



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	14060010197
School Name	Harvey Austin Elementary School #97
School Address	1406 Sycamore Street, Buffalo, NY 14211
District Name	Buffalo City School District
School Leader	Ms. Bridgette Gillespie
Dates of Review	December 17-18, 2013
School Accountability Status	Priority School
Type of Review	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet												
Grade Configuration		PK-8	Total Enrollment		433	% Title 1 Population	91.9%	% Attendance Rate		90.4%		
% Free Lunch	90.1%	% Reduced Lunch	1.8%	% Student Sustainability	91.0%	% Limited English Proficient	0.2%	% Students with Disabilities		23.3%		
Types and Number of Special Education Classes												
# Special Classes		7	# Consultant Teaching		0	# Integrated Collaborative Teaching			9			
# Resource Room		0										
Types and Number Special Classes												
# Visual Arts	0	# Music	1	#Drama	0	# Foreign Language	0	#Dance	0	#CTE	2	
Racial/Ethnic Origin												
% American Indian or Alaska Native	0.0%	% Black or African American	87.1%	% Hispanic or Latino	4.8%	% Asian or Native Hawaiian /Other Pacific Islander		1.2%	% White	4.4%	% Multi racial	2.5%
Personnel												
Years Principal Assigned to School		8	# of Assistant Principals		1	# of Deans	0	# of Counselors / Social Workers		.5/1.5		
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate		0%	% Teaching Out of Certification		0%	% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp.		5%	Average Teacher Absences		15%	
Overall State Accountability Status (Mark applicable box with an X)												
Priority School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Focus School Identified by a Focus District	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reason for Identification	<input type="checkbox"/>	SIG Recipient (a)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2011-2012 ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	21.1%	2011-2012 Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	23.6%	2011-2012 Science Performance at levels 3 & 4	37.7%	4 Year Graduation Rate (HS Only)		N/A				
2012-2013 ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	3.8%	2012-2013 Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	3.4%	2012 – 2013 Science Performance at levels 3 & 4		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				

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	X	Black or African American
	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
	White		Multi-racial
X	Students with Disabilities		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
	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
	White		Multi-racial
X	Students with Disabilities		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		

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

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS DESCRIBED BY THE SCHOOL:

Annual Goal # 1: The school's vision will be presented and shared at faculty meetings, SBMT meetings, Family Teacher Community Organization (FTCO) meetings, grade level meetings, and the school website and will be the driving force of the School CEP.

Annual Goal # 2: Implement district initiative of PBIS identifying Universal or Tier 1 level of supports to recognize and improve individual student academic and behavioral performance, social/emotional wellness, and student attendance.

Annual Goal # 3: All teachers in grades PK-8 will develop units and lessons aligned to CCLS.

Annual Goal #4: By the end of September 2013, the school will establish and sustain a fully functional system in which Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports serves as the primary focus and tool for all behavior management. This system also utilizes a Behavior Response Team to manage, record, and track student behavior using Infinite Campus. The effectiveness of this system will be measured by the number of behavior referrals/suspensions in Infinite Campus and staff and student surveys.

Annual Goal #5: Over the course of the 2013-2014 school year, the school will improve parental involvement and communication in order to increase student attendance, decrease behavior referrals/suspensions, and thus improve student achievement. This will be measured by sign-in sheets at school events and meetings and Parent Contact Logs kept by all staff members.

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	The school leader ensures that the school community shares the Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Results-oriented, and Timely (SMART) goals/mission, and long-term vision inclusive of core values that address the priorities outlined in the School Comprehensive Educational Plan (SCEP).				X
2.3	Leaders make strategic decisions to organize programmatic, human, and fiscal capital resources.			X	
2.4	The school leader has a fully functional system in place aligned to the district's Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) to conduct targeted and frequent observation and track progress of teacher practices based on student data and feedback.			X	
2.5	Leaders effectively use evidence-based systems and structures to examine and improve critical individual and school-wide practices as defined in the SCEP (student achievement, curriculum and teacher practices; leadership development; community/family engagement; and student social and emotional developmental health).			X	
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 ensures and supports the quality implementation of a systematic plan of rigorous and coherent curricula appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) that is monitored and adapted to meet the needs of students.			X	
3.3	Teachers develop and ensure that unit and lesson plans used include data-driven instruction (DDI) protocols that are appropriately aligned to the CCLS and NYS content standards and address student achievement needs.			X	
3.4	The school leader and teachers have developed a comprehensive plan for teachers to partner within and across all grades and subjects to create interdisciplinary curricula targeting the arts, technology, and other enrichment opportunities.				X
3.5	Teachers implement a comprehensive system for using formative and summative assessments for strategic short and long-range curriculum planning that involves student reflection, tracking of, and ownership of			X	

	learning.				
	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	School and teacher leaders ensure that instructional practices and strategies are organized around annual, unit, and daily lesson plans that address all student goals and needs.			X	
4.3	Teachers provide coherent, and appropriately aligned Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)-based instruction that leads to multiple points of access for all students.			X	
4.4	Teachers and students work together to implement a program/plan to create a learning environment that is responsive to students' varied experiences and tailored to the strengths and needs of all students.			X	
4.5	Teachers inform planning and foster student participation in their own learning process by using a variety of summative and formative data sources (e.g., screening, interim measures, and progress monitoring).			X	
	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 leader establishes overarching systems and understandings of how to support and sustain student social and emotional developmental health and academic success.			X	
5.3	The school articulates and systematically promotes a vision for social and emotional developmental health that is aligned to a curriculum or program that provides learning experiences and a safe and healthy school environment for families, teachers, and students.			X	
5.4	All school stakeholders work together to develop a common understanding of the importance of their contributions in creating a school community that is safe, conducive to learning, and fostering of a sense of ownership for providing social and emotional developmental health supports tied to the school's vision.			X	
5.5	The school leader and student support staff work together with teachers to establish structures to support the use of data to respond to student social and emotional developmental health needs.			X	
	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 leader ensures that regular communication with students and families fosters their high expectations for student academic achievement.			X	
6.3	The school engages in effective planning and reciprocal communication with family and community stakeholders so that student strength and needs are identified and used to augment learning.			X	
6.4	The school community partners with families and community agencies to promote and provide training across all areas (academic and social and emotional developmental health) to support student success.			X	
6.5	The school shares data in a way that promotes dialogue among parents, students, and school community members centered on student learning and success and encourages and empowers families to understand and use data to advocate for appropriate support services for their children.			X	
	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: While the school leader has been pursuing resources through partnerships and beginning to engage staff in discussions about school improvement, there is no long-range vision to propel the resources and staff discussion to sustainability of school improvement. The school leader’s lack of a long-term vision and systematic plan for the school hinders the progress of staff and students toward school-wide success.

Strengths:

All ratings for this tent are either **Developing** or **Ineffective** and there, comments are listed under **Areas for improvement**.

Areas for Improvement:

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

- The school leaders do not clearly articulate Specific, Measureable, Ambitious, Results-oriented, and Timely (SMART) goals for improving achievement, learning and instruction. The review team found that the school leaders were unclear on what goals are and how to achieve them, which restricts the school community in working in unison to improve student academic success. The school does have a mission statement displayed on every floor of the school. However, in asking different members of the school community, what the mission and vision of the school were, the responses varied considerably and were often unclear. In an interview, school leaders shared that the school’s mission and vision were a work in progress, and that they were getting feedback from the teachers to reformulate the vision. Parents shared with the review team that while safety is a priority at the school, the school’s vision should focus more on the academic development of the students. Similarly, attendees of the teachers’ focus group shared an unclear understanding of the school’s goals and mission as they related to academic achievement. Thus, while the school leaders state that the mission of the school is to focus on the whole student; teachers, shared that their daily priorities are mainly focused on dealing with behavior issues, rather than providing students with academic support. As the school leaders do not articulate school goals, or how to achieve them, they are not able to share a unified vision with the school community. Hence, there is a disconnect across all constituencies regarding what constitutes the priorities of the school and how these priorities are to be achieved; and, this limits the school’s capacity to improve student academic performance.

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

- The school leader has begun to make strategic decisions to organize programmatic, human, and fiscal capital resources, and has identified resources to organize professional development (PD) opportunities for the school community. However, the cumulative impact of these decisions is not strong enough to drive school improvement at a fast enough rate. While the school leader has re-designated the literacy coach to the new role of data and instructional coach in order to provide PD on data and assessment at grade-level teacher meetings, school leaders and staff stated that data conversations are in the early stages and as a result have not yet had an impact on academic achievement. In addition, teachers stated to the review team that they spend more time dealing with behavior issues in the school than on lesson planning and instruction. In the teachers' meeting, school leader interviews, and the support staff meeting, everyone stated unanimously that the school's expanded learning time program had grown from previous years as more students now participate in the program than in the past. The school leader was able to secure resources to expand the after-school program to include more enrichment activities for the students, such as sports and field trips. School leaders and staff shared that personnel turnover limits the school's progress. For example, four teachers left recently and the school will be losing a key guidance counselor in the coming month. The school leaders articulated that the district leads the hiring process, but that they can request additional staff when needed and the district would respond appropriately. School leaders state that staff retention is not an area that they can control, as teachers leave during the school year. Hence, the school leader does not have a plan or respond to the high staff turnover. While the leader has pursued instructional and curriculum resources to meet the immediate needs of the school, the lack of a systematic plan to cultivate these resources and the lack of response in addressing staff turnover does not fully address the strategic needs of the school community.

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

- The school leader is developing a structure for targeted and frequent classroom observations to evaluate the quality of instructional practices; however, feedback does not effectively help teachers shift instructional practices. A document review demonstrated to the team that school leaders have created an observation chart to track teacher observations and feedback. Teachers shared with the review team that they are aware of the schedule and that the school leaders communicate with them regarding when observations will take place. While the review team noted that the school has documentation for the formal, informal, and walk through observations conducted, these documents reveal that feedback given to teachers based on these observations is not consistently concise and does not directly address instructional practices that need improvement. For example, in one binder, 33 observations had feedback solely on the organization of teacher lesson plans; however, the feedback did not include classroom instructional practices. Teachers shared with the review team that they did not find the feedback helpful in targeting the instructional practices they need to improve. Similarly, an analysis of observation feedback indicated that school leaders do not provide guidance on how to improve specific practices, such as differentiation. Thus, feedback given to teachers to help them improve their pedagogy is limited. Discussions with the school leader and a review of the PD calendar indicate that the school does not consistently use observation data to provide on-going training and development for staff. Consequently, neither school leaders nor teachers are held accountable for the quality of learning across the school and

this hinders improvements to student achievement.

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

- The school leader has recently begun incorporating a system and structure to examine and improve critical individual and school-wide practices. In interviews with school leaders, school support staff, teachers, and parents, all stakeholders spoke to the structures the school has in place to support student social and emotional developmental health needs in the school. However, evidence from observations, interviews and review of documentation indicate that the school-wide practices as defined in the SCEP for student achievement goals and instructional practices were not consistent, supported, or well understood by the various stakeholders. The school leader, coach, and the teachers shared that they had just begun conversations on an evidence-based system to work toward improving student achievement in their monthly grade-level meetings. Additionally, while the SCEP stated that the school would ensure PD opportunities for teachers in regards to CCLS and their implementation, teachers shared in the focus group meeting that they did not get adequate PD, but that they are working on creating their own resources to align their work with CCLS. As a result, the creation of curricular resources to support CCLS is inconsistent across the school, as noted in both interview and classroom observations by the review team. The coach and the school leader responded that they are working to put a structure in place to meet those PD needs. The school leaders are beginning to develop evidence based systems to improve critical practices, however these structures are not presently coherent and therefore do not improve progress toward critical school-wide goals.

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

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: The school is using district provided or selected curriculum, including the New York State Education Department mathematics modules and an English Language Arts (ELA) program to support Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). Staff is in the beginning stages of analyzing data for instructional decision-making and teachers are not consistently using formative and summative assessments to plan curriculum. Cross-content collaborative planning is not in place and this restricts students benefiting from regular interdisciplinary activities that would enhance learning, engagement and achievement.

Strengths:

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

Areas for Improvement:

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

students.

- The school leader has recently begun supporting the implementation of a coherent curriculum appropriately aligned with the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). However, a structured plan is not in place to monitor the impact and effectiveness of the curriculum in meeting the needs of students. A review of documents indicated that conversations regarding the planning for and implementation of the CCLS began during the 2013-14 academic year. This evidence included plans and next steps for pacing and practicing these standards in instruction. However, the plan was not systematic in order to ensure rigor and coherency in implementation across classrooms per the review of documents and interviews with both school leaders and staff. In the teachers' focus group, many teachers shared their difficulty in aligning the CCLS to adapt to the needs of students. This was reflected in classroom observations where the delivery of the curriculum lacked engagement and challenge to meet the needs of students. The school leader planned a PD calendar to support the implementation of CCLS and has had conversations with the instructional coach on supporting teachers to put into practice new learning from PD. However, as these strategies are at an early a stage, classroom observations did not demonstrate that the PD has led to an impact on classroom practice. While the school leader is developing a systematic plan of instruction aligned to the CCLS, inconsistent instructional practices in the classroom do not presently prepare students for college- and career- readiness.

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

- While teachers are developing unit and lesson plans that note the CCLS content standards, classroom observations indicate that there is limited evidence of teachers using those plans during instruction to meet the identified needs of students. The interviews with the instructional coach, school leaders, and the teachers highlighted the differences between the planning documentation and the execution of those plans. While the majority of the teachers interviewed were able to identify which CCLS content standards would best fit with specific tasks and activities for a lesson, few teachers were able to articulate or demonstrate how to put those plans into practice during actual instruction. The review team additionally found limited evidence of data-driven instruction (DDI) protocols. The school leader and teachers shared that they have recently integrated DDI discussions and trainings into their grade-level meetings, which include the documentation of DDI protocols, as well as the usage of these protocols in the classrooms. In the teacher focus group meeting, teachers stated to the review team that they particularly struggle with differentiation. Of the 30 classrooms observed by the review team, the majority had the CCLS posted on the board as well as essential questions or learning objectives. However, only four of the classrooms demonstrated evidence of DDI practices in which evidence of accommodations for students with differing needs was present. Thus, although teachers are documenting and attempting to align the CCLS with their unit and lesson plans, they are unclear on how to adapt those plans to meet the needs of their students, which hinders improvement to student academic achievement.

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

opportunities.

- The creation of interdisciplinary curricula is limited, as the current focus of the school leader and teachers is centered on grade-level and subject specific curricula aligned with CCLS. While the creation of enrichment opportunities is evident in the after-school program, it is not embedded or consistent across classrooms during the school day. The school leader shared with the review team that the school has not yet discussed the creation of a strategic plan for teachers to collaborate in order to implement an interdisciplinary curriculum. While the instructional coach supports teachers in grade-level planning, this is often one-on-one on issues they are having in the classrooms with little direction on interdisciplinary curricula development relating to CCLS. During interviews with the review team, school leaders, teachers, and the instructional coaches shared that each subject area teacher works solely within the confines of his or her own classroom. As the school adds an additional grade every year, they stated that their plan is to focus more on grade-level planning than on interdisciplinary curricula. In a focus group meeting, teachers noted that they try the best they can to integrate other subject areas into their planning; however, observations indicated little or no interdisciplinary practices were evident during instruction. Hence, there are no plans in place for reflection on and revision of interdisciplinary curricula, although classroom visits during the review indicated that some teachers use and integrate technology into their instructional strategies. As there is no comprehensive plan or practices to create interdisciplinary curricula across all grades and subjects, there are limited opportunities for students to engage in thoughtful cross-curricula activities that increase student engagement and improve student achievement.

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

- Teachers are beginning to engage in discussions, and participate in training to develop a system for analyzing and using data to make curricular decisions. However, the review team found that there are inconsistencies across the school in how data is used and in ensuring alignment between the curriculum and assessment. Although teachers have access to different forms of data from state and city tests, as well as from school assessments, evidence from grade-level meetings, teacher focus groups, classroom observations and the teacher data binders indicate that the use of assessment data to make well-informed curricular decisions is inconsistent. Professional development opportunities have just started to provide teachers with more guidance in the use of data, but the impact of this PD on planning and classroom practice is not yet evident. In a few classrooms observed, teachers annotated students' binders and included an informal assessment, but these were not purposeful. In one binder, the teacher documented that a few students did not understand lessons, and that the next step was to "re-teach the lesson," but did not note what differences in instructional practice they would utilize to re-teach. Student work observed by the review team demonstrated that few examples of teachers using assessment information to provide specific feedback to students were evident. Discussions with students indicated that not all were aware of what precisely they needed to do to improve their work. A lack of alignment between the curriculum and assessment and an absence of data based feedback to increase students' ownership of their learning affects and academic growth.

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

Tenet Rating

D

learn, so that all students and pertinent subgroups experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking, and achievement.

Debriefing Statement: Teachers are implementing New York State mathematics modules and the district selected ELA program, but are lacking the skills to differentiate consistently during lessons. The learning environment reflects positive behavioral supports and respect for students and staff. In the classroom, teachers were not using higher-order thinking questioning or activities, or accommodating different learning needs. Without instructional delivery that is adapted to meet all students' needs, students lack a deep understanding of curricular content and ownership of their learning.

Strengths:

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

Areas for Improvement:

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

- The school is beginning to develop instructional practices and strategies organized around annual, unit, and daily lesson plans that address student goals and needs. However, these practices are not consistent across classrooms. In a grade-level meeting observed by the review team, there was evidence of attempts to align the planning goals across the classrooms while discussing the integration of poetry into instructional practice during ELA. However, this discussion was general and did not include how teachers would work to meet individual student learning needs. The review team found that while teachers are able to articulate points of potential differentiation and strategies to teach students during meetings and in planning, teachers do not effectively implement instructional practices in the classroom to meet student needs. For example, during observation of a grade five ELA lesson, the classroom instruction on vocabulary was mechanical and did not engage students. Similarly, in a science grade four classroom, the teacher did not check for student understanding and did not make the instruction explicit, but rather continued to teach while many students did not understand. The school leader indicated that the school is beginning conversations among teachers at grade level meetings and PD about the establishment of long and short-term goals for different groups of students based on data. However, these conversations have not yet resulted in targeted planning to help students meet those identified goals. Inconsistent school-wide practice that promotes high levels of student engagement and inquiry based on differentiated planning, limits student academic achievement.

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

- Teachers are inconsistently providing coherent, and appropriately aligned, CCLS-based instruction that leads to multiple points of access for all students across the school. In interviews, staff and school leaders expressed the importance of aligning the CCLS with instruction in both planning and

teaching practice. However, the review team found that while lesson plans showed some evidence of planning based on CCLS, instructional practices in the classroom were not aligned to CCLS and did not lead to multiple points of access for all students. For example, vocabulary homework observed in the lower grades required students to write out the words in a certain amount of time, or to put the words in sentences. Similarly, in the 30 classrooms observed by the review team, only five had evidence of teachers asking and students answering questions that required higher-order thinking skills. Often questions asked required only basic knowledge or single word answers and teachers did not ask students to expand their answers or to think beyond the literal level. In several lessons, the instructional materials did not contain high levels of text or content complexity. In the math classes observed, none of the teachers provided differentiation or made connections to the students' lives. Instructional practices do not consistently include higher-order thinking skills nor lead to high levels of student engagement, which impacts student academic achievement.

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

- Teachers are in the beginning stages of implementing a program to create a learning environment that is responsive to students' varied experiences, as well as tailored to their strengths and needs. While students in the two focus groups shared that they felt the school had provided them with a safe learning environment, evidence from IIT observations indicated that the school does not consistently provide an challenging learning environment tailored to the needs of all students. Similarly, students stated to the team that they feel comfortable asking and answering questions in class; however, questions and discussions observed did not give students opportunities to express their own views, values and opinions or to have a genuine voice in contributing to the life of the school community. While there was evidence during the staff interviews of teachers who understand the different learning modalities, a number of teachers shared with the review team that they were always looking for ways to make things easier for the students, rather than presenting them with tasks and activities that both challenged and engaged them based on their different needs. Thus, a stated desire to make students comfortable, rather than challenging students intellectually in their learning environment, along with a lack of genuine student voice in the life of the school, indicates that the environment is not fully responsive to students' varied experiences and needs. While students learn in an environment that is physically safe, the school does not differentiate for all students in order to improve their academic achievement.

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

- Teachers are beginning to inform planning, and foster student participation in their own learning process, by using summative and formative data sources. Teachers and school leaders shared with the review team that during grade-level meetings and prep time they are beginning to plan together using data sources. For example, using ELA assessment scores given by the coach, the school leader shared with the team that teachers then work to identify the needs of, or adjust, student groupings and instructional strategies based on this data. However, during teacher meetings and classroom observations, the review team found limited evidence that lesson planning and instructional practices were based on data. Therefore, a lack of detailed analysis from summative and formative

assessment data restricts teachers' ability to match work to the differing ability levels of the students. Additionally, the review team found that few teachers are using available data to provide feedback to students on their academic performance or informing students what they need to do to improve their learning. Interviews with the school leaders and staff indicated that staff felt that students are not motivated to be a part of their own learning process. However, the school's lack of monitoring or evaluating the strategies it uses to involve students as active and participatory learners impedes the school's ability to engage students. Inconsistent data-based instruction and the lack of high quality feedback to students, reduces the opportunities for student academic achievement.

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

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: The school community has recently identified a structure to support and sustain student academic success and social emotional development. The after school program has expanded to include both academic and enrichment activities. The school has begun adopting research based practices that promote a safe supportive learning environment. However, the recent identified structure is not within an interconnected and cohesive system to effectively address barriers to students' social and emotional health and academic success.

Strengths:

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

Areas for Improvement:

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

- The school leader has begun to establish a system and understanding of how to support and sustain student social and emotional developmental health; however, currently its components are disjointed and not operating in a cohesive manner to ensure that the needs of all students are met. Discussions with teachers and support staff indicated that the school leader has developed a system where students are allocated to designated staff members, so that that each student is known well by an adult. In the two focus groups, students shared that they were able to come to the counselors anytime they needed help with academic or emotional problems. While staff members interviewed shared that they understand, and practice the school-wide protocols that are in place to help students, they further shared there is a lack of clarity on the referral processes they need to follow in order to acquire additional support and guidance for students in need. There was no evidence that the school is using data to identify areas of student needs. Furthermore, interviews with both school leaders and staff indicated that the school does not make the connection between social emotional developmental health and its impact on student academic achievement. Similarly, in the parent focus group, attendees expressed that the school puts an emphasis on student social

and emotional health more than on academics indicating communication to stakeholders about the role that social emotional health plays in achievement outcomes is unclear. While the school is developing an overarching system to support student social emotional developmental health, they do not effectively address how this influences student academic success.

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

- The school is evaluating a range of programs to promote the teaching of social and emotional developmental health to meet the needs of students. However, there is no program embedded in practice to meet the needs of all students consistently. In interviews, staff and school leaders specified that the school has a strong focus on student social and emotional developmental health, but the review team found limited evidence of how the school sees this connected to students' academic success. The Student Support Team indicated that they work closely with the teachers on concerns about their students' progress. In the student focus groups, participants commented that the adults at the school make it clear how students are expected to behave and treat each other, and that teachers confront any bullying in the classrooms. Parents also expressed in interviews that the school does provide PBIS workshops for them to understand the school's processes and to bring awareness to them that the school is focusing on student social and emotional developmental health. Teachers also shared with the review team that while there is PD available for them to enhance student social and emotional well-being, the PD does not link for teachers how to connect social emotional learning to academic success and this limits their skills in meeting the needs of all students. While the school promotes a vision for social emotional developmental health that provides for a safe environment, the lack of a connection to learning limits the impact on student academic achievement.

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

- While there is an existing partnership between the school leaders, teachers, and the School Support Team in creating a safe community, the school is still developing a consistent sense of ownership for the social emotional developmental health of students tied to the school vision. Teachers shared in interviews that if they need assistance on working with a student, they would contact the appropriate Student Support Team member. All staff interviewed indicated that the Student Support Team plays a pivotal role in supporting the school's focus on students' social and emotional developmental health. However, according to the school leaders and the Student Support Team, staff turnover within the team hampers the schools' efforts to meet the needs of its students. For example, the school psychologist is currently on leave and the counselor, with whom the students have built a rapport, will be leaving in the coming weeks. The staff shared with the review team that this particular counselor has been instrumental in helping students build a positive school experience. Additionally, school leaders and staff indicate that additional staff turnover due to illness and promotions have likewise affected the sustainability of the schools' efforts to promote social emotional developmental health. The school has an open door policy as expressed by the

school leaders and the parents, and all stakeholders indicate that they can communicate concerns to each other whenever needed. Hence, while the school is creating a community that is safe, key staff turnover and a lack of a plan to monitor the impact of the contributions of all stakeholders on the social emotional developmental health needs of students hinders consistency, which impacts student achievement.

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

- The school is at the beginning phase of developing a structure to support the use of data to respond to student social and emotional developmental health needs. The school staff and leaders shared in interviews that they frequently discuss student needs during informal conversations and in meetings, including the Student Support Team. However, the use of data in these discussions is limited to attendance, suspension and behavioral reports, as shared by the school staff and leaders. While the school is using this data, the review team found its use to be sporadic and not systematic or part of planning for long term student goals. For example, the review team observed a poster that displays student suspension data for the year posted in the main office. However, there was no evidence of how school leaders or staff monitors this collected data and what actions they then take subsequently to meet student needs. The Student Support Team and staff expressed to the review team that the school monitors students with behavioral problems on a case-by-case basis. While the after-school program had a student data binder with student work plans, these plans were not tied to work plans for students during the school day. The use of data to respond to social emotional developmental health needs does not consistently support students in a responsive manner to help increase student achievement.

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 starting to develop a culture of partnerships with families and community members to help support student academic progress and social and emotional development. The school has reached out to families using multiple forms of communication in regards to programs and services available for the students and families. The majority of the teachers attempt to communicate with families about students’ academic and behavioral development. The school’s Student Support Team plays an integral part in the development of this partnership. However, evidence showed that response rates from parents were low. Consequently, programs and services for the students are not maximized, which limits students’ academic progress and social-emotional growth.

Strengths:

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

Areas for Improvement:

6.2 The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice: The school leader ensures

that regular communication with students and families fosters their high expectations for student academic achievement.

- The school leader is developing a plan to communicate regularly with students and families to convey high expectations for student academic achievement. However, at the current time the school does not share these expectations on a regular basis with families to enable them to work in partnership with the school in promoting student academic success. In interviews, parents gave credit to the school leader and some teachers for efforts to help their children, but they also shared that they do not know how they can support student achievement specifically with the CCLS or in regards to helping with homework. Additionally, while parents shared that there was a workshop made available to them on CCLS, they were still unclear as to how the school is implementing these standards. School staff and the school leaders acknowledged that school social events have greater parent attendance than the academic events. The fall school open house, for example, had over 100 families in attendance. However, the Saturday workshops on the CCLS had very few people in attendance. The parent focus group shared that they felt that some flyers and memos do not get home in a timely manner, which affects attendance. Teachers all have communication logs, which note the time and the reasons they call parents, including calls to discuss children's positive efforts or development, and some teachers shared that they do home visits with counselors when needed. However, staff expressed that overall, when they communicate with parents about student progress there is low parent participation. The staff shared with the review team that the school does not have PD resources or strategies to assist them on adjusting to ensure better correspondence with families. The school leader shared with the review team that the school plans to address this issue in the future by creating robust procedures for staff to communicate with families about the school's expectations for student academic success. The school is developing plans to ensure that the relationship between families and the school contributes to student needs being met, which impacts student academic achievement.

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

- The school is developing plans to communicate with families and community stakeholders on identifying students' strengths and needs. In interviews, the school leader and staff indicated that the main methods of communication with parents include phone calls, mail or backpacking flyers, memos and letters home. However, they also indicated that this communication does not generally focus on student learning, but that the much of the school communication focuses solely on social and emotional developmental needs. A review of documents indicates that the school has only a few English language learners and therefore, school staff shared with the review team that there is not a high need to translate communication into other languages. Thus, the majority of the documents are in English only. Interviews with school leaders, teachers, and the School Support Team showed that the school is beginning to log communication with families and the community to share instances of student progress. In identifying students' strengths, there are awards and recognition given via the intercom and notices to parents, for students who are doing well. The school leaders shared with the team that the school is only beginning to have conversations with parents about the effectiveness of communication strategies. Consequently, an inconsistent focus and a lack of evaluation on the success of its communication with families do not presently ensure

that parents are able to support their children's academic achievement to their highest potential.

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

- There is evidence that the school community partners with families and community agencies to promote and provide training to parents in a limited manner, however this communication does not focus effectively on student academic achievement. Interviews with all stakeholders, as well as documentation, showed that the school holds occasional weekend workshops for parents, regarding the math and ELA curricula. The Parent Teacher Association, in collaboration with school staff, makes phone calls to parents to invite them to these meetings or sends home flyers. However, parents shared with the review team that they do not feel that the school focuses on student academics, but rather largely on behavior and social emotional developmental health concerns. They stated also that they want more training on understanding the CCLS. The school leader and staff shared that various community agencies send counselors to work with the Student Support Team that are a liaison between the school and the parents to better support student learning. The school's existing strategies for communicating with parents around student academic achievement do not fully create a robust home-school connection, which affects students from benefiting from collaborative support for their academic success.

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

- The data that the school shares with parents is limited, as the school is at the beginning stages of discussing how staff advocates for appropriate support services for students based on data sources. In interviews with staff, school leaders and parents, there was a lack of clarity given to the review team regarding how the school shares data with parents. Staff did share that the main communication with families is around student behavior, suspension, attendance, and some teachers shared that they inform parents if a child does well on a test. However, the review team found that this was not consistent and that most communication was limited to behavioral issues. The School Support Team stated that they share student strengths and needs with parents during Individual Education Program (IEP) meetings. While, the school leader stated that the school had provided parents with PD on CCLS, the parents interviewed expressed that they need more information and do not presently feel confident helping their children with their homework. While there are initial efforts being made in engaging families in conversations around data, the school does not presently do so in a way that empowers families to take action to support student learning that leads to higher student achievement.

Recommendations:

Tenet 2: School Leader Practices and Decisions

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

- 2.2: Continue to engage in discussions with staff about the Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Results-oriented, and Timely (SMART) goals/mission. The goals and mission should integrate data-driven plans with concrete strategies for continuous and sustainable school improvement. The discussions and practice of the goals/mission should take place frequently until a clear plan is ready to share with the school community. School leaders should rigorously monitor progress toward the school goals.
- 2.3: Develop a system or protocol with staff in which a template of needs and resources based on the school's long-term goals is formalized. Additionally, the template should consist of a framework for an action plan, timeline and measurable benchmarks to ensure the use of all available resources in order to meet the needs of the school community.
- 2.4: Expand the observation process already in existence by including more actionable feedback on teaching practices throughout the school year. The actionable feedback should include precise suggestions and elaborative comments on what individual teachers need to do to improve, with a particular focus on differentiated instruction.
- 2.5: Develop guidelines for staff to use evidence-based systems that are dynamic, adaptive, and interconnected, which address individual and school-wide practices. The guidelines should also address how the usage of the evidence-based systems will be monitored, such as through peer-monitoring or school leader monitoring.

Tenet 3: Curriculum Development and Support

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

- 3.2: Develop and require a well-documented systematic plan when providing teachers access to pedagogical support. All teachers receiving professional development or coaching sessions should have a work plan with actionable feedback and next steps.
- 3.3: Develop unit and lesson plans collaboratively that meet the demands of CCLS and grade level DDI protocols that incorporate a progression of sequenced and scaffolded skills.
- 3.4: Ensure that discussions at grade level meetings include planning of how to develop interdisciplinary curricula. A strategic plan should be developed to ensure that an interdisciplinary curriculum is embedded across the school and its success carefully monitored and evaluated.
- 3.5: Develop a comprehensive system for using data with clear identifiable and realistic targets, including pre- and post-unit assessment for all subgroups, and provide students with more data-based feedback to enable them to take greater responsibility for their own learning. Ensure that the monitoring of this system takes place frequently.

Tenet 4: Teacher Practices and Decisions

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

- 4.2: Integrate demonstration of exemplary instructional practices in PD workshops and coaching sessions to train teachers to use an adaptive and aligned curriculum for groups of students with a variety of needs and learning styles. Ensure that teachers are receiving documented actionable feedback in both the workshops and in-classroom practices for implementing the curriculum.
- 4.3: Provide a more cohesive and systematic plan of action for teachers to develop and implement instructional plans that are reflective of the CCLS shifts. School leaders should monitor the implementation closely.
- 4.4: Ensure that a program/plan is shared within the school community by outlining the expectations of both behavioral and academic standards, which would promote a learning environment that is intellectually challenging, as well as safe.
- 4.5: Develop and implement the practice of using both summative and formative data to develop curriculum that targets different student needs. Provide actionable feedback that is clear and targeted for students to understand how to improve their work.

Tenet 5: Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health

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

- 5.2: Prioritize and share with the school community a system that addresses the understanding and practice of connecting student social and emotional developmental health needs to their academic needs.
- 5.3: Provide more PD trainings and workshops for the school staff in building their capacity to support student social and emotional developmental health needs, as it pertains to academic achievement.
- 5.4: Develop and share with the school community a monitoring system that supports the school in responding to students' social and developmental health needs.
- 5.5: Continue to work in collaboration with the school support staff in building a plan that emphasizes data to address students' academic and social emotional developmental health needs.

Tenet 6: Family and Community Engagement

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

- 6.2: Develop and implement a plan to assist school staff with reviewing and assessing how parents respond to efforts to build family-school relationships. Ensure that evaluations and adjustments are made on these efforts, if strategies are not working.
- 6.3: Develop protocols or guidelines to ensure that parents are receiving all correspondence from the school. The school leaders should evaluate its communication procedures with families and consider implementing any suggestions for improvement made.
- 6.4: Develop procedures and protocols to ensure that all staff has the skills to build strong relationships with parents and families and that a plan is devised to teach parents ways to support student learning and growth.
- 6.5: Provide more professional development trainings and workshops for parents and families on the interpretation of data and share strategies with parents on how to support student learning that leads to higher student achievement.