



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

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



<b>BEDS Code</b>	331700011489
<b>School Name</b>	W.E.B. Dubois Academic High School
<b>School Address</b>	402 Eastern Pkwy, Brooklyn, NY
<b>District Name</b>	Community School District 17
<b>School Leader</b>	Dr. Catherine Hartnett Costa
<b>Dates of Review</b>	January 22 – 23, 2014
<b>School Accountability Status</b>	Priority School
<b>Type of Review</b>	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

### School Information Sheet for 17K489

School Configuration (2013-14)					
<b>Grade Configuration</b>	09,10,11,12	<b>Total Enrollment</b>	131	<b>SIG Recipient</b>	N/A
Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes (2013-14)					
<b># Transitional Bilingual</b>	N/A	<b># Dual Language</b>	N/A	<b># Self-Contained English as a Second Language</b>	N/A
Types and Number of Special Education Classes (2013-14)					
<b># Special Classes</b>	N/A	<b># SETSS</b>	8	<b># Integrated Collaborative Teaching</b>	N/A
Types and Number of Special Classes (2013-14)					
<b># Visual Arts</b>	N/A	<b># Music</b>	4	<b># Drama</b>	N/A
<b># Foreign Language</b>	5	<b># Dance</b>	N/A	<b># CTE</b>	N/A
School Composition (2012-13)					
<b>% Title I Population</b>		70.3%	<b>% Attendance Rate</b>		66.8%
<b>% Free Lunch</b>		72.4%	<b>% Reduced Lunch</b>		9.0%
<b>% Limited English Proficient</b>		0.8%	<b>% Students with Disabilities</b>		11.9%
Racial/Ethnic Origin (2012-13)					
<b>% American Indian or Alaska Native</b>		1.5%	<b>% Black or African American</b>		87.3%
<b>% Hispanic or Latino</b>		7.5%	<b>% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</b>		2.2%
<b>% White</b>		1.5%	<b>% Multi-Racial</b>		N/A
Personnel (2012-13)					
<b>Years Principal Assigned to School</b>		10.19	<b># of Assistant Principals</b>		2
<b># of Deans</b>		N/A	<b># of Counselors/Social Workers</b>		1
<b>% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate</b>		N/A	<b>% Teaching Out of Certification</b>		5.2%
<b>% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Years of Experience</b>		N/A	<b>Average Teacher Absences</b>		7.5
Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools (2012-13)					
<b>ELA Performance at levels 3 &amp; 4</b>		N/A	<b>Mathematics Performance at levels 3 &amp; 4</b>		N/A
<b>Science Performance at levels 3 &amp; 4 (4th Grade)</b>		N/A	<b>Science Performance at levels 3 &amp; 4 (8th Grade)</b>		N/A
Student Performance for High Schools (2011-12)					
<b>ELA Performance at levels 3 &amp; 4</b>		57.4%	<b>Mathematics Performance at levels 3 &amp; 4</b>		31.3%
Credit Accumulation High Schools Only (2012-13)					
<b>% of 1st year students who earned 10+ credits</b>		N/A	<b>% of 2nd year students who earned 10+ credits</b>		N/A
<b>% of 3rd year students who earned 10+ credits</b>		N/A	<b>4 Year Graduation Rate</b>		12.5%
<b>6 Year Graduation Rate</b>		32.4%			
Overall NYSED Accountability Status (2012-13)					
<b>Reward</b>			<b>Recognition</b>		
<b>In Good Standing</b>			<b>Local Assistance Plan</b>		
<b>Focus District</b>		X	<b>Focus School Identified by a Focus District</b>		
<b>Priority School</b>		X			

### Accountability Status – High 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	N/A	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	N/A
White	N/A	Multi-Racial	N/A
Students with Disabilities	N/A	Limited English Proficient	N/A
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	N/A	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	N/A
White	N/A	Multi-Racial	N/A
Students with Disabilities	N/A	Limited English Proficient	N/A
Economically Disadvantaged	No		
Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Graduation Rate (2011-12)			
American Indian or Alaska Native	N/A	Black or African American	No
Hispanic or Latino	N/A	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	N/A
White	N/A	Multi-Racial	N/A
Students with Disabilities	N/A	Limited English Proficient	N/A
Economically Disadvantaged	No		

Describe the school's top priorities (no more than 5) based on the school's comprehensive plans (SCEP, SIG, DIP, etc.):

1. Create multiple opportunities for over-aged, under-credited students to make progress towards graduation
2. Develop a rigorous, standards-based blended learning curriculum in the core subject areas
3. Create a self-paced, blended-learning environment that prioritizes student choice, interest, strengths, and needs
4. Develop students' college and career readiness skills
5. Increase parental involvement and engagement.

**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>	Statement of Practice	<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>	Statement of Practice	<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>E</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 Narrative:**

<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>
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**Debriefing Statement:** The school leader articulates a shared vision focused on student well-being and college and career readiness that reflects and values the input of all stakeholders. However, actionable feedback and measurable accountability structures that monitor the effectiveness of staff pedagogical practice are not fully established. This limits continuous improvement in providing rigorous, relevant instruction that promotes sustainable student achievement, engagement and higher-order skill development.

**Strengths:**

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

- The School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP) indicates and the school leader stressed that the mission of the school is to ensure that students graduate with a firm post-secondary plan as well as with the skills and knowledge necessary to be college and career ready. All stakeholders articulated and shared this long-term vision to create a learning environment in which students work to master the core knowledge and skills that have been identified as necessary for post-secondary success. Students, parents, staff, and community partners support this mission and monitor the progress in achieving SCEP goals by looking at the academic impact and student engagement of the blended learning model to date. The school has recognized the need to include more face-to face, explicit, subject-specific instruction, in response to student and parental requests for increased direct teaching, to ensure comprehension of Regents content. School support staff and community-based partners foster student social and emotional well-being and welcome all transfer students. The school stakeholders are proud that their students make both educational and personal progress. The SCEP indicated and school stakeholders detailed a data-driven extended learning time program for additional student Regents support and enrichment provided through a grant. Therefore, with funding for the school’s long-term vision, stakeholder buy-in for the Desire to Learn, on-line program and staff monitoring of student progress, the core values to achieve the SCEP goals are present to enable positive student outcomes in a non-traditional setting.

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.

- Collaborative and strategic decision-making is evident in the school in its creation of a flexible academic blended learning model program and extended learning time program. School support staff and community-based partners are specifically identified to address and support student choice, interest, strengths and needs, so as to re-engage them as participants in their own learning. The school leadership team and school leaders described the instructional program for September

2013 as a “Flex model” blended learning program. The online learning program provides the courses necessary for individual “learning paths,” where students take only three courses at a time, and the teacher “generalist” is on-site to support their self-paced learning. The teacher, or other adults including community-based-organization (CBO) staff and college tutors, provide face-to-face support on a flexible, as-needed basis, through activities such as small-group instruction, group projects, and individual tutoring. Teacher programs were revised in early October and early December in response to the expressed desires of parents and students for additional face-to-face support in the core subject areas. The school sought input on the extended learning time program offerings through a student survey, at school leadership team meetings, and during NYCDOE “Early Engagement Conversations” as per the SCEP. This program was then designed to meet the needs and interests communicated by parents and students. The immediate needs of the school community are also met through the retention of a highly qualified teaching staff and the support of CBO partners. School leaders make decisions that reflect and value the input of all stakeholders and that focus on the precise needs of students who attend this school. As a result, programs, fiscal resources, staffing and partnerships address the immediate needs of the school community and effectively promote student well-being and college and career readiness for students who attend regularly.

#### **Areas for Improvement:**

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

- In order to comply with the NYCDOE Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) process, the school uses the Advance system of cycles of observations and feedback to support teacher growth. The school leader and the two Assistant Principals (APs) evaluate teachers according to their strengths, with the school leader monitoring English language arts (ELA) and the APs evaluating math and science respectively. The principal indicated that she meets monthly with the APs to discuss the progress teachers are making towards meeting their individual goals, which teachers self-identified as “areas of growth” in September. However, the feedback on the observations provided to the reviewers consisted of one or two sentences with school leaders indicating that no disruptions were evident in classroom environment and that those teachers were generally effective in their interactions with students. School leaders indicated that they strive “to develop a common understanding of what effective, actionable feedback tied to teacher improvement looks like.” However, the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) reviewed samples of written recommendations that lack specificity, including guidance to ask more “pivotal questions” and “promote higher order thinking with DOK,” referring to Webb’s Depth of Knowledge. The school leadership indicated and the SCEP reflected that the two-hour weekly Wednesday professional development (PD) sessions focus on developing “a common understanding of what effectiveness looks like across the Danielson competencies.” School leaders also indicated that they spend two or three periods teaching each day, working and assisting both students and teachers in the classroom and providing ongoing feedback. The IIT noted that written feedback provided by the school leader does refer to teacher goals. However, no connections to student data were indicated, nor were

suggestions made to increase rigor and relevance to support the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) or to improve facilitation in the newly-instituted blended learning environment. Therefore, despite daily planning opportunities for teachers, school documentation indicated that the school leader does not consistently monitor teacher effectiveness using individual student performance data or articulate feedback with purposeful next steps and measureable objectives for teacher growth. As a result, teachers are not held fully accountable for continuous improvement, which hinders student achievement.

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

- The school’s decision to implement a blended instructional program was to address the diverse needs of students and decrease the excessive absences and interrupted instructional opportunities common to the “at risk” student population of the school. The online technology support for a range of courses on the Desire to Learn platform ensure data-driven, individualized student coursework is offered and the full range of programs and courses are maintained despite reductions in staffing. In order to increase the number of students who are making adequate yearly progress towards graduation, an SCEP goal, the school offers an extended learning time program that includes academic intervention, opportunities for credit-accumulation, and enrichment. For example, a “History of New York” course will be offered for elective ELA or social studies credit in the spring semester. In addition, stakeholders indicated to the team that the blended learning curricula selected is aligned to the CCLS and designed according to the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in order to prepare students for college-level work in all major curriculum areas. Student and parents support the self-paced, blended learning environment that allows students to choose the three courses based on their interest or transcript needs as well as the CBO-sponsored, weekly college and career readiness workshops aligned to the domains of college and career readiness. However, the team found limited evidence that indicated that school leaders are proactive in assessing and evaluating the quality of instruction and the overall performance of the students, on an ongoing basis. The use of targeted and connected evidence based systems is inconsistent, limiting progress in achieving school-wide goals and the vision of college and career readiness.

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

**Tenet Rating**

**D**

**Debriefing Statement:** The school leader provides opportunities for faculty collaboration to design and revise curricula, including units of study, in all core subjects. The school has adopted a school-wide lesson plan template and rubrics that reflect the alignment to the expected instructional shifts of the Common Core Learning Standards. However, although teachers facilitate access to individualized Regents course selections, there is an absence of clear modifications or adaptations of online units of study and student self-paced performance tasks to address the needs of English language learners, students with disabilities and long term

absentees. This limits opportunities and multiple points of access to learning that meet the individual needs of all students.

**Strengths:**

All ratings for this Tenet are **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.

- According to the SCEP and school stakeholders, the school uses a blended, self-paced, mastery-based curricula aligned to New York State (NYS) Standards and the CCLS, with about 65 percent of online curricula designed by Desire to Learn and where students can log-on whenever they choose, from school or home settings. The school leader indicated that the faculty designs the remaining 35 percent of the elective online curricula and that, in non-Regents courses, greater alignment to CCLS exists. Staff indicates that the blended learning curriculum is designed according to the principles UDL in order to provide multiple points of entry for all students. However, lesson plans reviewed by the team were not directly responsive to the needs of identified individual students with disabilities or English language learners (ELLs). In addition, reviewers noted that differentiation strategies were generic in nature or relied on the online video, graphic organizers or checklists attached to each lesson. Stakeholders stated that teachers have received ongoing professional PD, exclusively provided by school leaders, and school leaders indicated that they have accessed NYCDOE materials related to CCLS, UDL and DOK. However, the impact of this PD is not reflected in the classroom where the curriculum is not consistently adapted to meet the needs of all groups of students. Thematic questions, graphic organizers and checklists are used, and students copy academic vocabulary definitions from the online dictionary as part of note-taking. However, students do not consistently integrate the vocabulary into their subject area content and assessments nor are they guided to do so. The absence of clear modifications or adaptations for individual student self-paced performance tasks limits student learning opportunities for college and career readiness.

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

- Teachers indicated that they meet forty minutes each morning and for two hours each Wednesday in order to collaborate on curriculum development, look at student work, and assess the quality of the enacted curriculum. School leaders indicated that teachers are expected to ensure that unit and lesson plans are data-driven and aligned to NYS Regents and CCLS and that student work is assessed according to rubrics, used school-wide, that are aligned to the CCLS content. However, reviewers noted an absence of clear modifications or adaptations of online units of study and student self-

paced performance tasks to address the needs of ELLs, students with disabilities and long term absentees. This limits opportunities and multiple points of access to learning that meet the individual needs of all students. Although the school administers “mock” Regents examinations to identify topics in need of additional practice or re-teaching, teachers are not systematically using data-driven protocols to identify and address individual student needs. During daily meeting time, teacher teams use the “What Comes Up” protocol for looking at student work and the lead teacher indicated that teams are currently working on developing a series of cross-disciplinary lessons to assist students in developing the writing skills for the argumentation essay, a CCLS performance task. To increase text complexity, teachers of English, science, and social studies state that they are moving from relying solely on textbooks to using primary sources and scholarly articles to teach key concepts. However, reviewers observed class instruction that consisted of independent, online student interactions with complex texts and DBQ’s, and limited scaffolding strategies to support individualized lesson delivery to address the gap between what students know and what they need to learn. These limitations reduce the multiple points of access necessary for rigorous, relevant learning opportunities that meet the needs of the school’s diverse population and the individual needs of students in different subgroups.

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

- The school leader and teaching staff have begun to collaborate on interdisciplinary projects that foster a connection between the core subjects, the arts and technology but this is work in progress and not embedded in curriculum and instructional practices. Teachers partner within and across grades and subjects to create inter-disciplinary curricula as seen in the creation of the course, The History of NY. Teachers indicated that they have adopted a school-wide lesson template that is used across all content areas, and incorporates essential, pivotal questions, scaffolded according to DOK levels. Similarly, a faculty-adopted and CCLS adapted rubric for the argumentative essay is used in core subjects. It is expected that an argumentative essay will be written in each discipline to support CCLS skill development within and across all core areas. Students were seen working on interdisciplinary essays on subject-specific topics such as: gun control v. Second Amendment rights, abortion in ELA, and stem cell research in science. However, the written work samples reviewed by the team revealed a gap between student work and the expectations of the CCLS, needed for college and career readiness. The CBO staff support technology integration based on student interest in video production by staffing the WEBCENTER as an incentive during lunch and after-school for enrichment. The school and partners incorporate field trips to enrich the curriculum. For example, this year students have visited the Museum of Jewish Heritage, The Morgan Library, and The World Trade Center Memorial and teachers and students went to Carnegie Hall. While the school has made some moves towards an integrated approach to learning, this work is not yet embedded across the school limiting opportunities for students to bring greater relevance and understanding to their learning.

**3.5: The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** Teachers implement a comprehensive system for using formative and summative assessments for strategic short and long-range

curriculum planning that involves student reflection, tracking of, and ownership of learning.

- Teachers indicated that they have implemented a system for using formative and summative assessments to inform curriculum and to encourage student ownership for learning. All blended-learning courses are mastery-based and students must complete all assessments at 70 percent mastery before moving forward. Teachers state that they provide targeted instruction to individual and groups of students along their continuum of learning until they reach mastery. Although teachers reported that they consistently monitor student progress until they achieve a 70 percent mastery grade on unit assessments, students indicated that teachers infrequently assess their understanding of the online material taught. Also, in discussions with the IIT, many students said the 70 percent is at times achieved by “guessing correctly.” Further observations and discussions indicated that a rigorous approach is not consistently adopted to analyze student performance and to make adjustments to curriculum and instructional practices accordingly. In addition, while certain CCLS-aligned performance tasks are used across the disciplines and student performance on these tasks is assessed according to common rubrics, when the IIT observed teacher analysis of a student’s argumentative essay, the discussion did not result in any focused revisions for effective next steps, either to improve teacher practice or to provide relevant, actionable feedback to the student. The observed protocol did not allow teachers to move along a continuum from qualitative to quantitative data that aligned with CCLS exemplary models. Students were seen using rubrics and checklists to assess their progress and identify areas for improvement as they worked online. However, while teachers monitor the progress students are making in mastering unit objectives and share it with students, they do not yet have a process for regularly checking that students deeply understand the content and for providing ongoing, effective feedback to students, to improve individual and subgroup achievement and to make consequent changes to curricula.

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:** School leaders, faculty and community partners engage in conversations about student progress, attendance expectations and instruction. However, teachers are not systematically using data-driven protocols and scaffolding strategies to make decisions for individualized lesson delivery that address the gap between what students know and what they need to learn. As a result, the academic needs of all students and students in pertinent subgroups are not specifically addressed to target and monitor student achievement and to optimize college and career readiness skill development through explicit instruction.

**Strengths:**

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

**Areas for Improvement:**

4.2 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** School and teacher

leaders ensure that instructional practices and strategies are organized around annual, unit, and daily lesson plans that address all student goals and needs.

- School leaders, faculty and community partners engage in conversations about student progress, attendance expectations and instruction. However, teachers are not systematically using data-driven protocols and scaffolding strategies to make decisions for individualized lesson delivery that address the gap between what students know and what they need to learn. The content-area teachers have one period daily to monitor the progress students are making in mastering course standards. While teachers indicated that they regularly use data from formative assessments to inform their daily planning, the What Comes Up teaching protocol observed by reviewers did not include rigorous, actionable next steps for student academic improvement. One piece of student work was analyzed in the 40 minute planning session observed by the team and teacher comments included “she likes to rush through her work,” “her writing has improved” and “let’s makes this her draft copy.” These comments did not reflect monitoring of the writing process and a scaffolded plan to ensure daily targeted instruction, and improvement steps for the student whose work was assessed were not addressed. As a result, while time for continuous assessment of student work is provided for teachers, these opportunities have not consistently lead to the development of timely and appropriate instructional interventions for all students. Extensive and differentiated use of technology tools and online resources enable students to remain connected to and engaged with content beyond the regular school day. However, although the team did not observe teachers maximizing on-site time to work with individual students to assess and close the gap between what students know and what they need to learn to be college and career ready, they have a foundation on which to develop deeper connections for students. Teachers are not consistently setting individual goals for students that would plot a learning trajectory for them to achieve at a higher level nor developing intermediate steps to measure learning along the way. Although additional structured face-to-face time was being added to the model for the February semester, a balance of blended learning to meet the needs of all students is developing. As a result, the observed instructional practice did not consistently promote the high levels of student engagement and inquiry, adapted to individual student academic needs and necessary to increase and accelerate student achievement.

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

- The school leader described the transformed self-paced academic program as a learning path for each student that is facilitated by the generalist teacher. While the units and lessons from the Desire to Learn online platform, as well as the online courses developed by the staff include scaffolded learning activities, CCLS-aligned performance tasks, and reflect a focus on DOK levels 3 and 4, IIT reviewers did not consistently observe these levels of rigorous instruction in the blended learning classes visited. Students were seen completing graphic organizers prior to writing their argumentative essay and checklists were used to self-assess progress. However, the final drafts reviewed by the team reflected limited mastery of the expectations of the NY Regents standards in ELA and the CCLS high school exemplary writing samples. In addition, while the instructional materials reflect text and content complexity and the curriculum follows UDL guidelines to allow all

students access to a rigorous curriculum, efforts to close the achievement gap for students with disabilities and struggling readers and writers, were not seen in classroom visitations. In one class as the IIT reviewer entered, the teacher redirected any students who were off-task to log onto their laptops. All twelve students worked independently, on a variety of individualized tasks. Students indicated that most complete their online work at home and some ask for help from onsite college tutors, when they are available. During class visits, the IIT observed one teacher ask, “Are you good? You don’t need me?” and another asked “What are you working on?” and resumed typing on her computer without checking that students understood fully and that work was being completed to an expected level. The team observed few examples of teachers asking higher-order questions to challenge student thinking or understanding, or to enable the teacher to get a clearer grasp of what precisely the student did or did not know. The lack of targeted teacher facilitation for students in all subgroups and focused instructional practice that stimulates thinking and is responsive to individual needs hinders student achievement.

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

- The school has created a safe learning environment but the individual needs of all students are not consistently met. The school has a four "house" system that has teacher facilitators and one support person from a CBO, assigned to the 30-35 students in each house. After an initial planning period, from 8:40-9:20 a.m., where students delineate their goals for the day with the CBO support staff, students spend the majority of their day working at their own pace in their “house” while being supported by generalists and content area-teachers. However, the team reviewed logs and noted that they did not consistently appear to maximize focus and engagement, and did not always reflect optimal use of a forty minute block of onsite time. Although the SCEP indicated that, “House teachers check-in regularly with students and reinforce the mutually agreed upon standards of behavior,” and each “house” develops and agrees to a set of rules to govern student behavior that helps the student feel that their input is valued, the team observed that the classroom does not always reflect a learning environment, which limits the off-task conversations that the reviewers heard. The team also observed that most questions asked by teachers were similar to “What are you working on now?” and “Do you need any help?” and did not facilitate next steps in learning. Although the reviewers observed a student sign-in sheet, with multiple names requesting math tutoring by the college tutor assigned to the House, the team noted that the tutor worked with one student during the 45-minute visit to the classroom. When asked about this practice, students indicated that no time limits are set for tutors and teachers do not facilitate the process by telling tutors to move on to the next student requesting assistance. Therefore, the academic needs of all students and students in pertinent subgroups are not always targeted and addressed, and student achievement is not consistently monitored or receiving explicit instructional support, hindering accelerated academic progress.

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

- Teachers and school leaders stated that they use assessments to inform planning and foster student participation in their learning but reviewers did not see consistency in practice. Students use rubrics and checklists to self-assess their progress and identify areas for improvement. Teachers track student progress in mastering unit objectives and share outcomes with students. The SCEP indicated that the assessments “measure the depth and breadth of the state academic content standards for a given grade level.” Although the school administers “mock” Regents examinations to identify topics in need of additional practice or re-teaching, teachers are not systematically using additional data-driven protocols to identify and address individual student needs. In addition, teachers indicated that student use of Web 2.0 tools is required in all disciplines as a means to equip students with the skills necessary for college and career success. However, limited monitoring of student progress was observed. Frequent assessments of a student’s progress toward the mastery criterion with opportunities for corrective instruction, enabling students who do not initially meet the mastery criterion were not always evident and the school leaders indicated that they do not administer Measures of Student Learning (MOSL) for pre- and post-assessment to measure student growth. In addition, most corrective instruction by teachers or tutors, that the team observed, was reactive and occurred when requested by students or when it was offered as a large or small group review of Regents topics. Therefore, despite screening for learning style upon admission and progress reports at six to eight week intervals, students do not regularly receive timely and purposeful feedback and actionable next steps that lead to high levels of student achievement.

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

Tenet Rating

**E**

Debriefing Statement: The school community creates an environment that provides all stakeholders with experiences that promote students’ social and emotional developmental health. As a result, some barriers toward success are being reduced and students benefit from a safe instructional setting, healthy relationships and enrichment opportunities that promote social success.

Strengths:

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

- The school community creates an environment that provides all stakeholders with experiences that promote student social and emotional developmental health. School support staff and CBO partners indicate that they address student choice, interest, strengths, and needs by surveying all students upon entry to the program. The guidance counselor and CBO partners help each student use the information to design individual learning paths. Through the house structure, every student is well known to their house teacher and CBO personnel. The teacher and CBO staff helps students stay focused on their academic goals and act as liaisons between the students and support staff in order to coordinate additional social-emotional supports and enrichment opportunities when

needed. The Student Support Service team meets weekly to analyze student attendance, social-emotional Response to Intervention (RTI) data, behavioral referrals and academic performance data in order to identify areas of need and create and monitor plans to support identified students. As a result, barriers toward success have been reduced and students benefit from a safe instructional setting and healthy relationships.

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

- The school leader and the AP who supervises the school's support staff met with the school's community-based partners throughout the summer to develop a series of workshops focusing on four domains of college and career readiness. Students attend these workshops for ninety minutes each week, and a College and Career Readiness Workshop calendar has been developed in conjunction with St. John's University - United Way, the guidance counselor and the parent coordinator. Workshop participation is based on credit accumulation toward graduation. In addition, the school support staff described to the IIT, their roles in providing a three-tiered social and emotional developmental health RTI plan that is also delineated in the SCEP. In Tier I, all faculty and staff ensure that the creation a high quality, supportive environment for students is characterized by nurturing and responsive adult-student relationships. In Tier II, students identified for more intensive interventions are referred to community-based partners for targeted social-emotional support. Finally, those students requiring Tier III interventions are referred to the school guidance counselor who develops and implements an intensive intervention plan for students and their families. Staff benefit from PD on an on-going basis that enables them to continue to acquire the necessary skills to enable them to support students. As a result, students learn in a safe and healthy school environment.

5.4: **The school has received a rating of Effective 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.

- The school leader provides multiple opportunities for stakeholders to work together to develop a common understanding of their contributions to creating a safe environment conducive to learning. All stakeholders interviewed, i.e., parents, students, teachers, support staff and CBO personnel, agreed that the school environment is safe and that students are emotionally supported to re-engage in their quest to graduate from high school. The school leader meets monthly with the community-based partners to analyze the impact of the support they are providing to students and plan additional support and enrichment activities to further promote a safe and healthy learning environment. Teachers, students, and parents state that they have a voice in the decision-making process and work together to create a positive school culture through monthly school leadership team meetings, monthly student council meetings, and the open-door policy of the administration. Support staff indicated that the school's social-emotional RTI system ensures that students receive "just in time" and "just right" social-emotional support. Students agree that they have at least one

adult at the school to help with issues of personal well-being and that teachers are willing and accessible to provide academic support. Parents relate stories of one-on-one support for their children and recognize the school’s persistent, reengagement efforts, even when their children are not immediately receptive to the opportunities offered. Some parents and students also feel that the blended learning environment focuses more on independent online academic work, with fewer typical teen distractions. Log in data allows parents to see evidence that the student is striving to succeed by working at home and on weekends to develop college and career readiness skills. Therefore, the school community is able and willing to contribute to the creation of a school learning environment that meets student social and emotional developmental health needs.

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

- The school leader and student support staff review academic progress reports, Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), attendance data and behavioral referrals and use the data to respond to the individual social and emotional developmental health needs of students. The AP described a coherent, welcoming, admissions process. Alongside the admission surveys and assessments, the guidance counselor and parent coordinator interview parents and students in order to gather relevant data about the social and emotional developmental health needs of individual students. Relevant data is shared with the teachers prior to placement in the “house” structure, and teachers indicate that they have input in the assignment process. Similarly, the community-based partners are assigned to work with the students based on the data collected. For example, if the student is one of the school’s 31 long-term absentees, the attendance teacher will monitor their attendance and make home visits, if necessary, the day she is assigned to the school. Also, if a student is court-involved he or she receives targeted services and mentoring from a CBO partner. During the summer, the school staff and community-based partners planned and now facilitate weekly, Wednesday, two-hour workshops targeting identified social and emotional developmental health needs. Social-emotional RTI plan data is also collected and analyzed to deliver needed services. The Student Support Services Team also meets weekly to analyze student attendance, social-emotional, and academic performance data in order to identify areas of need and to create and monitor plans to support identified students. As a result, barriers toward success are being reduced and students benefit from a safe instructional setting, healthy relationships and enrichment opportunities that promote social success.

**Areas for Development:**

All ratings for this Tenet are either **Highly Effective** or **Effective** and therefore, comments are listed under **Strengths**.

**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 creates a culture of open and frequent communication among staff,

students, parents, and community agencies. This culture serves to foster students' social-emotional well-being, ensuring an environment of mutual trust and respect. However, strategies to engage parents and families as partners are not as effective as they could be.

**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.

- All stakeholders agree that the school's priority is to graduate students who are ready for the demands of college and careers. This goal is regularly shared with parents, students, and staff through the mutual development and monitoring of the SCEP process and through frequent communications to school community members. Parent, student, CBO and staff interviewed by the IIT indicated that their input is valued and incorporated in school-wide decision making. NYCDOE School Quality Conversations informed the establishment of school goals and action plans. The entire school staff reported their expectation that students graduate ready for the demands of college and career and students agree that this expectation is their ultimate goal. To further facilitate communication with students and their families, the school developed its own student report card and progress report in order to provide parents and students with information about student progress beyond a number grade. The report card and progress report are in narrative form and communicate information about the progress students are making in completing courses, accumulating credits as well as the degree to which students are mastering course standards. The students indicated that the school assists them in reviewing their transcript each time they complete a course and helps them select the next course necessary to meet their graduation requirements. Therefore, the school community reaches most students and families and fosters a culture of school and family partnership that seeks to promote student achievement and 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.

- Parents, students and community stakeholders indicate that the school has an open-door policy for parents and makes every effort to accommodate parent availability for in-person and phone conferences. The school's parent coordinator acts as a liaison between parents and the school in order to keep lines of communication open and ensure that parent concerns are addressed. Written communications are translated into each family's home language and school staff and community-based partners provide on-site translation services on an "as-needed" basis. The school staff analyzes parent survey responses in the annual NYCDOE Learning Environment Survey, which measures the effectiveness of communication outreach to parents, and makes adjustments to its strategies when needed. In 2012-13, the school received a "B" for its family and community outreach efforts. The Liberty Partnership Program provides tutoring to students on Saturdays and assists family and students in the college application process to ensure students maximize their educational achievement. The weekend trips to Manchester College culminated in student

presentations to family members, church sponsors and school personnel at a community dinner to reinforce student learning from the trip and their aspirations for college. The relationships among the school, families and the CBOs support academic achievement, college and career readiness and social-emotional growth.

**Areas for Improvement:**

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

- In partnership with CBOs, the school provides workshops to families on parenting, the college admissions process, and literacy as per the SCEP. Parents indicated that online documents including progress reports are easily understood and that computer training was provided for those who attend Parent Association (PA) meetings. The school leader has identified that there is a need for the school staff to receive PD to equip them with skills and strategies to build and sustain strong partnerships with parents and families. Reviewers saw the plans that are being devised to implement this PD that has the potential to forge a stronger connection between home and school. As a result, all students are not yet benefiting from a robust connection between the school and families.

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.

- Parents are kept abreast of their child's academic progress through narrative reports that are sent home six times throughout the year, through parent-teacher conferences held twice a year, and through outreach phone calls made on an as-needed basis. School leaders and support staff indicate that data about family needs is gathered by teaching staff, community-based partners, and school support staff and is shared and accessed through the use of Google docs. The data and referrals are analyzed at weekly Student Support Staff meetings in order to identify families for targeted support. Parents who have advocated on behalf of their children indicated that their children are often older and as "adults," must be empowered to make the correct decisions themselves, to move ahead in their lives. However, parents do appreciate the on-going school information provided. School support staff and CBO personnel state that they analyze, interpret and present individual student data in face-to-face conferences for targeted students and indicated that most families attend the meetings. However, the PA attendance rate is 20 percent for well-attended events and regular parent involvement is inconsistent. As a result, family advocacy for the academic and social and emotional supports to ensure student well-being and college and career success is limited, hindering student success.

## Recommendations:

### Tenet 2: School Leader Practices and Decisions

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

- 2.4: Provide PD for teachers regarding the Danielson Framework for Teaching and APPR system. Provide for all teachers, specific and timely, instructive and constructive feedback, which aligns with the expectations for instruction delineated in the School Comprehensive Education Plan.
- 2.5: Develop and implement monitoring procedures, to ensure that all staff use designated systems for achieving the school vision and goals for supporting student learning. Include expectations for participating in data analysis meetings in order to generate appropriate strategies for ELLs, students with disabilities, and LTA's that lead to multiple points of entry and 21<sup>st</sup> century skill development.

### Tenet 3: Curriculum Development and Support

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

- 3.2: Ensure that interdisciplinary teams add rigor and relevance to their Common Core Learning standardized lesson and unit plans by aligning best practices, questioning strategies and creating formative and summative assessments that address the CCLS expectations for each course and that they are being used in all classes to assure rigorous and coherent CCLS-aligned instruction. Provide professional development opportunities that include systematic support for all teachers to create rigorous, relevant and coherent curricula for all sub-groups.
- 3.3: Ensure that teachers use both quantitative and qualitative data to ensure CCLS alignment and access for a diverse range of learners and effectively monitor and revise pedagogical teaching strategies, including creating multiple points of access into classroom lessons.
- 3.4: Utilize common planning time for teachers to develop rich, integrated learning opportunities that embed the visual arts, technology and other enrichment areas to broaden student engagement, learning and reflection with corrective, purposeful feedback that leads to college and career readiness.
- 3.5: Adopt a school-wide comprehensive protocol to identify and norm expectations for exemplary student work and align Regents and CCLS curricula to online assessments. Incorporate clear delineations in rubric language that reflect the instructional shifts and reinforce the need for teachers to provide accurate, actionable, high quality feedback that encourages students to become active participants in their own learning and helps them attain exemplary levels of academic achievement.

### Tenet 4: Teacher Practices and Decisions

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

- 4.2: Ensure teachers systematically use data-driven protocols and scaffolding strategies to make decisions for individualized lesson delivery that address the gap between what students know and what they need to learn.

- 4.3: Provide PD to increase teacher capacity to align instructional practices to CCLS shifts. Promote rigor in instruction and higher order thinking skills in students across all classes to better engage students in their own learning at higher levels so that they are able to achieve their targeted goals.
- 4.4: Evaluate current practice and adjust as indicated, to ensure that all staff work together to create an environment that actively involves students in the learning process and consistently meets their needs and abilities.
- 4.5: Provide support for teachers to analyze and utilize data in their delivery of instruction and help them provide formative long-term growth and actionable next steps to students. Train stakeholders in self-reflection models, student self-assessment of academic tasks and ensure teachers provide purposeful frequent feedback with discussions of the importance of student accountability and ownership of their learning.

#### Tenet 6: Family and Community Engagement

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

- 6.4: Provide PD for new CBO personnel as well as college tutors on how to enhance school partnerships with students and families to support and meet the needs of all students.
- 6.5: Analyze, interpret and present the individual student data and its implications in ways that empower both student and his/her family support network to access useful data-driven strategies, resources or internships to support both higher level academic progress and to promote social/emotional wellbeing. Identify research-based strategies that meet the needs of this population of parents and students and provide greater outreach to ensure that the entire family unit understands students school performance data and benefits from the home-school connection.