve learning.

- Teachers do not consistently use assessment data to inform instruction. In addition, formative assessments and checks for understanding were not consistently used to monitor student learning during classroom visits. While teachers often circulated among students during independent learning, in many classrooms, individuals or groups of students were arriving at wrong answers without the teacher noticing or correcting them unless the teacher reviewed the assignment with the whole class. However, even in these cases, teachers did not consistently identify student misunderstandings that led to errors.
- The school is using some computer-based programs to provide students with self-paced instruction and immediate feedback, such as the Plato program for credit-recovery that provides immediate feedback as students answer each question.

**Impact Statement:** Instruction that is not consistently data-based, timely, and purposeful hinders student achievement.

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

- Ensure teachers use assessment data to inform instruction and provide students with actionable feedback that gives clear next steps to improve learning.

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

**Tenet Rating**

**D**

**Debriefing Statement:** The school has a number of systems and programs in place designed to meet the social and emotional needs of students. However, these are not strategically coordinated and aligned to a clear vision for developing student social and emotional developmental health. Not all stakeholders are actively involved in shaping the school's vision with respect to social emotional health. While many stakeholders are collecting and using data, the school does not have a systematic approach to sharing and analyzing data and using it to meet social-emotional needs in a coordinated manner. As a result, unmet social-emotional needs inhibit the academic success of some students.

**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.

**Overall Finding:** The school has a set of systems to identify social and emotional developmental health needs, but they do not address the needs of all students.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- While the school has systems in place to identify at-risk students, these systems primarily relate to academics and not to the social and emotional needs of students. For example, the school screens incoming grade eight students by examining their grades and state test scores and consulting with middle school staff, and then uses this information to provide a summer program for at-risk students to prepare them for the transition to high school. Similarly, the ESL department runs a summer program for students. In addition, the school has systems to identify students for AIS classes based on Regents exam results. Further, the school uses weekly instructional support team (IST) meetings in each academy to identify at-risk students and to develop strategies to address their needs. However, a review of notes from the IST meetings revealed that most strategies involved simply calling or meeting with parents and that there were few strategies identified that teachers and staff needed to implement to support students.
- Students shared that not all students feel that there is an adult that knows them and the review team found that there is no system in place to ensure that each student is known by an adult. School counselors shared that they have large caseloads. Further, parents stated that accessing the counselors can be difficult for students and that it requires student and parent initiative and persistence, which may be difficult for those students having social-emotional problems.
- The school has parent liaisons and attendance teachers who conduct home visits to address student attendance, behavior, and academic issues. However, they have limited capacity to address the social and emotional developmental health of all students. Parents raised concerns about students falling through the cracks because it was so difficult to connect with counselors and teachers.

**Impact Statement:** The implemented systems do not consistently address barriers to student social and emotional developmental health and academic success.

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

- Develop systems to ensure that the social and emotional needs of every student are identified in a timely manner; develop systems to ensure that every student is known by an adult.
- Continue to provide and refer students to programs and resources to support social and emotional development.

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:** The school does not consistently promote a vision for social and emotional developmental health that is aligned to a curriculum or program to support student needs.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- The school has not articulated a clear vision for developing the social and emotional developmental

health of students. While social-emotional development is embedded in certain aspects of the curriculum, support services, and intervention programs, there is no explicit or comprehensive system for addressing student social and emotional developmental health. For example, the school's SCEP references a plan to research and adopt a character education program, but school leaders and support staff stated that there is no curriculum and that social emotional health is a component of physical education and health courses. While school leaders shared that there are guest speakers, an anti-bullying program, and the Best Buddies initiative to build connections between general and special education students, the review team found that none of these individual programs are connected to a larger vision for student social and emotional developmental health.

- The school has provided some PD opportunities to address social-emotional health, such as a book study group and workshops on understanding trauma and refugee children.

**Impact Statement:** The social emotional needs of all students are not being fully met, which inhibits the academic success of some students.

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

- Create and articulate a clear vision for social and emotional developmental health; develop a coordinated system to ensure the social and emotional needs of all students are identified and met; provide PD to ensure that all staff members meet student social and emotional needs.

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

**Overall Finding:** The school has established some valuable partnerships that focus on the social and emotional health of students, but these are not strategically coordinated and aligned to a clear vision.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- Discussions with teachers demonstrated that teachers are not clear on their roles in supporting student social and emotional developmental health. Further, parents stated they were unclear as to the expectations the school had for their roles in supporting student social-emotional well-being.
- While the school staff works with the Refugee Center, a local organization that provides services and referrals, such as translation, to support refugee students and families, the school does not articulate a clear vision or a comprehensive plan for stakeholder roles in addressing the trauma of dislocation or other student social-emotional needs. Additionally, while the school works with a number of other partners to address student needs, such as Check and Connect, Please Stand Up, drug and alcohol prevention, grief and loss support, social skills development, and the district's Safe Schools/Healthy Students program, these are not aligned to a school vision for student social-emotional developmental health.

**Impact Statement:** Not all school constituents are able to articulate their roles in creating a learning

environment that supports student social and emotional developmental health, which hinders student success.

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

- Develop a clear understanding of the roles of all stakeholders in supporting students, aligned to a school vision for social and emotional health.

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:** While the school collects a range of data, it does not have a strategic plan to analyze and use data to identify and meet the social-emotional needs of all students.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- The school has some systems in place to identify at-risk students based on data. For example, parent liaisons and the attendance teacher monitor students using behavior, attendance, and achievement data to identify students in need of home visits, interventions, and referrals. The school also has a system for identifying incoming grade eight and ELL students and placing them in summer programs. Further, the IST process is using data to identify at-risk students. However, there is no coordinated approach to collecting and sharing data to ensure that all student social and emotional needs are met. In addition, teachers stated that there are no formal systems or opportunities for sharing social and emotional data about their students.

**Impact Statement:** The lack of a coordinated approach toward using data to monitor student social and emotional health limits the opportunities for students to become academically and socially successful.

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

- Establish a system to ensure that the progress and health of every student is evaluated and monitored; create opportunities for all stakeholders to share and discuss data.

**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 articulates expectations for student success, but these are not aligned to clear and measurable goals for college- and career-readiness. The school provides some opportunities for parent involvement, but does not engage all parents in supporting their children’s growth and achievement. The school does not have a systematic approach to developing home-school partnerships and using data to engage parents in discussions about their children. Consequently, the school has not effectively partnered with parents to increase student achievement.

**Strengths:**

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

for Improvement.

**Areas for Improvement:**

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

**Overall Finding:** The school leader does not ensure that regular communication with students and families consistently fosters high expectations for student academic achievement.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- While interviews with school leaders and a review of documents demonstrated that the school has a focus on academic achievement, parents stated that individual teachers do not always reinforce the school's commitment to raising academic achievement.
- While some school structures and programs allow for consistent communication with parents, such as AIS parent-teacher conferences and Title I meetings, this is not consistent across the school. For example, counselors do not organize meetings with every parent and parents stated that staff members were not always accessible. Further parents shared that they felt the school needed to improve its communication with families. Surveys from an orientation program indicated that parents want more information via e-mail to ensure they receive relevant and timely information. Additionally, parents stated that the school's online Parent Portal was a good idea, but not useful as teachers do not all regularly update the portal. The review team found that the school does not regularly evaluate its strategies for establishing effective relationships with parents.

**Impact Statement:** As a result of limited partnerships with parents, not all students are given the full support that they may need to achieve academic success.

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

- Improve communication strategies to ensure all parents have access to timely information about their children and the school's expectations for academic achievement.

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

**Overall Finding:** The school provides some opportunities for parent involvement, but does not engage all parents in supporting their children's growth and achievement.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- A goal of the school's SCEP is to improve parent engagement. While the school has systems for disseminating information to families, such as report cards, progress reports, a testing schedule, and Regents exam notifications, there are limited opportunities for reciprocal communication. IST records indicated that a frequently used intervention is parent phone calls or meetings, but there

was little evidence that this is an effective strategy for raising student achievement. Communication between home and school is translated into home languages. Parent liaisons and an attendance teacher regularly conduct home visits and make efforts to contact parents of at-risk students. However, for other students, parents stated that it is difficult to access staff. Parents also shared that the counselors were too busy and that parents needed support in ensuring that they are able meet with teachers. For example, one parent shared that when a meeting was scheduled because her child was failing, not all teachers attended the meeting. While the school's special education department is holding regular meetings with parents to review and revise IEPs, some parents stated that the process was slow, and one parent said that she had been told her child was too old to get services.

**Impact Statement:** Lack of reciprocal communication hinders the ability of families to support their children's academic achievement and social and emotional growth.

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

- Ensure that parents have access to school staff and provide opportunities for all parents to participate in reciprocal communication about their children's needs; evaluate the effectiveness of communication between school and home and address any concerns.

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

**Overall Finding:** The school does not have a comprehensive plan to develop home-school partnerships.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- There are some training opportunities for parents. For example, the school meets with parents of incoming grade nine students to develop a plan for success. The school also relies on the community Refugee Center, which provides training for parents on cultural orientation to the United States, English instruction, and how to access services. The Refugee Center provides an orientation for new students and families enrolling children in the school and has interpreters and translators that help parents understand school communications and requirements. The school hosts information sessions, such as a Common Core night and a data workshop, but staff reported that not many parents attend these sessions. In addition, the school has disseminated a parent guide to help their children with homework. However, many opportunities support only a limited number of parents in helping their children succeed.
- The school has a number of partnerships with higher education institutions, such as Utica College, and Mohawk Valley Community College (MVCC), and has programs that involve parents in various ways, including Young Scholars, STEP, and Upward Bound. In addition, the school introduced the MVCC Gear Up program to grade nine students this year, which includes information for parents about financial aid and the college application process. However, the review team found that there is no comprehensive plan to provide parents with necessary information or to ensure that parents are able to support their children's success. Further, training for teachers to help them build

stronger home-school connections is not part of the school's PD plan.

**Impact Statement:** Not all students benefit from a robust and focused home-school connection in order to support student achievement.

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

- Develop systems that encourage parents to engage with teachers in a meaningful way; ensure parents can access their children's teachers and support staff; provide training for teachers on developing productive home-school connections and for parents on how to support their children's academic development.

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

**Overall Finding:** The school does not have a systematic approach to using data to engage parents in discussions about their children.

**Evidence/Information that Lead to this Finding:**

- While the school has a goal in the SCEP to improve parent involvement, the review team did not find evidence of a systematic approach to monitoring parent participation and engagement.
- While there are systems in place for sharing information with parents about student grades and test scores, and notifying parents if their children are at risk of failure, the school does not share student social-emotional data with parents or consistently share academic data in a way that would help raise student achievement.

**Impact Statement:** The school does not share data with parents in a way that empowers all families to take action to support student achievement.

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

- Ensure that data is shared with parents in a way that promotes dialogue and empowers families to support student success.