



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR DISTRICT AND SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS (DTDSE)



BEDS Code/DBN	130502020004
School	Dover Middle School
School Address	2368 Route 22, Dover Plains, NY 12522
District	Dover Union Free School District
School Leader	Patricia Rizzo
Dates of Review	May 15 – 16, 2013
School Accountability	Focus
Type of Review	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet											
Grade Configuration	6-8	Total Enrollment	334	% Title 1 Population	16.8	% Attendance Rate	93.6				
% Free Lunch	36.5	% Reduced Lunch	15.3	% Student Sustainability	99	% Limited English Proficient	1.5	% Students with Disabilities	12.3		
Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes											
# Transitional Bilingual	0	# Dual Language	0	# Self-Contained English as a Second Language		3					
Types and Number of Special Education Classes											
# Special Classes	3	# Consultant Teaching	5	# Integrated Collaborative Teaching		0					
# Resource Room	2										
Types and Number Special Classes											
# Visual Arts	1	# Music	1	# Drama	0	# Foreign Language	0	# Dance	0	# CTE	0
Racial/Ethnic Origin											
% American Indian or Alaska Native	0.3	% Black or African American	11	% Hispanic or Latino	12.9	% Asian or Native Hawaiian /Other Pacific Islander	1.8	% White	76.3	% Multi-racial	0.6
Personnel											
Years Principal Assigned to School	3	# of Assistant Principals	0	# of Deans	0	# of Counselors / Social Workers		2			
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	0	% Teaching Out of Certification	0.02%	% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp.		0.03%		Average Teacher Absences	7.5/yr.		
Overall State Accountability Status (Mark applicable box with an X)											
School in Good Standing		Priority School		Focus District	X	Focus School Identified by a Focus District			SIG Recipient (a) (g)		
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	45.8%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	56.4%	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	81.2%	4 Year Graduation Rate (HS Only)		NA			
Credit Accumulation (High School Only)											
% of 1 st yr. students who earned 10+ credits		% of 2 nd yr. students who earned 10+ credits		% of 3 rd yr. students who earned 10+ credits		6 Year Graduation Rate					

Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA (Mark an "X" in the field(s) where school is identified for not meeting AYP.)			
	American Indian or Alaska Native		Black or African American
	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
	White		Multi-racial
X	Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient
	Economically Disadvantaged		
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics			
	American Indian or Alaska Native		Black or African American
	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
	White		Multi-racial
X	Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient
	Economically Disadvantaged		
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science			
	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		
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for Effective Annual Measurable Achievement Objective			
	Limited English Proficiency		

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

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS DESCRIBED BY THE SCHOOL:

1. Increase the percentage of students performing at levels 3 and 4 in ELA in Grades 6 – 8.
2. Increase the percentage of students performing at levels 3 and 4 in Math in Grades 6 – 8.
3. Increase the AYP of Students with Disabilities in ELA in Grades 6 – 8.
4. Increase the AYP of Students with Disabilities in Math in Grades 6 – 8.

Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions: Visionary leaders create a school community and culture that lead to success, well-being and high academic outcomes for all students via systems of continuous and sustainable school improvement.

Mark an "X" in the box below the appropriate designation for each tenet, and mark in the 'OVERALL RATING' row the final designation for the overall tenet.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
2.2	Leaders ensure an articulated vision, understood and shared across the community, with a shared sense of urgency about achieving school-wide goals aligned with the vision as outlined in the School Comprehensive Educational Plan (SCEP).				X
2.3	Leaders effectively use evidence-based systems to examine and improve individual and school-wide practices in the critical areas (student achievement, curriculum & teacher practices; leadership development; community/family engagement; and student social and emotional developmental health) that make progress toward mission-critical goals.			X	
2.4	Leaders make strategic decisions to organize resources concerning human, programmatic and fiscal capital so that school improvement and student goals are achieved.			X	
2.5	The school leader has a fully functional system in place to conduct targeted and frequent observations; track progress of teacher practices based on student data, feedback and professional development opportunities; and hold administrators and staff accountable for continuous improvement.			X	
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 2:				D	

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

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
3.2	The school leader and staff support and facilitate the quality implementation of rigorous and coherent curricula appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) in Pre K-12.			X	
3.3	Teachers ensure that unit and lesson plans that are appropriately aligned to the CCLS coherent curriculum introduce complex materials that stimulate higher-order thinking and build deep conceptual understanding and knowledge around specific content.			X	
3.4	The school leader and teachers ensure that teacher collaboration within and across grades and subjects exists to enable students to have access to a robust curriculum that incorporates the arts, technology and other enrichment opportunities.			X	
3.5	The school leader and teachers develop a data-driven culture based on student needs, assessments and analysis, which leads to strategic action-planning that informs instruction and results in greater student achievement outcomes.			X	

	OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 3:			D	
Tenet 4 - Teacher Practices and Decisions: Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students and pertinent subgroups experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.					
#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
4.2	Teachers use instructional practices and strategies organized around annual, unit and daily lesson plans to meet established student goals and promote high levels of student engagement and inquiry.				X
4.3	Teachers provide coherent, appropriately aligned Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)-based instruction that leads to multiple points of access for all students to achieve targeted goals.				X
4.4	Teachers create a safe environment that is responsive to students' varied experiences, tailored to the strengths and needs of all students, and leads to high levels of student engagement and inquiry.			X	
4.5	Teachers use a variety of data sources including screening, interim measures and progress monitoring to inform lesson planning, develop explicit teacher plans and foster student participation in their own learning process.				X
	OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 4:				I
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 cultivates the development of overarching systems and partnerships that support and sustain social and emotional developmental health.				X
5.3	The school articulates and systematically promotes a vision for social and emotional developmental health that is connected to learning experiences and results in building a safer and healthier environment for families, teachers and students.				X
5.4	All school constituents are able to articulate how the school community is safe, conducive to learning and fosters a sense of ownership that leads to greater student outcomes.				X
5.5	The school leader and student support staff work together to develop teachers' ability to use data to respond to students' social and emotional developmental health needs, so students can become academically and socially successful.				X
	OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 5:				I

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 atmosphere is welcoming and fosters a feeling of belonging and trust, which encourages families to freely and frequently engage with the school, leading to increased student success.			X	
6.3	The school engages in effective planning and reciprocal communication with family and community stakeholders so that students' strengths and needs are identified and used to augment learning.			X	
6.4	The entire school community partners with families and community agencies to promote and provide professional development across all areas (academic and social and emotional developmental health) to support student success.				X
6.5	The entire school shares data in a way that empowers and encourages families to use and understand data to promote dialogue between parents, students and school constituents centered on student learning and success.				X
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 6:				D	

School Review Narrative:

Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions: Visionary leaders create a school community and culture that lead to success, well-being and high academic outcomes for all students via systems of continuous and sustainable school improvement.	Tenet Rating	D
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Debriefing Statement: The school articulates goals based on the district’s action steps for implementing required initiatives. However, not all stakeholders know the goals. School staff reviews data, although the analysis of all available data is not widely used to examine and improve individual and school-wide practices in critical areas. Therefore, the school culture does not lead to success, well-being, and high academic outcomes for all students.

Areas for Improvement:

2.2 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* for this Statement of Practice:** Leaders ensure an articulated vision, understood and shared across the community, with a shared sense of urgency about achieving school-wide goals aligned with the vision as outlined in the School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP).

- There is not an articulated vision understood and shared across the community. A review of documents and interviews indicated that the school uses the district’s mission statement vision. As a result, school constituent groups informally create their own vision. One group of staff members stated that the vision is to prepare students for society, graduation and literacy, while another group of staff members stated that the vision is to foster the development of students so their learning is optimal. Other teachers interviewed stated that the goals for the school are increased attendance, safety, and to “increase state exam scores.” Students stated the vision is for them to get a good education so they can further their education and get a good job, and parents reported believing that the school’s vision is to prepare students to succeed and provide character education. The school leader reported that the Board of Education (BOE) develops the district goals, which become the school goals. A review of the goals listed in the SCEP indicated that they are not specific, measurable, ambitious, results oriented, and timely (SMART). Within the school community there is an inconsistent understanding of who creates the goals and how. For instance, in interviews, some teachers and parents stated that they are unaware of what the district’s mission statement is, what the school goals are, or how it is connected to the district’s mission. Some documents reviewed also indicated that the Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) develop goals for each grade and content area. The list of priorities on the school’s DTSDE Self-Assessment document is one of few references to the school’s data. Without a collaboratively developed vision statement that is universally articulated and leads to the identification of SMART goals based on the school’s data, the school community experiences uncoordinated efforts that do not support student achievement.

2.3 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** Leaders effectively use evidence-based systems to examine and improve individual and school-wide practices in the critical areas (student achievement; curriculum and teacher practices; leadership development; community/family

engagement; and student social and emotional developmental health) that make progress toward mission-critical goals.

- The school leader encourages staff to collect and review data, although there is not a systematic approach to examining data focused on the improvement of individual and school-wide practices in critical areas. The review of the DTSDE Self-Assessment document indicated that the school uses the Northwest Evaluation Association's (NWEA) system to identify skill weaknesses and notes that the intervention-planning component is "not very well used." Additionally, the self-assessment document states that the Mastery Manager system provides feedback for student intervention, and that student needs identified by formative assessments inform the development of the Academic Intervention Services (AIS) schedule. However, some teacher interviewees were unaware of any formal systems used, and said that the Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) chairperson provides the data they review. Another group of teacher interviewees reported that data collected includes student attendance, state assessment scores, and academic data tracked by NWEA's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). The self-assessment document stated that teachers share best practices and that the school leader introduces new strategies for teacher reflection and implementation during faculty meetings. The school leader stated that she expects teachers to use best practices to improve school and student progress, although feedback loops and examples of best practices connected to student achievement were not evident. Teacher interviewees reported that the school focuses on lesson planning, strategies for close reading, and making evidence claims. Document review and interviews indicated that district goals direct the development of school goals and that PLCs facilitate development of grade-level and content area goals. However, the goals are not explicit enough or are not based on individual and school-wide data, which prevents improvement in school-wide practices and causes student achievement to stagnate.

2.4 The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice: Leaders make strategic decisions to organize resources concerning human, programmatic and fiscal capital so that school improvement and student goals are achieved.

- There are organized procedures concerning human, programmatic, and fiscal capital in place, although strategic decisions made by leaders focused on school improvement outcomes rather than the achievement of student-centered goals. The review of documents indicated that current recruitment procedures consist of posting open positions on the Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) website. The school leader reported that she personally prepares the job description for open positions; she also reviews and screens the applications submitted and creates an interview team, which includes teachers and the Director of Education. Candidates for teaching positions present a demonstration lesson, and four names are forwarded for district consideration. For the 2012-13 school year, the school moved from a co-teaching model to a consultant teacher model of instruction for students with disabilities because it was determined that co-teachers lacked sufficient time to co-plan. Documents indicated that the school provides Academic Intervention Services (AIS) instruction, and interviewees stated that students can receive extra academic help during their lunchtime. There is no extended learning time program, and there was no evidence of revision of the programming structures to address the changing needs of students. Some instructional staff reported, "The school schedule determines what (intervention services) students get." The school leader stated that there is an annual budget process in which she determines

needs and forwards them to Department Chairpersons, who review them and provide feedback. The process takes two to three months, and the district leader states that, “decisions are looked at in terms of schedules, personnel, programs, and materials and supplies.” However, there was little evidence of consideration of school goals, student data, or community needs the final funding decision determinations. The lack of strategic decision-making based on student data and achievement limits measureable progress toward academic achievement for all students.

2.5 The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice: The school leader has a fully functional system in place to conduct targeted and frequent observations; track progress of teacher practices based on student data, feedback and professional development opportunities; and hold administrators and staff accountable for continuous improvement.

- There is a functional system in place for observing instruction and providing feedback to teachers. The review of documents and interviews indicated that the school leader develops a schedule for frequent observations and walkthroughs, that she provides feedback after each class visit, and that one teacher currently has a Teacher Improvement Plan (TIP). Eighty-three percent of teacher survey respondents agreed with the statement, “School leaders provide me with meaningful feedback regarding my teaching.” Document review and school personnel interviews indicated that PD opportunities focus on the transition to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS); however, there was no indication of a connection between PD supports and student data, feedback from classroom observations, or the targeted needs of instructional staff. Review of the DTSDE self-assessment and the district’s action plan indicated the establishment of performance targets for each school level, although there was no indication that the targets, or progress toward the targets, inform instructional supports. The school leader and the Director of Special Education (DSE) reported that they create a collaborative plan for frequent observation, feedback, and reflective conversations with instructional staff. However, the failure of school leaders to track the progress of teacher practices based on student data and develop PD opportunities that connect with the needs of instructional staff means administrators and staff are not held accountable for continuous school improvement.

Tenet 3 - Curriculum Development and Support: The school has rigorous and coherent curriculum 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: Student exposure to the arts aligns with the implemented academic curricula, and opportunities for teachers to collaborate across grades/subjects are scheduled. The school climate and culture stem from the belief that results of analyzed data are attributable to external forces beyond the control of instructional practices. As a result, the tendency to minimize the needs of individual students as well as the needs of subgroups increases the incidence of non-proficient student performance.

Areas for Improvement:

3.2 The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice: The school leader and staff support and facilitate the quality implementation of rigorous and coherent curricula appropriately aligned to

the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) in Pre K-12.

- The school provides PD focused on the CCLS alignment of curricula as well as the implementation of instruction aligned with the CCLS. The review of the DTSDE self-assessment and the SCEP indicated that the school plans to offer ongoing PD provided during faculty meetings and on Superintendents' Conference Days that will target CCLS alignment, encourage the examination of data by PLCs for curriculum and instruction adjustments, and promote the alignment of Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) and assessment with the CCLS across all subjects. The SCEP goal is for teacher development of CCLS-aligned English Language Arts (ELA) literacy units that can be shared across other subject areas. Some teacher interviewees stated that not all instructors receive equitable support for accomplishing CCLS alignment and implementation. One of four classrooms reviewed for their instructional place in the CCLS content was on-schedule. Documents and interviewees indicated that the school uses a combination of NYSED-developed instruction modules and locally developed curricula that is not cohesive, comprehensive, or vertically aligned. Without the implementation of cohesive and comprehensive curricula and instruction across all grades and subjects, not all students learn what they need to know and, as a result, not all students are presented with opportunities to achieve their potential.

3.3 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** Teachers ensure that unit and lesson plans that are appropriately aligned to the CCLS coherent curriculum introduce complex materials that stimulate higher-order thinking and build deep conceptual understanding and knowledge around specific content.

- Teacher collaboration on CCLS-aligned lesson plans is inconsistent, and plans do not sufficiently challenge students. The review of the DTSDE self-assessment indicated that ELA and math teams meet weekly to “collaborate on CCLS units” while social studies and science teams do not meet with the same frequency. During the observation of a grade/subject meeting, the discussion focused on the fact that the sixth grade state testing occurs at the same time that other students will be participating in NWEA post assessment. Additional concerns expressed included the accommodations required for students with disabilities during testing, as well as the number and variety of assignments required of the special education staff. The majority of classrooms visited had an “aim,” “target,” “I can,” and/or “do now” displayed. Of the lesson plans available for review during classroom visits, most aligned with respective grade levels, although none met Tri-State Rubric criteria, promoted higher-order thinking skills, or included analysis of student data. Only fifty-nine percent of student survey respondents agreed with the statement, “I am challenged by the work assigned to me at school.” Because teacher planning does not consistently include a coherent introduction of complex materials, students lack the opportunities for higher-order thinking, deep conceptual understanding, and knowledge of specific content material needed to increase their academic success.

3.4 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader and teachers ensure that teacher collaboration within and across grades and subjects exists to enable students to have access to a robust curriculum that incorporates the arts, technology and other enrichment opportunities.

- Although some teachers use the arts and other enriching forms of communication and engagement

as components of their instruction, this incorporation of arts and other enrichment opportunities is not consistently or systematically planned or executed school-wide across all subjects. Some incorporation of reading and writing occurs in art and other non-core academic classes, and some students and teachers use technology devices on a daily basis. However, reviewers witnessed limited student use of technology during eight classroom visits. School personnel interviewees reported that some teachers have regularly scheduled meetings while others do not have the same common planning opportunities. The DTSDE self-assessment stated that the integration of the “arts and core classes” does not completely exist. Without regular collaboration and planning among subject and grade level teachers, students have limited opportunities to engage in thoughtful cross-curricula activities that could lead to improved academic performance.

3.5 The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice: The school leader and teachers develop a data-driven culture based on student needs, assessments and analysis, which leads to strategic action-planning that informs instruction and results in greater student achievement outcomes.

- The school leader and teachers collect and review limited data to determine student progress, but this data does not drive strategic action-planning. The DTSDE self-assessment states that teachers discuss formative and state assessment data at regular PLC meetings. However, no review or discussion of student achievement, patterns of student learning, or adaptation of instructional planning took place during observed PLC meetings. During interviews and discussions, some teachers stated that they review data to determine individual student learning patterns in order to group students more productively and to adjust their instruction. However, because all school leaders and teachers, across grade levels and subject areas, do not use timely data for strategic decision-making and action planning, students are limited in their ability to achieve high levels of success.

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 sub-groups experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.

Tenet Rating	I
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Debriefing Statement: Generally, teachers provide generic instruction to all students; some teachers acknowledge diverse groups of students and their needs. The use of a variety of data sources to guide strategic practices, make purposeful decisions, and/or address the gap between what students know and need to learn is rare. Therefore, high levels of student engagement in learning, thinking, and achievement are not widespread.

Areas for Improvement:

4.2 The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* for this Statement of Practice: Teachers use instructional practices and strategies organized around annual, unit and daily lesson plans to meet established student goals and promote high levels of student engagement and inquiry.

- The school leader requires that teachers develop lesson plans, although there is no template provided and the review of the plans is inconsistent. The school leader stated that although there is no format for unit or daily lesson plans, there are model plans available. The lesson plans available

during classroom visits did not reference student data, Individual Education Programs (IEPs) or student goals, and did not meet Tri-State Rubric criteria. Six of the eight lesson plans available during classroom visits contained no information about instructional accommodations, interventions, or student groupings, and there was no reference to students with disabilities or English language learners (ELLs). In one of nine classrooms observed by one reviewer, the teacher divided the class into two groups to complete independent classwork; in the other eight classrooms, the reviewer observed large-group, teacher-directed instruction. Another reviewer observed that in eight other classrooms, none of the lesson plans included either short- or long-term student goals. Some teacher interviewees reported difficulty in designing instruction from goals included in student IEPs because the goals do not align with the CCLS. The review of documents and teacher interviews indicated the development of goals by grade level and subject area but not student specific goals. Student interviewees stated that teachers may tell them to “do better” when their performance is low, but there is no discussion or development of goals. Teachers fail to align instructional practice with student needs, which has a negative effect on student engagement, inquiry and achievement.

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

- Classroom instruction is minimally aligned to the CCLS and includes few points of access for all students to meet targeted benchmarks. The review of the DTSDE self-assessment document indicated the use of Mastery Manager to compile data and align learning objectives to CCLS. During interviews with teachers, however, none mentioned the use of Mastery Manager or the implementation of CCLS maps to classroom instruction. Of eight classrooms visited by one reviewer, one implemented some aspects of CCLS-aligned instruction, and all eight met the criteria for the “readiness” level of CCLS pedagogy. However, there was no observable differentiation of instruction in any of the eight classrooms. Another reviewer observed that in eight of nine classes visited, instruction was teacher-directed and provided as a large group. Lesson plans available for review did not reference the standards addressed, did not include various entry points for student engagement, and failed to meet Tri-State Rubric criteria for daily/unit lesson plans. Without school-wide implementation of coherent, CCLS-aligned instruction leading to multiple access points for all students, many students, and particularly those with disabilities experience difficulties in accessing learning, achieving academic goals, and improving their academic performance.

4.4 The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice: Teachers create a safe environment that is responsive to students’ varied experiences, tailored to the strengths and needs of all students, and leads to high levels of student engagement and inquiry.

- In general, teachers create a classroom environment that is safe, but entails little sensitivity to the needs of diverse groups of students and low levels of student engagement and inquiry. Posters listing positive character traits were visible throughout the hallways and in approximately half of the classrooms visited. In some classrooms, adults explicitly acknowledged appropriate behavior/responses more frequently than inappropriate behavior/responses. Student interviewees reported feeling physically safe, although some expressed their belief that some teachers are not

assertive enough with classroom management. Fifty eight percent of student survey respondents agreed with the statement, “During my classes, teachers lecture most of the time.” Students also reported that teacher explanations are sometimes confusing. Of nine classrooms visited by a reviewer, two teachers explicitly taught or retaught necessary reading, writing and math strategies, and two teachers explicitly referenced previously taught strategies. There was limited evidence of the use of specific strategies to address the diverse learning needs of all students in any of the nine classrooms visited. In eight classrooms visited by a reviewer, teachers asked low-level questions. One teacher reported not knowing how to meet the needs of ELL students, stating, “They go to another building for English as a Second Language (ESL) class.” Another reviewer visited eight classes and found no indication of instructional strategies sensitive to diverse student learner needs, including academically accelerated students. A third reviewer observed that in three of eight classrooms visited teachers created work groups of students with mixed abilities, and two teachers distributed vocabulary sheets to assist with a reading assignment. Sixty-one percent of teacher survey respondents agreed with the statement, “I am able to meet the individual needs of each and every student.” Staff members have not created a learning environment responsive to the varied experiences and needs of all students, which limits student access to learning and social opportunities and results in low levels of student engagement and inquiry.

4.5 The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* for this Statement of Practice: Teachers use a variety of data sources including screening, interim measures and progress monitoring to inform lesson planning, develop explicit teacher plans and foster student participation in their own learning process.

- A variety of data sources exist. However, not all teachers have a consistent understanding of the data or the ability to use it to inform their planning so that instruction fosters student participation in their own learning. A review of the DTSDE self-assessment document and the school leader interview indicated the availability of a variety of data sets accessible to teachers. However, teachers do not refer to any of these sources when asked about data “systems.” Instead, teacher interviewees reported that the PLC chairpersons provide data to them and lead the collaborative review of the data. During the observation of a PLC meeting, the facilitator shared information about schedules for final exams and state testing. There was no discussion about individual student or group progress, although teachers expressed concern about the testing abilities of student groups such as students with disabilities and ELLs. Teacher interviewees reported that there are limited opportunities for PD connecting the collection and review of data to the development of their instructional plans. In six of eight classes visited, teachers had lesson plans, though none of the plans indicated the use of data to adjust grouping and instructional strategies or create various entry points for student learning. Although student interviewees said that teachers provide anecdotal, sometimes written, feedback on assignments, class tests, and written work, no students reported receiving data-based feedback. Teachers have limited opportunities for PD that supports the connection of data to the development of instructional plans as well as the delivery of instruction based on student strengths and needs, which means that students do not receive specialized, individualized, or differentiated instruction or feedback to address their skill deficits.

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
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Debriefing Statement: Overall, the school provides a physically safe environment for students and staff. The school is implementing some programs to address the social and emotional developmental health of students, although it lacks a system of training, referral, and support addressing the academic as well as social and emotional developmental health needs of all students, connected to academic performance. As a result, the school environment and culture is not conducive to learning for all constituents.

Areas for Improvement:

5.2 The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* for this Statement of Practice: The school cultivates the development of overarching systems and partnerships that support and sustain social and emotional developmental health.

- There is no formal overarching system that designates a specific adult to coordinate the social and emotional developmental health needs of each student. However, the majority of teacher, student, and parent survey respondents reported that there is at least one adult in school to whom children can go for help with a problem. Teachers and the Director of Special Education reported that a special education liaison system exists. Through the liaison system, special education staff members inform other instructional personnel of IEP requirements, and each designated staff member is the primary contact person for up to ten students with disabilities, their parents, and other teachers. However, parents and some teachers report being unaware of the system or aware that most students by-pass the system by taking any concerns to their teacher. The DTSDE self-assessment document states that a Child Study Team (CST) exists; some staff members describe the CST as a prescriptive intervention model while others said the CST is “ineffective” and does not address barriers to social and emotional developmental health and academic needs. Some student interviewees stated that some teachers do not listen to students and “assume the worst.” School personnel stated that, student attendance, anecdotal reports, and behavior reports are the data points reviewed to identify social and emotional developmental health needs. Some staff members are aware that some community resources available to the school are the result of incidences of student needs for treatment or crisis management related to “cutting,” suicide, alcohol and other drug use, and other serious social and emotional developmental health needs. The school lacks an overarching system of prevention, identification, coordination, and intervention, which has a negative effect on the development of healthy relationships and a safe, respectful learning environment.

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 connected to learning experiences and results in building a safer and healthier environment for families, teachers and students.

- There is no school vision promoting social and emotional developmental health for all students connected to learning. Some school personnel and parent interviewees articulated skills and

behaviors they believe indicate the social and emotional health of academically successful students, but there was no consistency across interview groups, and interviewees said there was no uniform, school-wide promotion and articulation of targeted goals for skill and behavior acquisition. The DTSDE self-assessment document states that some program presentations from Random Acts of Kindness and Character Education occurred, although there was no data available regarding the implementation and monitoring of such programs or an effectiveness measurement of the instruction provided. In addition, the self-assessment document lists the school's Code of Conduct, course expectations, and extracurricular activities as current strategies and practices for promoting social and emotional developmental health. There was no evidence indicating a planning process for supports or specialized instructional programs for students who are unable to meet the mainstream expectations. Likewise, there was no evidence of PD provided that helps staff members support the social and emotional developmental health of all students. The lack of a consistent, promoted school-wide vision for the social and emotional developmental health of all students creates barriers to student safety, health, and academic achievement.

5.4 The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* for this Statement of Practice: All school constituents are able to articulate how the school community is safe, conducive to learning and fosters a sense of ownership that leads to greater student outcomes.

- All school constituents articulated feeling physically safe in school. The DTSDE self-assessment lists the various physical safety procedures and plans and cites the district and school survey results, in which the majority of all student, teacher, and parent respondent groups indicated that they feel physically safe in the school. However, the survey results indicated that fifty-five percent of student respondents agree with the statement, "At this school, students get in fights or hurt each other." Additionally, thirty-nine percent of teachers and fifty-seven percent of parents agreed with the statement, "Students threaten and bully each other at this school." Thirty-four percent of student respondents agreed that, "This year, I have been bullied by another student at this school." Bullying includes a variety of topics and some students report that teachers also contribute to bullying. In interviews, staff members could not articulate a school vision connected to the social and emotional developmental health of all students, and did not know what their role is in supporting student social and emotional developmental health. Some staff members reported that school resources are limited in the area of student social and emotional developmental health needs and expressed concern about the many needs of students. For example, forty-seven percent of teacher survey respondents agreed that, "Alcohol and drug use is a problem in this school." Some parent interviewees reported not knowing how the school supports the social and emotional health of their children, although they believe that not enough support is available. Sixty-seven percent of parent survey respondents either agreed with or said they "don't know" whether "The teachers and staff make assumptions about my child's life chances." Not all school constituents feel safe, which creates a less than ideal learning environment that poses an obstacle to academic success.

5.5 The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* for this Statement of Practice: The school leader and student support staff work together to develop teachers' ability to use data to respond to students' social and emotional developmental health needs, so students can become academically and socially successful.

- Since there is no school vision promoting social and emotional developmental health for all students

connected to learning, there is no data-based system or plan to address student needs or support staff efforts. The review of the school’s DTSDE self-assessment indicated that instructional assistance programs such as AIS and Title I are in place as strategies to “respond to students’ social and emotional developmental health needs.” The school leader stated that she knows all students who are at risk and has a plan in place for each at-risk student. The Director of Special Education reports that the school lacks a formal Response to Intervention (RtI) program. In interviews, teachers identified attendance and behavior as two data sources related to students’ social and emotional development health. School personnel reported that AIS instruction is “make-up” work, the CST is ineffective in addressing the needs of all students, and students are suspended from social activities based on their academic scores. Additionally, staff members stated that programs and services for students with disabilities are based on the services available in the district or on available staff rather than on the needs of the students. For example, if more than five students with disabilities require resource room services, school leaders schedule the “extra” students with disabilities into the learning lab, because the learning lab can accommodate ten students. Because there is little school response to students’ social and emotional developmental health needs, some students needs are unmet or undetected, which prevents students from becoming 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

D

Debriefing Statement: The school is welcoming to parents. However, there is minimal existence of a school culture of partnership among all constituents who share the responsibility for student academic progress, social-emotional growth, and well-being. This inhibits student success and family engagement in academic achievement.

Areas for Improvement:

6.2 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school atmosphere is welcoming and fosters a feeling of belonging and trust, which encourages families to freely and frequently engage with the school, leading to increased student success.

- The school atmosphere is welcoming and friendly toward families. The DTSDE self-assessment document lists a variety of events held at the school that include parents. Parents reported that the school leader is welcoming when parents visit the school and when they call and leave a telephone message for her she returns the call. Ninety-two percent of parent survey respondents agreed with the statement, “I feel welcome in my child’s school.” Fifty-eight percent of parents agreed that, “I am satisfied with the opportunities for parent participation in the school.” However, thirty-three percent of teacher survey respondents agreed with, “I am satisfied with the level of parent/caregiver involvement.” The admission procedure to the building entails producing a driver’s licenses, which raises an issue for family members without licenses. District and school leaders maintained that this level of security is appropriate and assured reviewers that they allow exceptions for student family members as necessary. The district PD plan includes no opportunities

for training inclusive of family involvement. Although seventy percent of parent survey respondents agreed that, “There are many ways for parents to become involved with the school,” no evidence indicated intentional school efforts encouraging volunteer opportunities for family members. While some families initiate engagement with the school and the school welcomes those who do engage with them, school entry may be restrictive for some families, which contributes to the limited effectiveness of the partnership between home and school in cultivating better student success.

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

- The school primarily engages in one-way communication with families and community stakeholders and expects stakeholder reciprocation by attending scheduled events and meetings. The review of the DTSDE self-assessment indicated that there is limited racial or ethnic diversity in the school and about half of the student population qualifies for the free or reduced lunch program. A diversity committee meets a few times per year, although the purpose and function of the group is unclear. The district website provides translation of all information posted through Google’s translator program. Additionally, teachers stated that Spanish translators are available during parent-teacher conferences. Some parents expressed concern about the assumption that all families have access to computers since much of the student achievement information shared with families is by electronic means. The review of documents and interviews indicated that the school lacks a plan that cultivates its understanding of community needs. As a result of this lack of a comprehensive plan that includes identification of student strengths and needs and a variety of ways to communicate, the ability of parents to support their child’s academic growth is limited.

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

- Although some school personnel connect students and families in need with community resources and agencies, formal partnerships between and among the school and community resources do not exist. The DTSDE self-assessment document lists a variety of resources that provide services to families and students within the school community. However, parents reported that the school does not make connections between families and community resources for supporting student learning and growth. Less than half of parent survey respondents agreed with the statement, “The principal works with the community to build support for students.” The review of documents and interviews did not produce evidence of district- or school-sponsored PD that trains staff members to develop and sustain partnerships with families. As a result, the lack of a plan and a coordinated process of information dissemination prevent all students from benefitting from a robust and focused home-school connection.

6.5 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* for this Statement of Practice:** The entire school shares data in a way that empowers and encourages families to use and understand data to promote dialogue between parents, students and school constituents centered on learning and success.

- The school shares much data through the district website and other electronic systems, which promotes dialogue with some families. Based on interviews and a review of both the DTSDE self-assessment document and the SCEP, current school strategies for sharing data with families include electronic means such as Parent Portal and the district website, and teacher communication. Some parents expressed concern about the school’s assumption that all families have access to computers, and others state that there are no explanations in “layman’s terms” of what data means when staff present data at meetings, conferences, or in written communications. Some parents stated that there are no opportunities provided by the school for families to learn about data. Some parents said the school leader helps them understand the data communications they receive if they ask her to do so. The school’s assumption that all families have access to computers and understand data regarding student learning limits families’ ability to collaborate with the school and take action to support learning and higher achievement.

Recommendations:

Tenet 2: School Leader Practices and Decisions

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

- 2.2: Create a committee representative of all stakeholders in the community, including students, parents, and teachers, to develop a school vision concerning student achievement and well-being. Develop specific, measurable, ambitious, results-oriented, and timely (SMART) school goals that reflect priorities aligned with the vision and share these with the community.
- 2.3: Communicate school goals to all stakeholders through various forms of media and in pertinent languages. Provide PD so that school personnel know how to analyze data and use it in support of instructional practices, including feedback loops connected to improved student achievement.
- 2.4: Ensure that interview committee members review the school's academic and social needs data to match with the skills of potential candidates for hire. Develop and incorporate an extended learning time program into student and teacher programming in order to address lags in student achievement. Base all determination of school needs on progress toward fulfillment of the school goals as well as teacher and student progress data. Organize human, programmatic, and fiscal capital resources around the accomplishment of school improvement and student goals.
- 2.5: Implement all components of the APPR system, provide relevant feedback to teachers, and create teacher improvement plans to address the adjustment of teacher practices based on student and class data. Clearly define the steps that enable each staff member to achieve a positive year-end evaluation rating and lead to improved student learning and achievement data.

Tenet 3: Curriculum Development and Support

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

- 3.2: Create a curricula review committee comprised of CCLS experts to review teacher- and/or PLC-created curricula, provide guidance, and train PLC chairpersons in managing the implementation of CCLS-aligned instruction. Redesign standing agendas for PLCs to focus teacher attention and support on student data to inform planning and instruction.
- 3.3: Reexamine and redesign the school schedule to formally provide grade and subject level meetings so that teachers collaborate to create CCLS-aligned and coherent unit plans. Review teacher lesson plans on a regular basis to ensure alignment with the Tri-State Rubric, thus promoting higher-order thinking and information analysis skills in students.
- 3.4: Re-design the agendas for PLCs to focus teachers on using data to inform planning and instruction, include the examination of instructional content until all are clear about what is taught and why it is taught to students. Integrate various forms of methods for communication throughout curricula so that students have opportunities to explore the communication of information using many outlets, including the arts, technology and other enrichment areas.

- 3.5 Provide PD opportunities for PLC chairpersons to be able to discuss and demonstrate to teachers the use of timely data to assess school effectiveness and identify student needs. Review with teachers the data and assessment tools that identify patterns of student learning, and teach them to adapt their planning and instruction to coincide with student learning patterns.

Tenet 4: Teacher Practices and Decisions

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

- 4.2: Require teachers to develop goals based on student data for all groups of students. Include the creation of long- and short-term goals based on grade-level benchmarks for each group of students. Teach instructional staff the skills necessary to align the instruction they provide to plans that include differentiation, accommodations, and interventions addressing the needs of groups of students.
- 4.3: Require teachers to align their instructional practices using CCLS curricula maps and provide a variety of access points for students to engage in learning so their targeted goals are achieved.
- 4.4: Monitor consistent implementation and accountability for behavioral expectations and physical safety. Distinguish behavioral safety from instructional safety, and teach school staff to develop an instructionally safe environment that is free of teasing, derogatory comments, and all forms of subtle as well as overt forms of bullying within classrooms and in social settings. Recognize cultural and social diversity by modeling understanding and providing access to learning and social opportunities for all students.
- 4.5: Require teachers to use data to inform instructional decision-making such as student grouping and instructional strategies. Adjust and target instructional plans based on student data. Analyze data so that teachers provide frequent feedback to students, including their next steps for achieving their goals.

Tenet 5: Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health

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

- 5.2 Establish a system by which an adult is designated to know each student and his/her needs. Charge the designated adult with coordinating the instructional strategies and services necessary for the student's social and emotional developmental health. Identify a district/school with an effective system of referral and support that addresses the barriers to student social and emotional developmental health and academic success and seek guidance and training from that district/school in replicating and implementing an effective system. Collaborate with area service providers and resources to identify data points that most reliably indicate the type and extent of student social and emotional developmental health needs. Use available data to ensure adequate school support personnel and cultivate relevant partnerships to promote and positively affect the social and emotional developmental health of all students.
- 5.3 Create a collaborative workgroup that includes representatives of each segment of school community stakeholders to research, discuss, and identify the skills and behaviors demonstrated by socially and emotionally healthy students. Articulate the skills and behaviors that lead to academic success throughout the community

and incorporate them into a school vision and goals. Develop a comprehensive program that teaches and supports student acquisition of the desirable healthy skills and behaviors. Design and implement PD opportunities that build adult capacity to support the social and emotional developmental health of all students as one component in the creation of a safe, respectful learning community.

- 5.4 Create a school vision, as recommended in 5.3, which supports the social and emotional developmental health and safety of all students. Articulate the responsibilities of school personnel in modeling desirable skills and behaviors that contribute to a respectful learning community. Work through school/community partnerships and parent groups to inform parents about the school's vision, commitment to supporting the social and emotional developmental health of all students, and the link between student health and academic success.
- 5.5: Use the data generated by the reliable measures of student social and emotional developmental health identified in 5.3 above to create PD opportunities for teachers. Increase teacher understanding of how identifying needs based on data, and addressing social and emotional developmental needs, aligns with the academic and social success of all students.

Tenet 6: Family and Community Engagement

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

- 6.2 Establish and communicate a written open-door policy to ensure appropriate access to the school building, leaders, and staff. Provide skill-building PD for all school personnel so they develop respectful relationships with diverse families and community stakeholders. Develop, and offer to family members, opportunities for involvement and volunteering with the school focused on student learning and development.
- 6.3 Develop an effective plan to establish reciprocal communication with families and community stakeholders, and celebrate the diversity of knowledge and cultures within the school community. Diversify the methods of communicating student achievement information to families; identify and use the most effective methods.
- 6.4 Establish partnerships with a variety of public and private community resources so that the school can assist families when they need services to support student learning and growth. Provide skill building PD for all school personnel to facilitate the establishment and maintenance of healthy relationships and partnerships linked to school and student needs.
- 6.5 Develop and provide a wide range of opportunities so that families learn to understand student data. Share student data in a variety of ways that increase families' understanding of student learning needs and encourage advocacy for necessary student supports.