



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

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



<b>BEDS Code</b>	140600010118
<b>School Name</b>	West Hertel Elementary School #94
<b>School Address</b>	489 Hertel Avenue
<b>District Name</b>	Buffalo City School District
<b>School Leader</b>	Debra Sevillian-Poles
<b>Dates of Review</b>	November 13-15, 2013
<b>School Accountability Status</b>	Priority School
<b>Type of Review</b>	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

<b>School Information Sheet</b>												
Grade Configuration	K-8	Total Enrollment	817	SIG Recipient	<input type="checkbox"/>	Title 1 Population	92.2%	Attendance Rate	90.75 %			
Free Lunch	92%	Reduced Lunch	3%	Student Sustainability	86%	Limited English Proficient	29%	Students with Disabilities	17%			
<b>Number of English Language Learner Classes</b>												
#Transitional Bilingual	0		#Dual Language		0		#Self-Contained English as a Second Language			5		
<b>Number of Special Education Classes</b>												
#Special Classes	7		#Consultant Teaching		0		#Integrated Collaborative Teaching			8		
# Resource Room	0											
<b>Number Special Classes</b>												
#Visual Arts	10	#Music	11	#Drama	0	#Foreign Language	1	#Dance	0	#CTE	2	
<b>Racial/Ethnic Origin</b>												
American Indian or Alaska Native	1%	Black or African American	35.6 %	Hispanic or Latino	20.8 %	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	24.4%	White	14%	Multi-racial	4.4%	
<b>Personnel</b>												
Years Principal Assigned to School	2.3		# of Assistant Principals		2		# of Deans		0		# of Counselors / Social Workers	3
Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	0%		Teaching Out of Certification		0%		Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp.		4%		Average Teacher Absences	14%
<b>Credit Accumulation (High School Only) and Performance Rates</b>												
% of 1 <sup>st</sup> yr. students who earned 10+ credits	N/A		% of 2 <sup>nd</sup> yr. students who earned 10+ credits		N/A		% of 3 <sup>rd</sup> yr. students who earned 10+ credits		N/A		4 Year Graduation Rate	
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	6%		Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4		5%		Science Performance at levels 3 & 4		40%		6 Year Graduation Rate	N/A

<b>Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA</b>			
	American Indian or Alaska Native	X	Black or African American
X	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
X	White		Multi-racial
X	Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient
X	Economically Disadvantaged		All Students
<b>Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Math</b>			
	American Indian or Alaska Native	X	Black or African American
	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
X	White		Multi-racial
X	Students with Disabilities		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. Analyze multiple measures of data and use to develop a plan of action for decision making and instructional guidance.**
- 2. Effectively use the evidence-based system of PBIS to improve academic achievement.**
- 3. Provide professional learning opportunities to staff to ensure effective implementation of instructional practices that positively impact student learning.**
- 4. Increase and sustain parent involvement.**

**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>I</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			X	

	planning that involves student reflection, tracking of, and ownership of learning.				
	<b>OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 3:</b>			<b>D</b>	

**Tenet 4 - Teacher Practices and Decisions:** Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn, so that all students and pertinent subgroups experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking, and achievement.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
4.2	School and teacher leaders ensure that instructional practices and strategies are organized around annual, unit, and daily lesson plans that address all student goals and needs.			X	
4.3	Teachers provide coherent, and appropriately aligned Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)-based instruction that leads to multiple points of access for all students.			X	
4.4	Teachers and students work together to implement a program/plan to create a learning environment that is responsive to students' varied experiences and tailored to the strengths and needs of all students.			X	
4.5	Teachers inform planning and foster student participation in their own learning process by using a variety of summative and formative data sources (e.g., screening, interim measures, and progress monitoring).			X	
	<b>OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 4:</b>			<b>D</b>	

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

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
5.2	The school leader establishes overarching systems and understandings of how to support and sustain student social and emotional developmental health and academic success.				X
5.3	The school articulates and systematically promotes a vision for social and emotional developmental health that is aligned to a curriculum or program that provides learning experiences and a safe and healthy school environment for families, teachers, and students.				X
5.4	All school stakeholders work together to develop a common understanding of the importance of their contributions in creating a school community that is safe, conducive to learning, and fostering of a sense of ownership for providing social and emotional developmental health supports tied to the school's vision.			X	
5.5	The school leader and student support staff work together with teachers to establish structures to support the use of data to respond to student social and emotional developmental health needs.				X

	<b>OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 5:</b>				<b>I</b>
<b>Tenet 6 - Family and Community Engagement:</b> 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.					
<b>#</b>	<b>Statement of Practice</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>I</b>
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 strengths 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>I</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>I</b>
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**Debriefing Statement:** The school vision and goals, determined by a team representing school constituent groups, are unknown throughout the school community. Inconsistently implemented systems and structures relative to the organization of resources, teacher practices, and school improvement, result in too much variability in student engagement and low levels of academic outcomes.

**Strengths:**

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

**Areas for Improvement:**

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

- The school leader, along with a small representative group of the staff, has begun the process of putting SMART goals, a mission, and a long-term vision in place. However, this process is in the early stages. Therefore, the goals, mission, and vision are not yet understood or known by the majority of stakeholders. Teachers at grade level meetings, members of the student council, parents at the parent meeting, and members of external agencies that provide student support services, had no knowledge or awareness of the goals, mission statement, or vision. As a result, there is a lack of ownership by stakeholders in the school’s overall plans for development. The school leader has not established a data-driven mission, and teachers, for example, are at the early stages of using data to review student achievement. The evidence from classroom visits by the review team, documents, and discussions with teachers, demonstrate that staff does not make a clear connection between student achievement and the realization of the school’s long-term vision, or priorities based on the School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP). Parents are unaware of the monitoring and evaluation of the school’s progress. Parents in the group interviewed did not remember receiving the reports of state evaluation scores for their own children. With approximately 30 percent of students speaking English as a second language, there are language barriers in sharing and explaining student data, school goals and priorities, and a long-term vision with community stakeholders. Data is available through the Parent Portal, although access to that system, and technical assistance in accessing the system, is not readily available. As a result of this lack of awareness and engagement in the development of the goals and vision by the wider school community, progress on school improvement initiatives is limited.

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

- The school is beginning to use some systems related to tracking student achievement to inform its work. The school has the Response To Intervention (RtI) system in place to support students achieving at Levels 1 and 2. However, this program is having a limited impact. The SCEP targets a 10 percent improvement in ELA and math, but the projected growth is only 0.1 percent. The school does not have a systematic approach toward executing an expanded program aligned to student achievement. For example, while recent teacher training focused on differentiated instructional techniques, most lessons seen did not show differentiation in the work set for students. The school leader partners with the district to recruit appropriate staff, including the recently appointed Assistant Principal (AP), and utilizes the fiscal budget available to provide the resources required to ensure the delivery of the curriculum. However, the training for staff is fragmented. One staff member said, “Our training is too superficial, often delivered over too short a time in our faculty or grade level meetings;” this sentiment was typical among teachers. One teacher in her first year of teaching reported that she received no proper training, and that she had relied solely on the support of her peers to become proficient in her work. As a result of these deficiencies, the school provided support for students does not address their social and academic needs. While the school uses some of its budget to set up a range of training, one of the APs reported that often less than a quarter of the teachers invited actually attend these sessions. The school experienced instability in its leadership staffing, as it was without an AP for much of the last academic year. This affected improvement initiatives and limited attention focused on making strategic decisions about future improvement. The school has yet to launch many of the initiatives in the SCEP. As a result, school improvement is progressing slowly, and the school is making little headway in improving student achievement.

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

- The school lacks clear and comprehensive plans aligned to the district’s APPR plan. One of the APs reported that no formalized systems and plans are in place to show how lessons will be monitored and how feedback will be given to teachers. No formal observations of lessons have taken place this year, and although observations are planned for the future, there is no schedule to show the range of lessons that will be viewed, and by whom. Teachers interviewed by the SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) were unclear about systems in regard to the APPR. For example, one teacher said, “I have not had my lessons viewed for a long time and not received any feedback about the quality of my work.” Additionally staff reported that the informal monitoring that occurs does not strongly link to student data. As a result of a lack of functional systems for the APPR, failure to provide timely continuous feedback to teachers, and failure to collect observation data, school leaders and staff are not held accountable for raising student achievement.

2.5 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* 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).

- Evidence-based systems are not used sufficiently in the school to inform the development of school-wide practices, and measure progress toward the goals identified in the SCEP. Communication across the school does not ensure that those who need to know are provided with relevant up-to-date data pertaining to the achievement or emotional and social development of students. For example, while student progress is monitored and evaluated using the Common Formative Assessment (CFA), the school is at the early stages of using systems to capture and interpret ongoing student performance data. Classroom visits by the review team confirmed that in general, teachers do not understand how to use current software systems to gain a picture of how well different groups of students achieve. At a grade level meeting observed by the review team, a teacher stated that teachers need support in learning how to break the data down and assess the achievement of the students they teach, rather than looking at the results for the entire grade level for the full year. Many other teachers at this meeting agreed that they need more training in this aspect of their work. The school's overall annual assessment scores show that many groups of students perform at Levels 1 and 2. However, teachers do not use data to analyze the step-by-step growth of different groups of students. As a result, teachers do not monitor the ongoing achievement of groups such as English language learners (ELLs) rigorously enough. This in turns means that work in lessons does not always match the needs of these students. Parents are unaware of the monitoring and evaluation of school progress. Additionally, some parents spoken to did not remember ever receiving the reports of state evaluation scores for their children. External agency partners and others involved in providing in-school social and emotional developmental support said that they did not receive proper information to inform their support practices. The school leader has not put systems in place for staff to use evidence-based systems to review the progress toward the SMART goals outlined in the SCEP. Teachers reported that they do not discuss the SCEP at their meetings. The difficulties the school experiences in using evidence-based systems mean that school-wide practices are not being monitored and connected to improvement areas, which hinders student success.

**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:** A system of formative assessment is in place, and teachers meet across grades and subjects to review data. There are modifications made in some classrooms to meet the needs of students. However, the implementation of the CCLS curricula is inconsistently rigorous and coherent. Therefore, most students are not as academically successful as they should be.

**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 reflecting the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) that is monitored and adapted to meet the needs of students.

- The school is developing plans to show how it will address the needs of all students, but while some components of a plan exist, teachers are unaware of goals targeted to address the needs of all students. In two classrooms visited by the review team, teachers used planning material downloaded from Engage New York- [www.engageny.org](http://www.engageny.org) and some had annotated these plans to indicate extra areas of work that they intended to include. However, this was not consistent practice across the school, and most planning seen did not differentiate work for students. In some instances, although teacher plans showed ideas for differentiating the work, this did not happen during the lessons. One student said that in most of the lessons, “Everyone gets the same work to do.” Collaborative teacher meeting times are scheduled at the beginning and the end of the school day. Teachers reported that much of the meeting time is often taken up with administration points, and little of the time is devoted to collaborative planning. Adjustments made to the teaching timetable this year mean that the time for teachers to meet and plan together has been reduced. A teacher said, “There is no system in place to indicate how we can better ensure that curriculum plans specifically focus on student needs.” Teachers report that the current approach by the school leader is limited to implementing new programs, but with insufficient guidance and training to support the new programs. As a result, teachers adopt a wide variety of approaches with planning and there is no consistent whole-school approach to focus on improving student achievement. The school leader does not provide pedagogical support for teachers; while teachers received introductory training for the CCLS, there is no clear plan to provide supplementary in-depth training. Teachers reported that they do not understand how to adapt the work to match the needs of the students they teach, and say they are frustrated by the lack of support they get in this area. When asked about modifying the CCLS to match closely to student needs, one teacher said, “I supplement the curriculum with extra aligned textbooks to help make the provision match student needs more closely.” However, this was not an approach systematically and commonly adopted by other teachers interviewed. Teachers reported to reviewers that they have been advised to use a system of “backward planning,” which includes deciding the standard that they wish their students to achieve, and adapting the CCLS teaching modules accordingly. However, little evidence was seen of this occurring in classroom practice. In the absence of a systematic approach toward developing the curricula, teachers’ planning seldom targets student needs, especially for ELLs. Five lessons were observed where students in this category were unable to participate fully in the work. Two of the teachers providing “push-in” support for these students said that the lack of collaborative planning time meant that they had to “wing it” without proper lesson preparation. The deficiencies in the curricular planning systems, and lack of training for staff, mean that teachers’ ability to accelerate the achievement and progress of students is limited. No clear systems are in place to monitor the implementation of the curricula and this limits the extent to which staff can understand how to improve the curricula.

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

- The lack of opportunities for teachers to spend the time required to plan collaboratively means that little in-depth consideration is given to ensuring that unit and lesson plans meet the demands of CCLS protocols. At the grade level meetings observed, teachers considered student achievement performance data. However, there was little time to consider how patterns in student achievement could be used to inform curricular modifications. The school's data team met once during the school year and provided little information on student achievement levels across the school. Observations and evaluation of lesson planning documentation demonstrates that few teachers use unit and lesson plans across all grades and subjects. Student performance data is seldom used to inform how teachers plan differentiated work to match the needs of the students. The school policy is for teachers to follow the online district pacing guide. However, use of this guide is not supporting teachers in ensuring that their classroom instruction focuses precisely on the needs of different groups. The lack of planning and preparation time for English as a second language (ESL) teachers results in their co-teaching role not operating as successfully as it should. For example, in lessons observed by reviewers, no detailed planning was seen for ELLs. The ESL teachers mirrored the approach of the general education teacher with the group of ELL students, and did not use any extra resources to support the students and make the work accessible to them. The school has introduced teaching modules, such as the "Steve Jobs model" for introducing complex instructional materials. However, no training has been provided for staff to help them sustain the program. Teachers reported that the school does not have any formalized or systematic approach to help them monitor and adjust the curricula to support the CCLS instructional shifts. As a result, in all but one math lesson observed by the IIT in grade four, lesson plans did not feature or apply instructional shifts. In nearly all lessons seen teachers did not provide a sufficient range of opportunities, resources, or extension tasks to help students develop higher-order thinking skills. Inconsistent plans that do not align to DDI protocols, or the CCLS, hinder student academic growth.

3.4 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* 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

- The school leader has not established detailed plans to aid the process of forming partnerships across the school to focus on developing interdisciplinary curricula. In grade level discussions observed, teachers did not develop ideas about how different content area links should be established. The review team did not observe projects that demonstrate that subject areas are being linked together in a meaningful way. There is no evidence across the school of planning for cross-curricula themes. Teachers do not review their work in a systematic way to examine the potential for introducing an interdisciplinary approach. Reviewers did not observe any lessons where the work planned went beyond delivering the basic core content. Teachers have no schedule organized to review their work in connection with establishing or examining the impact of the interdisciplinary curricula. Consequently, many opportunities are missed to expand student understanding, or to enliven the work they do, for example, by providing projects that link different content areas, including the arts and technology. The lack of focus on creating an interdisciplinary

approach means that students do not have a chance to use and apply their skills in a variety of different content areas.

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.

- The school leader and district have implemented a Comprehensive Formative Assessment (CFA) plan in which assessments are administered three times per school year. The data is shared with teachers at grade level meetings. However, there is little evidence that the data received is analyzed to identify student needs and promote high levels of student learning and success. Discussions with students indicate that they do not have opportunities to reflect on their learning or progress. Also, in lessons observed, there were few opportunities for students to review or take ownership of their learning. A review of documents and observations of grade level meetings show that teachers are not familiar with analyzing performance data to discover patterns in student performance and to measure how effectively the curricula provides the kind of instruction that will enable students to become successful and independent learners. A new software system has been introduced to assist staff in this process, but teachers are still at the early stages of learning how to use it. In some classrooms, teachers have set up data tracking walls, but there is little or no performance data recorded on these displays. Evidence from teacher meetings, and observations of lessons, show that teachers do not make regular use of performance data to check the progress of different groups of students. In nearly all of the lessons observed, teachers provided the same tasks for all students so that some students found the work easy while others struggled. When reviewers observed two intervention groups to support students with disabilities, these students were provided with work that was matched to their needs. However, in all other lessons seen, the review team did not find evidence that data analysis leads to the strategic adaptation of instructional plans, or that students are given the opportunity to reflect on their own academic performance and contribute to improving it. The fact that teachers do not have clear and comprehensive methods for collecting and using data to inform their work means that instruction is often misaligned and limits student achievement. It also restricts the ability of staff to pinpoint areas of the curricula that need modifying and to plan pathways of progress for different groups of students. The lack of alignment between the curriculum and assessment hinders student achievement.

**Tenet 4 - Teacher Practices and Decisions:** Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn, so that all students and pertinent subgroups experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking, and achievement.

**Tenet Rating**

**D**

**Debriefing Statement:** The school uses formative assessments to monitor student progress at regular intervals throughout the school year; however, strategic CCLS practices organized around lesson plans do not guide most classroom instruction. There is little acknowledgement of student learning strengths and needs, which leads to inconsistent student engagement and low academic achievement.

**Strengths:**

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

**Areas for Improvement:**

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

- School and teacher leaders are at the early stages of engaging teachers in conversations about using data to inform their lesson plans, but there is not yet consistency in the way teachers plan their lessons. In one grade four math lesson, the teacher reported that she did not have a plan available, but said she was following the appropriate module that she had downloaded to her laptop. The ESL co-teacher taught a group by mirroring what the general education teacher was doing, but said she had not had an opportunity to prepare for the lesson, or collaborate with the teacher beforehand. While teacher leaders work to ensure that teachers know about the CFA results, these results are not used by teachers to sort students into groups based on performance, or to systematically plan for differentiated instruction. Teachers do not regularly record information from ongoing assessment in a systematic way that informs their instructional planning. There is no evidence from interviews, or meeting observations, indicating that teachers create grade-level goals informed by data for all groups of students. Teacher leaders and coaches give limited support to teachers to advise them about their instructional practice. There are some interventions provided across the school to support students with disabilities and ELLs, but the quality of this support varies. In one grade seven math lesson, 20 out of the 32 students were ELLs, with no ESL teacher in the classroom to assist them. Some of the students in the class are at the early stages of acquiring the English language. On two other occasions in ELA lessons, specialists provided effective support for ELLs that helped them stay engaged in the classwork. School leaders have failed to ensure that all classes are appropriately staffed and that all teachers use a range of strategies adapted to the differing needs of students, which results in variation in the way that teachers prepare their lessons. In one grade seven ELA lesson, the teacher used whole-class and group discussions, as well as a range of tasks so that students remained engaged and responsive throughout the lesson. However, in most lessons seen, the work was teacher-led with few chances for extended interaction between the students. As a result, students do not have a chance to articulate their understanding and extend learning through discussion. There are no formalized systems set up to ensure that teachers establish short- and long-term goals for students based on either formative or summative assessment information. This means that most students do not have specific high expectations set for them, and most have no idea what they need to do to progress to the next level. Some teachers make lesson objectives clear to students, and have these noted on the main class white-board. However, many teachers do not follow this practice, but launch straight into classwork without describing and making students aware of the aim. As a result, students often do not fully understand what they are doing, or why they are doing it, in lessons. Instructional strategies do not consistently promote high levels of student engagement, which hinders student success.

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.

- Teachers are in the early stages of developing lesson plans to effectively implement CCLS and to ensure that CCLS shifts are reflected in their instruction, but their plans are insufficiently modified and do not meet student needs. Teachers generally used the modules from Engage New York to ensure the work aligned to the CCLS. Teachers' ability to work with the CCLS shifts is varied. For example, in one grade seven lesson, the teacher got the students talking about, and interpreting, the text in a poem prior to writing their ideas about it, as advocated by the ELA Shift 2. However, in most ELA lessons observed by the review team, teachers dominated the discussions about texts, and did not give students opportunities to explore and interpret texts for themselves. As a result, students do not sufficiently develop their understanding of how the text they look at relates to their knowledge of the world around them. Teachers generally employ much questioning in lessons to check the knowledge and understanding of students. However, the questioning is not demanding in terms of developing students' higher-order thinking skills, because teachers do not plan lessons that are sufficiently challenging. This failure to include elements of the CCLS shifts for all students, and in particular for those that are higher-achieving, results in students not achieving to their full potential.

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.

- Teachers create a learning environment that is safe, but it is not consistently responsive to the needs of all students. In most lessons seen during the review, students generally showed respect for each other and their teachers. However, teachers did not establish high expectations for students in terms of attitudes towards learning. For example, in many lessons seen, students were passive and did not engage in question and answer sessions, nor make an effort beyond following basic instructions. In a small minority of instances, students did not follow lesson instructions. For example, in one grade five math lesson, students ignored a substitute teacher and carried on talking to each other. A Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program is in place with a behavioral matrix displayed around the school. Behavior rules are posted in classrooms. However, most teachers are not trained to deliver this program, and many ESL students are unable to read the contents of the matrix. The work of the teachers generally ensures students are reasonably self-disciplined, but the lack of follow through with the PBIS system, and the lack of focus by teachers to improve student motivation for learning, negatively impacts student progress. A few of the teachers said they have set up systems to regularly talk to parents and students, including emailing to devise strategies to help accelerate learning. However, one teacher stated, "We are mostly in survival mode trying to cope with all the new systems and new CCLS implementation without proper leadership. We have not got to the stage where we can work closely with the students to adapt learning programs to support them in the best possible way." Other teachers agreed with this statement. Therefore, work in lessons is seldom tailored to help students reach their full potential. Over the last three years the school's ELL population has grown from 16 percent to around 30 percent of the student population. School leaders have tried to address this change by moving to more "push-in" teaching support. However, this system is not working effectively in many instances due to the lack of opportunities for collaboration between the general education class teacher and their "push-in" co-teacher. The learning environment is generally safe but is not conducive to

creating intellectual achievement for all students, which hinders student success.

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

- Teachers are beginning to use plans for creating student groups; however, they are at the early stages of this work, and stated they do not receive sufficient support from school leaders or coaches to use data effectively. Teachers indicate that they review data at their grade level meetings, but they do not fully understand how to use the new Illuminate assessment software. Teachers look at a range of formative and summative assessment information, but there are no clear systems to help them identify strengths and weaknesses in student performance. For example, while teachers in a grade level meeting looked at the low level results of a recent phonics test, they were not able to identify the groups of students, or classes, with the lowest performance. Most teachers give students positive feedback during lessons, both by praising success and by encouraging those students who are not successful. However, with a few exceptions, the quality of grading of students notebooks is poor. In many classes, the notebooks seen by reviewers had not been marked at all this year. School leaders are not monitoring and addressing this practice. As a result, most students do not take pride in the way they set work out in their books, and often the notebooks are messy, scribbled on, or missing pages. This failure to monitor how teachers assess and give feedback to student, diminishes student motivation and achievement, and leaves students without the knowledge of the next steps they need to take to improve their learning. The lack of data-based instruction that is timely and purposeful limits 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**

**I**

**Debriefing Statement:** Some school personnel and agency partners promote a vision for the social and emotional developmental health of all students, but the school lacks robust systems to ensure that it meets student social and emotional needs. There is limited understanding of the connection between socially and emotionally healthy students, and the creation of an environment that is conducive to learning. As a result, not all students experience school as a safe, respectful community that supports their academic success.

**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 *Ineffective* for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader establishes overarching systems and understandings of how to support and sustain student social and

emotional developmental health and academic success.

- The school leader has not established systems to support student social and emotional developmental health. However, the school has a committed and energetic student support staff team that includes partner social work providers, who attempt to implement the PBIS system. School leaders and other staff implement the PBIS inconsistently. Teachers shared that there is no system in place for ensuring students are individually known by a designated adult. The student support team reported that there is dysfunction in communication with school leaders and inconsistency in the way that teachers refer students to the team. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that translators are not available to translate documents for ELL students and their families. The school leader delegates the operation of the referral and support systems for students requiring Tier 2 interventions to specific student support staff members. The nurse practitioner of the in-school medical clinic is the first point of contact for students referred for Tier 1 interventions, and is the school liaison with Child Protective Services (CPS). The staff support team reported that turnover in leadership and teaching staff is one of the reasons for the inconsistency of practices for referral and support for all students. Specific support staff members use attendance and behavioral data to identify areas of student needs. However, the school leader has not set up school-wide systems to support this work. This is another factor that makes the systems of referral dysfunctional across the school. Although nearly 29 percent of the student population speaks languages other than English, there is no proactive planning to address, accommodate, and support the social and emotional development of the changing student population. The student support staff reported that dismissal time is sometimes unsafe with occasional fights. There are no behavior plans for students, and the overall lack of rigor, good communication, and organizational practices mean that the social emotional developmental health and safety of students are at risk. The lack of systems to address barriers to student social and emotional developmental health limits student success.

5.3 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* 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 does not have a functioning curriculum to support the teaching of student social and emotional developmental health. Although the PBIS program is in place, the review team found that it is not being utilized in an effective manner. Teachers work with students on this program during breakfast time, which is not conducive to teaching the required skills. Many of the teachers have not been trained in the instructional skills necessary to deliver the PBIS program. There is no associated vision that systematically promotes the social and emotional developmental health of all students. Parent volunteers who work in the school said they are unaware of the school's aims, and reported that frequent incidents of teasing and bullying occur undetected by teachers. Teachers said there is little PD offered that addresses how to support the social and emotional developmental health needs of students. The training that was provided was limited to specific issues such as bullying or establishing appropriate behavior. Training did not provide staff with a comprehensive view of the continuum of each student's social and emotional developmental health needs. Staff reported that language barriers are a problem and sometimes misunderstandings between students result in bullying. The school leader has not put a clear plan in place to enable staff to adopt a

strategic and proactive approach towards helping develop better support for all students. Staff, parents, and some students reported that the school does not sufficiently recognize, praise, and encourage students who do well in terms of the way they behave and perform. There is no plan to provide, monitor, and revise PD to build adult capacity to support the social and emotional developmental health of all students, within a safe and healthy environment. Guidance points for teachers concerning behavioral support for students are given first thing in the morning while students are eating breakfast. Teachers spoken to say this is insufficient and that little time is spent supporting the work they do and building their skills. Parents spoken to said they are unaware of any training being planned to build their capacity to support student social and emotional developmental health. The lack of clear and comprehensive plans and strategies to enable the school community to support student social and emotional developmental health means there is a risk that students will not receive the support they need, which in turn undermines their chances of being academically successful.

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.

- Although all of the personnel and members of the community work to support students, the ways in which they work, and the delegation of responsibilities, are unclear and fragmented. The school leader has not yet developed rigorous systems to establish clear roles and opportunities for stakeholders to support student social and emotional development. This is the case at all levels. For instance, the APs do a considerable amount of work in this area, but do not have job descriptions that define their roles. The parent volunteers who work in the school are not clear about their roles. Many students spoken to say they worry about bullying and are not confident that they are safe at all times. One student commented, "Sometimes I get bullied by students in grade eight and they say things about me that are not true!" All adult members of the school community spoken to acknowledge that the social and emotional developmental health of the school is a priority in their work. However, the lack of teamwork, with a delineation of responsibilities, means that there is no school-wide prioritization, or vision, of what needs to be done to improve. As a result, teachers are generally depended on to identify potential student issues by informally monitoring student needs through their everyday behavior, and through the relationships they have formed with students. The lack of clear systems to monitor and support student social and emotional developmental needs leads to inconsistency in the overall culture within the school, and does not provide all students with an environment that is socially and academically safe.

5.5 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* 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 uses limited data to address student social and emotional developmental needs. The school community has not worked together to devise a clear plan as to how it could better use data to support student social and emotional needs. The student support services, district staff, and health clinic staff do use attendance, behavior, academic, and other data sources when reviewing

student needs and recommending interventions. However, there is no collaboration between contracted or agency support services staff, and district staff, and their efforts are uncoordinated and do not make a wide impact. The services these personnel provide are often seen as separate from the work of teachers and other school personnel in terms of creating high academic expectations. During discussions with the student support team, team members used the term “phenomenal fragmentation” to describe the school’s structure to respond to student social and emotional developmental health needs. This fragmentation limits the potential for students to have increased opportunities to become academically and socially successful.

**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**

**I**

**Debriefing Statement:** School leaders and staff are welcoming to community partners, and parents, who initiate a relationship with the school. However, there is little effort made to engage in reciprocal communication with all families to identify student strengths and needs in order to support learning. Therefore, few students benefit from a home-school connection and partnership that supports their academic achievement and social-emotional growth.

**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 Ineffective for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader ensures that regular communication with students and families fosters their high expectations for student academic achievement.

- The school leader and staff do not make it a school-wide priority for all students and their families to be aware of high expectations for student academic success. There is limited evidence of staff communicating academic expectations to students and families. Interviews with parents demonstrated that many agree with one parent who said that “a lot of parents don’t know what’s going on or what assistance is available. There are sometimes workshops held for parents although few people attend these.” In all interviews held with staff and parents, both groups stated that communication between the school and families needs to be improved. Staff in particular, shared that they operate in the best way they can. However, without a full knowledge of what is required of them, and the necessary support structures, it is difficult to implement many of the initiatives in the SCEP to achieve overall school improvement. The school does not formally examine or adjust its efforts to build relationships with students and families to encourage high expectations for student academic success. Parents were unaware of any review or assessment by the district or the school itself in terms of how effective the school is in fostering a culture of high expectations for students. The widespread disconnect in communication means that the school is not sufficiently tapping into

the support from families and staff to improve student academic and social development. This limits opportunities to build successful relationships with families to ensure student needs are met, which hinders student college- and career-readiness.

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

- Although efforts are made to communicate with families through newsletters, email, and information posted on the school website about school events and general school information, the school does not consider the need for translation. Families of ELLs do not always understand the information sent to them. The school does not have a plan to show how it will expand its communication systems. Meetings with staff and parents showed that they are unaware of any plan to communicate with parents concerning student progress, achievement, and needs except for parent-teacher conferences. The school seldom translates documents into multiple languages. Parents and staff reported that they are unaware of any monitoring of the effectiveness of the school's communication or of responses to family feedback. The lack of clear communication to parents, and in particular to the parents of ELL students, significantly hinders the ability of families to support their children's academic progress.

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.

- The school leader does not have a plan to support parents in helping their children's achievement. The student support team reports that no plan to create and sustain family engagement is in place. Nonetheless, members of the support team collaborate with parent volunteers to support the social and emotional development of groups of students. Discussions with school stakeholders show that the school provides little training for staff related to creating and sustaining partnerships with families and community organizations. One aspect of the school's work is the partnering with a local organization to run an afterschool activities program each day. During this time, students are able to participate in homework completion and one-on-one coaching sessions. After this, students participate in activities such as sports and computer studies. Although this is an example of a useful partnership with a local agency, the school has not done enough to engage local partners, and students do not benefit from a robust and focused home-school connection, which limits student success.

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

- School leaders, data specialists, student support professionals, and program coordinators do not use data to identify family needs and target strategies to address them. This was confirmed by interviews held with staff and parents who said that ideas around the use of data had not been discussed either at staff meetings or at parent events. Some information relating to student

achievement is available on the Parent Portal. However, most parents do not understand how to access the Portal, have not received training in how to do so, and do not understand how to interpret the ELA and math scores provided. As a result, the majority of parents do not know at what levels their children are achieving, and are not empowered to take action to support their children's academic achievement.

## **Recommendations:**

### **Tenet 2: School Leader Practices and Decisions**

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

- 2.2: With the assistance of staff and families, finalize the establishment of a long-term vision that is accomplished by the achievement of the school's SMART goals, and ensure all members of the school community are fully aware of these.
- 2.3: Develop and encourage staff to use systems that are dynamic, adaptive, and interconnected that lead to the collection and analysis of student outcomes. Re-examine and strengthen the Rtl system. Initiate orientation procedures for newly appointed staff.
- 2.4: Develop a rigorous and systematic approach toward monitoring instructional practices across the school, which incorporates a schedule of formal and informal lesson observations. Provide relevant feedback to teachers, and create improvement plans that will help them improve their classroom practice and accelerate student achievement.
- 2.5: Put a plan in place to ensure that staff members use evidence-based systems to inform the work they do and to help all of those in the school community to make rapid progress in achieving the SMART goals delineated in the SCEP. Evaluate the impact of this plan to assess its impact on student achievement.

### **Tenet 3: Curriculum Development and Support**

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

- 3.2: Provide a clear systematic plan to show how the CCLS-aligned curriculum will be established and embedded, how teachers will access training to implement the curriculum, and how teachers will adapt the curricula to meet the needs of students of differing abilities and English language skills. Monitor the impact of these actions on student academic success.
- 3.3: Ensure opportunities are given to teachers to collaborate frequently to consider formative and summative assessment information, to systematically use this information to inform the way in which they construct curricula plans and set up intervention groups, and to consider how their plans can best support the use of instructional shifts.
- 3.4: Schedule opportunities across grades and subjects for teachers to consider and implement interdisciplinary activities that incorporate the arts, technology, and other subject areas into instruction to broaden and enrich the work carried out by students. Ensure that interdisciplinary learning is embedded across the school and directly leads to improvements in student learning and engagement.
- 3.5: Devise a plan to train teachers in the analysis of student performance data using the data specialist. Ensure that teachers learn to identify patterns of student achievement, and use this information to adapt instructional plans so that work is provided for students that matches their ability. Include within the overall plan clear systems to help teachers map a path for the progress and growth of all students, and to enable teachers to regularly monitor how well students are succeeding.

#### **Tenet 4: Teacher Practices and Decisions**

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

- 4.2: Ensure that teacher lesson plans are informed by assessment data with clear achievement goals set for all individuals, so that work matches student needs. Ensure that work provided for ELL students is matched to their current level of English language proficiency, and that they are provided with the support to help them become successful in all lessons. Ensure that these plans are consistently implemented across the school
- 4.3: Ensure that all teachers plan in a consistent way so that their instructional practice is appropriately aligned to the CCLS and incorporates the CCLS shifts.
- 4.4: Develop comprehensive systems that ensure teachers work in a consistent way across the school in managing the behavior of students, helping students to develop motivated attitudes toward learning. Ensure teachers work in such a way that incorporates student values, and provides students with a learning environment that is conducive towards encouraging high achievement.
- 4.5: Ensure that teachers make full use of all assessment information to devise suitable student groupings and student goals in their classes. Ensure that teachers regularly and systematically provide feedback to students about how well they are progressing, and what they need to do to reach their achievement goals. Ensure that feedback is provided through careful marking of student work, so the students are informed about the strengths and weaknesses in their work.

#### **Tenet 5: Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health**

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the concepts in the Effective column of Tenet 5 the school should:

- 5.2: Establish systems to ensure that each student is well-known by a designated adult. Ensure that consistent practice is established so that all teachers refer students to the correct support expert when needed. Ensure that robust, consistent, and school-wide systems are put in place to monitor student social and emotional developmental health to minimize the chances of any at-risk student going undetected.
- 5.3: Provide training for staff in implementing and delivering the PBIS program across the school. Ensure that appropriate lesson time is scheduled for this program to be fully implemented, and set in place systems to monitor its effectiveness.
- 5.4: Devise a plan to show how the roles of all stakeholders work in regard to establishing protocols for supporting students' social and emotional developmental health.
- 5.5: Collaborate with student support staff to devise a plan to show how data will be systematically used to monitor student social and emotional developmental health and to identify any support needs. Ensure regular time for the student support staff members to meet and communicate fully with other staff as needed to develop a team approach to carrying out the support work.

## **Tenet 6: Family and Community Engagement**

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

- 6.2: Devise and implement a plan to show how school-wide expectations to help students become fully successful will be communicated in all pertinent languages to all stakeholders. Ensure that the plan incorporates systems to enable the school to review parent responses and adapt current policies, processes, and approaches as needed.
- 6.3: Devise and implement a plan to establish reciprocal communication with parents. Ensure that all possible methods are incorporated to provide parents access to communication. Provide translation of all communication for families of ELLs.
- 6.4: Devise and implement a plan to train all staff in how to create and sustain family engagement. Establish systems to ensure that regular and frequent points of engagement are established for staff and families across the year and that help staff sustain this engagement in a consistent way. Seek partnerships with community organizations that will be linked to the school's plan for engaging families.
- 6.5: Set up systems to help appropriate staff use data to identify family needs and to help them target strategies to address these needs. Ensure that all data is communicated to families in a way that they can fully understand and in a way that will encourage them to partner with the school in supporting their children's social and academic success.