



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code/DBN	060800010010
School	Dunkirk Middle School
School Address	525 Eagle Street, Dunkirk NY 14048
District	Dunkirk City School District
School Leader	David Boyda
Dates of Review	June 4-5, 2013
School Accountability	Focus School
Type of Review	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet											
Grade Configuration	6-8	Total Enrollment	435	% Title 1 Population	67%	% Attendance Rate	95.6%				
% Free Lunch	58%	% Reduced Lunch	9%	% Student Sustainability	NP	% Limited English Proficient	14%	% Students with Disabilities	11%		
Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes											
# Transitional Bilingual		# Dual Language		# Self-Contained English as a Second Language		6					
Types and Number of Special Education Classes											
# Special Classes	12	# Consultant Teaching	11	# Integrated Collaborative Teaching							
# Resource Room	3										
Types and Number Special Classes											
# Visual Arts	8	# Music	6	# Drama		# Foreign Language	18	# Dance		# CTE	17
Racial/Ethnic Origin											
% American Indian or Alaska Native	1%	% Black or African American	11%	% Hispanic or Latino	48%	% Asian or Native Hawaiian /Other Pacific Islander	0%	% White	39%	% Multi-racial	1%
Personnel											
Years Principal Assigned to School	10	# of Assistant Principals	1	# of Deans		# of Counselors / Social Workers		4			
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	0%	% Teaching Out of Certification	2%	% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp.		2%	Average Teacher Absences				
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)		NP
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	31% 43% 40%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	31% 45% 41%	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	67%	4 Year Graduation Rate (HS Only)		N/A			
Credit Accumulation (High School Only)											
% of 1 st yr. students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	% of 2 nd yr. students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	% of 3 rd yr. students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	6 Year Graduation Rate		N/A			

NP = Not Provided

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
X	White		Multi-racial
	Students with Disabilities	X	Limited English Proficient
X	Economically Disadvantaged		

Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics

	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
	Students with Disabilities	X	Limited English Proficient
X	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		
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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. Improve school proficiency level on NYS ELA Assessment
2. Improve school proficiency level on NYS Math Assessment
3. Increase percentage of English language learner(ELL) students reaching proficiency on NYSESLAT Assessment
4. Increase use of data to inform instruction, planning, and intervention
5. Improve implementation of CCLS and Modules

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			X	

	achievement outcomes.				
	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:			D	
Tenet 5 - Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health: The school community identifies, promotes, and supports social and emotional development by designing systems and experiences that lead to healthy relationships and a safe, respectful environment that is conducive to learning for all constituents.					
#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
5.2	The school 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:			D	

Tenet 6 - Family and Community Engagement: The school creates a culture of partnership where families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
6.2	The school 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' strength 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 has developed specific, results oriented goals that are based on data and are known by the internal school community. However, there is no vision that is clear to all constituents. The lack of a shared vision of continuous and sustainable school improvement, supported by best practices in all classrooms hampers the school’s ability to create a school culture that promotes success, well-being and high achievement for all students.

Strengths:

2.5 **The school has received a rating of *Effective* 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 (PD) opportunities; and hold administrators and staff accountable for continuous improvement.

- The school leader has implemented the approved District Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) process with fidelity. School leaders reported to the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) that although the observation, feedback, PD, and staff accountability components of the APPR process are time consuming, they “have survived” the process and, at the time of the IIT review, had very few observations remaining. During interviews, teachers informed the IIT that staff receives relevant and timely feedback from school leaders and that PD offered provides supports to teachers and other staff members. The IIT found, from a review of documents, that technical assistance and PD opportunities are connected to teacher improvement plans. The school leaders and teachers supervised by district leaders reported that supervising leaders collaborate with staff on the steps that must be completed to yield a positive year-end evaluation rating. Because school and district leaders implement a comprehensive performance review system, staff members are held accountable for continuous improvement.

Areas for Improvement:

2.2 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* 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).

- Although a school vision is included in the School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP), it is not understood and shared across the community. The School Leader and teachers are able to articulate two primary goals as having defined a vision for the school: increase student achievement on state assessments; and maintain a safe environment. Some staff members interviewed by the IIT

articulated some of the goals from the SCEP; however, staff reported that they did not participate in the creation of the goals. During interviews, parents reported that they were not aware of the vision. Students interviewed articulated that, “our teachers want us to do better in ELA and Math scores.” Student support staff members stated to the IIT that increasing parent involvement is one of their goals. The school leader discussed the decrease in disciplinary office referrals as the primary factor in maintaining a safe school environment. The lack of a school vision and school goals that are known and understood by all segments of the school community, hamper the development of a shared sense of urgency to achieve school-wide goals and school improvement.

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 has a web-based data management system that collects classroom and individual student data related to New York State (NYS) assessment scores, local benchmark assessment results, and academic interventions provided by teachers. The school has designed a School-Based Inquiry Team (SBIT) to examine student achievement data collected, and make instructional decisions supporting student progress toward goals. The school leader and staff members informed the IIT that, although the daily schedule is created to include regular meetings of the SBIT, goals focused on critical areas for school improvement are not defined. The IIT observed a discussion by a group of staff members where data was shared; however, the IIT noted that the discussion did not include the impact of the data/information on instructional planning or the use of instructional strategies to move students toward goal achievement. The school leader reported that he encourages staff members to use data systems, and that staff have received PD in the analysis of data as well as the use of it to inform teacher instruction, strategies, and decision-making. However, teachers stated that PD on the use of data is limited, and most PD focuses on state mandates and initiatives. The lack of clearly defined mission-critical goals and the lack of effective use of data analysis to inform and improve school-wide and individual instructional practices impede progress toward school and student goals.

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.

- At the time of the visit, the district managed the hiring process, and allocated fiscal resources based on fixed figures from the previous school year. District and school leaders informed the IIT that fiscal resources are allocated to the school based on student enrollment. Nevertheless, school leaders reported to the IIT that the school articulates school community needs when given the opportunity by district leaders. School leaders reported to the IIT that schools regularly communicate with the district regarding program needs that include the acquisition and maintenance of appropriate personnel and other resources to support student needs. When the school leader wants to fund a particular activity,

event, or course, he requests the funding from the district office and, depending on available resources and requests from other school leaders, funding may be provided. Some teachers informed the IIT that they have personally purchased materials to assist them in working with students of diverse backgrounds, including self-teaching language programs to be able to understand their students who speak languages other than English. During interviews with the IIT, the school leader stated that the district hiring process includes the school leader and staff on the interview committee; and that the teachers' union selects the staff representative on the committee. The school leader reported that he attempts to ensure that student schedules are created to address individual need, program requirements and other academic and behavioral considerations. The IIT found that the school has no formal or organized extended-learning-time program; however, school leaders, teachers, and students informed the IIT that teachers are free to arrange additional learning opportunities for students outside of, and in addition to, the static school schedule. From a review of documents and interviews, the IIT found that the school lacked SMART goals connected to a comprehensive vision that reflects the needs of the school community. The lack of organization of human, programmatic and fiscal resources to strategically address school community needs, hampers the school's ability to maximize achievement of school improvement and student goals.

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: There are opportunities for teams of teachers to work across subjects and review data to inform unit and lesson plans. However, the arts, technology, and other enrichment areas are not consistently embedded in instruction. The lack of systemic alignment and implementation of CCLS-based curriculum that is modified to meet the needs of all students hampers the optimization of instructional practice and impedes the maximization of student-learning outcomes.

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.

- At the time of the IIT review, the school had not achieved the systematic and consistent implementation of rigorous and coherent curricula appropriately aligned to the CCLS. From a review of the school's self-assessment document, the IIT found that teachers have had multiple PD opportunities focused on the implementation of curricula appropriately aligned to the CCLS. However, the Curricula Implementation Committee informed the IIT that implementation is a "work in progress" and needs to be increased. School leaders indicated that they provide opportunities for teacher teams to review data and collaborate across subjects; however; they also informed the IIT that the analysis of data does not inform instructional unit and lesson planning. Staff members

confirmed that most teachers are provided with technical assistance and time to engage in professional conversations about data-driven instruction across grades and subjects. However, neither unit nor daily lesson plans were available to the IIT. In classrooms visited, the IIT noted that instruction observed contained no use of CCLS instructional shifts and few high level questioning techniques. The review of documents revealed curriculum guidelines that were not appropriately aligned to the CCLS. Until quality curricula appropriately aligned to the CCLS is fully implemented, students are not learning what they need to know to become college and career ready.

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.

- At the time of the visit, unit and lesson plans were not available for review in most classrooms visited due to a collective bargaining agreement. Most teachers interviewed reported that they formally participate in meetings scheduled to create and examine plans appropriately aligned to the CCLS curriculum. During the observation of one such meeting, the IIT noted that the teachers discuss data and student progress. Although the instruction observed during classroom visits was aligned to standards appropriate for the grade and subject, there was no observation of the use of complex materials to stimulate higher-order thinking and build deep conceptual understanding and knowledge. The majority of lessons observed were characterized by whole group, teacher-directed instruction. Without transparent lesson planning that includes the use of complex materials and instruction based on the review and analysis of data, instruction remains inconsistent, limiting student progress and achievement.

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.

- The Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) observed that teacher collaboration takes place within and across grades and subjects. School leaders and teachers stated that data inquiry team meetings are regularly scheduled, and attended by leaders and staff members. However, some staff members also reported that not all teachers are required to attend the data inquiry meetings, and some do not. During classroom visits, the IIT observed that technology is available to students, although it is used sporadically during instruction. For example, students used computers to participate in reading assessments in only two of eleven classrooms visited. When IIT members reviewed student work, they found only two instances where students incorporated the use of art in their work samples. The limited integration of the arts, technology, and other enrichment opportunities within CCLS-aligned academic curricula limit student access to robust instruction.

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 leaders and teachers are developing a data-driven culture with the direction and support of district leaders. School leaders and staff members report that each school leader attends monthly data inquiry meetings to participate in the analysis of data. While many teachers attend the monthly data inquiry meetings, it is not required, and staff members stated that some teachers choose not to attend. School leaders and staff members reported that the data inquiry teams examine data trends and each team selects a new goal each month. However, it is difficult to determine whether patterns of student learning actually lead to the adaptation of instruction since teachers are not required to create unit or lesson plans. Likewise, school leaders and teachers reported that some strategies, such as student grouping, are identified to respond to data reports based on summative assessments, although student grouping was not evident during most classroom visitations. Because a data-driven culture does not exist, data analysis is not being used to drive strategic action planning to inform instruction based on student needs, which limits student achievement outcomes.

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

D

Debriefing Statement: Some teachers use instructional practices that are aligned to plans, include accommodations for groups of students with learning and/or linguistic needs, and provide data based feedback to students. Primarily, however, teachers use instructional practices that are not CCLS-aligned and do not lead to increased student achievement. Therefore, the gap between what students know and need to learn is wide, and there are not always high levels of student engagement, thinking, or achievement throughout the school.

Areas for Improvement:

4.2 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* 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.

- Although some teachers organize their instruction using a planning process, and time is scheduled for teachers to collaborate, lesson plans are not required, and were not made available to IIT members. The review of school documents and staff interviews indicate that formative and summative data is collected and some teachers reported using the data to inform their instructional practices and strategies. Some staff members interviewed also stated that they set student goals. However, during classroom visitations, instruction was teacher-directed to the whole group, with no observed differentiation. Additionally, instructional accommodations and differentiated instruction was observed in only two of twenty-three classrooms visited. During classroom visits, there was no involvement in setting or discussing student goals, or observation of high levels of student

engagement and inquiry. During the visit, a small number of students appeared engaged in classroom tasks during classroom visitations. Since instruction is not clearly organized by lesson plans, focused on meeting established student goals, or differentiated to address student-learning needs, student engagement in their own learning is limited.

4.3 The school has received a rating of *Developing* 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.

- Overall, instruction is not reflective of the CCLS, few students have targeted goals, and multiple points of access to instruction do not exist for most students. Although school leaders and some teachers reported that instruction aligned to the CCLS is beginning to develop, they also stated that curriculum maps do not support the CCLS. In nineteen of twenty-three classrooms visited, desks were set up in rows and content was presented in a singular approach without: a variety of access points; differentiation of tasks; opportunities for students to engage with each other in creative ways; formative assessment; and opportunities for integration of new learning. In four of the classrooms visited, students were partnered for review activities, although the activities were of low skill levels and there were no criteria for the pairing of students. In one classroom, the use of iPads was tailored to the reading/language needs of the learners, and in one classroom, frequent formative assessment measures were employed to check student understanding. Parents stated that they wished their children received assignments that are more rigorous. The lack of multiple points of access for all students hinders progress toward the achievement of targeted goals.

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.

- At the time of the DTSDE review, the IIT found that teachers create a safe learning environment and some provide, and create, opportunities to acknowledge diverse groups of students. The IIT noted that behavioral expectations were posted throughout the school building, including in the classrooms visited. One classroom visited featured student-generated anti-bullying posters. Student support staff stated that "five guidelines for student success" are taught to all students in the beginning of each school year and periodically throughout the year. In general, teachers and students were found to consistently and diligently follow the student code of conduct. When interviewed by the IIT, students articulated school and classroom rules and some explained why safety rules exist and parents reported that their children feel safe in school. During classroom visits, the IIT noted that most instruction was teacher-directed, and teachers expected students to engage in the same activities without variation or accommodation. The IIT also found that few teachers used strategies sensitive to diverse groups of students. In addition, instructional materials in use during classroom visitations did not contain high levels of text and content complexity. The majority of questions asked during classroom visits was of knowledge and recall levels and did not promote higher-order thinking. Although there is agreement among constituents that teachers

create a safe environment for children, the lack of instruction that is differentiated to address the strengths and needs of individual or groups of students and the lack of instruction that is culturally responsive to all constituents limit the school's capacity to foster high levels of student engagement and inquiry is limited.

4.5 The school has received a rating of *Developing* 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.

- School leaders and teachers collect and discuss data from a variety of sources although many teachers do not use the data to develop explicit plans. School leaders and staff members reported that some teachers use the student-grouping feature of the district's assessment and data management system. However, the use of data for this purpose was not evident during classroom visits, as desks were set up in rows and little student grouping was observed. The IIT found from a review of school documents, school leader, and staff interviews that school-based inquiry teams meet monthly to analyze data with the intention of using it to inform instructional decision-making, adjust student groups, and provide feedback to students. However, during an observation of an inquiry team meeting, the IIT found that data analysis results were not used in the accomplishment of these purposes. Feedback provided to students during classroom visits was limited to teacher responses to individual questions during whole class review activities. In only one of twenty-three classrooms did a teacher provide ongoing feedback to students engaged in a small group review activity, and in one other classroom, the teacher provided immediate end-of-year reading assessment results to students. Because not all teachers provide data based feedback to students on a regular basis, student participation in their own learning process is limited.

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

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: Although a vision for social and emotional developmental health connected to learning experiences is not systematically promoted, there are systems established that allow each child to be known by a designated adult and, based on available data, support referral to address barriers to social and emotional developmental health and/or academic needs. However, there is little PD in place to build adult capacity in supporting students' social and emotional developmental health. The school environment is generally physically safe and respectful but insufficient staff PD does not promote a stable environment that is conducive to learning for all constituents.

Strengths:

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

- The school cultivates systems and partnerships to support and sustain student social and emotional developmental health. School leaders and student support staff members described the Making A Connection (MAC) mentor program through which each student is paired with a designated adult in the beginning of the school year. Students make a list of a few adults in the school that they feel connected to and comfortable with. The team of student support staff reports that they then pair students with a designated adult of student choice. Students stated that they have at least one adult in the school with which they enjoy a trusting and caring relationship. School leaders and student support staff reported that, as student needs arise, the Student Assistance Team (SAT) convenes to identify pertinent issues and discuss relevant interventions or solutions. The Chautauqua County Mental Health Office has a satellite office within the building and, with parental permission, students have access to prompt assistance and services. The school-wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) program generates student data that is reviewed regularly by student support staff. In addition, school counselors state that they meet every week with students whose academic performance is low. The school leader and support staff also reported that an attendance committee generates reports when there are changes or questions about the attendance rates of specific students. Because of the systems and partnerships developed by school leaders and student support staff, a school environment that is conducive to learning has been cultivated.

Areas for Improvement:

5.3 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school articulates and systematically promotes a vision for social and emotional developmental health that is connected to learning experiences and results in building a safer and healthier environment for families, teachers and students.

- A number of school constituents are able to articulate appropriate skills and behaviors that demonstrate student social and emotional developmental health. However, a school vision articulating student social and emotional developmental health does not exist, so some constituents are unaware of the connection between health and learning. The student support team stated that they focus on a goal of creating positive supports for children because sometimes, student experiences in school are shaped by their parents' experiences, including how parent problems or issues were resolved when they were students. School and district leaders as well as school staff reported that PBIS, the newer anti-bullying initiative, and the mentor structure are examples of the programs put in place to teach and support student social and emotional developmental health. In addition, student support staff members visit fifth grade students and teachers in the elementary schools to facilitate a smooth transition process as students enter the middle school. However, only some of the programs in place measure the health of students and are aligned to defined outcomes. For example, there is an attendance committee in place to collect data and generate reports when there are changes or questions about the attendance rates of specific students. However, student support staff members interviewed stated that there is a significant truancy problem in the school. The system in place identifies attendance issues, and support staff members institute a procedure

to respond to the issue, but the effectiveness of the procedure is not measured. Without an articulated vision for student social and emotional developmental health, the safety and health of the school environment is not connected to positive learning experiences for families or teachers, and academic success for students.

5.4 The school has received a rating of *Developing* 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.

- During the visit, most school constituents articulated that the school is a safe environment and that they experience a sense of connectedness to the school community. Students interviewed stated that they feel safe and that they have at least one adult in the school that supports their social and emotional developmental health. However, during interviews with the IIT, students indicated that they sometimes wished their teachers were more positive when speaking with other students, and that at times students felt that some teachers provoke students by being unnecessarily negative in their interactions with students. Students also reported that lockers are often broken into and theft is an issue. Teachers reported that the student support staff is a valuable resource when student issues are identified. The teachers also state that they are unaware of their own role in supporting students' social and emotional developmental health and do not feel prepared to connect with students in meaningful ways concerning health concerns or issues. Parents reported that they feel that their children are safe at school and they appreciate the supportive resources available at, and through, the school, such as the Mental Health Center office in the school. While all constituents interviewed expressed that students are safe and supported in school, few were able to connect support for students' health to the school's vision of increased student achievement. Concerns over the presence of negative feedback impede the development of community ownership and responsibility for the improvement of student outcomes.

5.5 The school has received a rating of *Developing* 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.

- The school leader and student support staff collect and review data to respond to students' social and emotional developmental health needs. The review of documents and interviews with school leaders indicated that they encourage the collection and review of data by the data inquiry teams, attendance committee, PBIS committee, student support staff, and various other specific staff in order to address students' academic or social and emotional developmental health needs. However, there was no discussion of addressing social and emotional or any other health needs of students in the data inquiry meeting observed. Likewise, the student support staff clearly articulated their roles in supporting the social and emotional developmental health of students, but shared that they do not attend data inquiry meetings to discuss instructional strategies or decision-making. While teachers, leaders, and student support staff stated that some teachers are members of various intervention or data teams, in general, teachers' ability to use data to respond to the social and emotional developmental health needs of students is not developed or prioritized.

Consequently, the school's capacity to use data to maximize student success is limited.

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 a welcoming space and is responsive to families and community members. A number of activities and opportunities are designed to invite families and community members into the school to engage with staff, however, turnout and participation is generally low, and PD for staff seeking partnerships with families is not provided. As a result, families and community members do not regularly share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being.

Strengths:

6.2 **The school has received a rating of *Effective* 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 generally welcoming, and some staff members engage with families frequently. School leaders and documents indicated that a number of opportunities invite families to engage with staff throughout the school year. For example, cookouts, orientations, parent-teacher conferences, field trips, open houses, a monthly parent-teacher organization meeting, etc. District and school leaders stated that an outreach coordinator position had been created in an effort to increase family access to school staff. In addition, parents reported that school leaders support respectful relationships with family members. They stated that the parent-teacher group is provided with volunteer opportunities to develop activities and events to try to encourage other families to become involved with the school to focus on student learning and development. School leaders, staff, and parents reported that they were aware that some families have long work hours that are not conducive to daytime, early evening, or weekend meetings. Therefore, events that include food can become a family meal, increasing attendance and greater involvement. The development of reciprocal relationships that lead to family engagement with the school is a priority for many school staff and community members so that family involvement in their children's education will result in increased student success.

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

- District and school leaders are aware of the increasingly diverse school community and culture, and they have begun to increase supports to build relationships with all school constituents. The school leader and staff members reported that the addition of the outreach coordinator at the middle school is reducing the language barrier between school staff and some families. The coordinator

provides some translation, as do other school employees and some family members. School staff interviews and documents indicated that some written communications are translated into Spanish, including student achievement information. The school self-assessment document indicated that progress reports are provided for families every five weeks. Staff members also indicated that information is posted on the website and electronic parent access program. The school communicates with families to promote reciprocal communication and identify student strengths and needs to support learning.

Areas for Improvement:

6.4 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* 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.

- The school has developed partnerships to link families to the community resources available to them. School leaders, staff members, and school documents indicated that they share information about available community services with students and families. Additionally, the middle school houses a satellite office of the Chautauqua County Office of Mental Health for easy access by students and families. According to the documents reviewed, parent interviews, and staff interviews, information about community resources shared with families focuses on services provided rather than information or training to support student academic success. School documents and school leaders stated that the school partners with the State University of New York (SUNY) at Fredonia to provide academic support for students as well as PD opportunities for staff members. However, teachers reported that most PD opportunities offered are devoted to compliance with mandates rather than providing information or skill development related to building and sustaining partnerships with families. Until all constituents of the school community create partnerships focused on the academic as well as social and emotional developmental health of students, the promotion of academic achievement is limited.

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.

- While school staff members focus on sharing data with each other to improve student academic performance and success, raw data is shared with families without opportunities for them to learn how to use or understand the data to improve children's success. School leaders, staff, and parents reported that multiple opportunities are provided for families to exchange information related to students and their academic progress. However, parents stated that they do not have opportunities to learn how to "make meaning" of student achievement data or how to discuss the data with teachers or their children. Without the knowledge or skill to be able to communicate with instructional staff about student or school data, parents reported that they are unable to examine student achievement data in detail and discuss their children's' learning needs.

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: Review the current school vision in light of the goals of the SCEP. Establish a collaborative process to foster a common understanding of the school vision among all stakeholders and promote a community-wide sense of urgency in the achievement of school-wide goals. Ensure the SCEP includes specific, measurable, ambitious, results-oriented, and timely (SMART) goals that reflect the school's priorities and school vision.
- 2.3: Devise and develop interconnected systems that lead to the collection of pertinent data and comprehensive analysis of outcomes to inform progress toward school and student goals. Provide staff with PD that includes exposure to best practices such as providing meaningful, data based feedback to students.
- 2.4: Articulate SMART I goals in the SCEP and focus funding decisions on addressing these goals. Collaborate with district leaders and school staff to create a school structure that incorporates an extended learning time program and consistently supports the achievement of student and school-wide goals.

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: Examine curricula for alignment to the CCLS and adjust curricula as necessary. Ensure that collaborative PD opportunities focus on the planning, alignment and daily implementation of rigorous CCLS-based instruction that addresses the needs of all students. Ensure the creation and implementation of CCLS-based descriptive units of study to guide classroom instruction.
- 3.3: Provide collaborative teacher meetings to create unit and lesson plans aligned to the CCLS that include complex materials that stimulate higher-order thinking and build deep understanding and knowledge.
- 3.4: Ensure all staff have opportunities and the necessary skills and supports to collaboratively develop and implement robust CCLS-based curricula that incorporate the arts, technology, and areas of enrichment within and across grades and subjects. Ensure a focus on collaborative unit and lesson planning as well as designing procedures for shared teaching, modeling, and mentoring between those teachers who provide interdisciplinary instruction aligned to the CCLS and those who have not yet shifted their instruction to CCLS aligned curricula.
- 3.5: Establish a school culture that maintains a focus on improved instruction based on student needs, assessments and analysis. Ensure data analysis leads to strategic action-planning for greater student achievement. Ensure all constituents have a shared understanding that the adaptation of instruction to address student-learning needs improves student achievement, class progress, and school effectiveness.

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: Ensure instructional planning of unity and daily lesson plans incorporates instructional strategies and practices to enable students to achieve established goals and that instruction promotes high levels of student engagement and inquiry. Provide opportunities for all teachers to engage in a collaborative and written planning process that identifies the data that informs setting student goals, adapting curriculum and instruction, and providing instructional interventions based on student needs. Provide PD to constituents that enables the school community to promote student involvement in their own learning and engage students in the creation, understanding and monitoring of their own student goals.
- 4.3: Ensure the provision of daily CCLS-based instruction that provides multiple points of access for all students and is tailored to ensure all students achieve targeted goals. Ensure that instruction includes best practices and instructional differentiation based on identified student needs. Provide feedback to teachers, based on formal and informal observations that include specific steps to improve instructional practice in all areas.
- 4.4: Ensure that the well-publicized behavioral expectations, "five guidelines for student success," and student code of conduct are explicitly taught, and frequently reviewed with, all students and their families. Increase the number of teachers using instructional strategies sensitive to diverse groups of students, especially those strategies that provide increased access to learning and social opportunities for all students. Increase the availability of instructional materials with high levels of text and content complexity, and specifically look for the use of those materials during classroom walkthroughs and observations.
- 4.5: Provide PD to staff to use data to inform instructional decision-making, student grouping, and the strategies they use. Develop guidelines for teachers requiring the provision of frequent feedback on learning progress to students, including the necessary next steps to increase and improve progress.

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:

- 5.3: Develop a PD plan for school staff to learn about student skills and behaviors that demonstrate social and emotional developmental health and provide follow-up PD and support to build adult capacity to promote student acquisition of these skills and behaviors. Expand the school-wide implementation of the PBIS program and activities to ensure explicit teaching of the skills and behaviors to all students.
- 5.4: Create a committee with representatives of all school constituent groups, including students to develop a school vision articulating a commitment to the social and emotional developmental health of all students. Ensure the vision is connected to academic achievement, and articulates the role of all stakeholders in achieving the vision. Assess, during classroom walkthroughs and observations, whether teachers are meeting the expectations for supporting the social and emotional developmental health of all students. Provide feedback and continuing support to staff to ensure that the school community is able to connect support for students' health to increased student achievement.

- 5.5: Provide PD opportunities for all school staff to learn, and implement, the data use process. Ensure that school leaders and student support staff collaborate to develop a system to use data to measure and address the entire spectrum of students' social and emotional developmental health needs aligned to academic and social success. Monitor staff use of the data system and provide ongoing support for data-driven instruction during faculty meetings, classroom walkthroughs, and observations. Provide staff with feedback regarding the implementation of the system.

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:

- 6.4: Provide support to students and families to access community resources to support student learning and growth. Provide PD for all staff to build healthy partnerships with families and community resources to facilitate access to services supporting student learning and growth.
- 6.5: Design and deliver a wide range of learning opportunities for families to access, review, and analyze student data to understand their children's learning needs and successes. Teach families how to access student data using the electronic systems available through the school, and how to use the data to provide feedback to their child(ren) and advocate for student supports centered on increasing academic success.