



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	321200010217
School Name	IS 217 School of Performing Arts
School Address	977 Fox Street, Bronx NY 10459
District Name	NYC CSD 12
School Leader	Maiysha Etienne
Dates of Review	January 14-16, 2014
School Accountability Status	Priority School
Type of Review	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet for 12X217

School Configuration (2013-14)					
Grade Configuration	06,07,08	Total Enrollment	351	SIG Recipient	N/A
Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes (2013-14)					
# Transitional Bilingual	N/A	# Dual Language	N/A	# Self-Contained English as a Second Language	N/A
Types and Number of Special Education Classes (2013-14)					
# Special Classes	24	# SETSS	32	# Integrated Collaborative Teaching	12
Types and Number of Special Classes (2013-14)					
# Visual Arts	N/A	# Music	9	# Drama	1
# Foreign Language	8	# Dance	N/A	# CTE	N/A
School Composition (2012-13)					
% Title I Population	85.9%	% Attendance Rate	88.2%		
% Free Lunch	87.5%	% Reduced Lunch	3.7%		
% Limited English Proficient	14.5%	% Students with Disabilities	23.4%		
Racial/Ethnic Origin (2012-13)					
% American Indian or Alaska Native	2.3%	% Black or African American	25.9%		
% Hispanic or Latino	67.5%	% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	2.8%		
% White	1.4%	% Multi-Racial	N/A		
Personnel (2012-13)					
Years Principal Assigned to School	0.49	# of Assistant Principals	1		
# of Deans	N/A	# of Counselors/Social Workers	2		
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	N/A	% Teaching Out of Certification	28.9%		
% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Years of Experience	37.1%	Average Teacher Absences	9.5		
Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools (2012-13)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	6.7%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	5.5%		
Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (4th Grade)	N/A	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (8th Grade)	17.1%		
Student Performance for High Schools (2011-12)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	N/A	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	20.0%		
Credit Accumulation High Schools Only (2012-13)					
% of 1st year students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	% of 2nd year students who earned 10+ credits	N/A		
% of 3rd year students who earned 10+ credits	N/A	4 Year Graduation Rate	N/A		
6 Year Graduation Rate	N/A				
Overall NYSED Accountability Status (2012-13)					
Reward		Recognition			
In Good Standing		Local Assistance Plan			
Focus District	X	Focus School Identified by a Focus District			
Priority School	X				

Accountability Status – Elementary and Middle Schools

Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA (2011-12)			
American Indian or Alaska Native	N/A	Black or African American	Yes
Hispanic or Latino	No	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	N/A
White	N/A	Multi-Racial	N/A
Students with Disabilities	No	Limited English Proficient	No
Economically Disadvantaged	No		
Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics (2011-12)			
American Indian or Alaska Native	N/A	Black or African American	No
Hispanic or Latino	No	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	N/A
White	N/A	Multi-Racial	N/A
Students with Disabilities	No	Limited English Proficient	No
Economically Disadvantaged	No		
Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science (2011-12)			
American Indian or Alaska Native	N/A	Black or African American	N/A
Hispanic or Latino	No	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	N/A
White	N/A	Multi-Racial	N/A
Students with Disabilities	N/A	Limited English Proficient	N/A
Economically Disadvantaged	No		

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS DESCRIBED BY THE SCHOOL:

1. Include all relevant stakeholders in establishing, implementing, and monitoring SMART goals/mission for school improvement and communicate regularly with all constituents regarding the mission, vision, and SMART goals.
2. Ensure that all teachers of core subjects engage in regular cycles of collaborative inquiry to review student work and analyze common assessment data in order to inform daily instruction as well as make curriculum adjustments to meet the needs of all students including ELLs and SWDs as evidenced through curriculum and lesson plan adjustments/modifications.
3. Build staff capacity to create a safe, positive and respectful school environment by meeting the social and emotional needs of all students.
4. Build staff capacity to implement rigorous, engaging and differentiated instruction reflective of the CCLS.
5. Increase the percentage of parents who actively engage in school activities with a focus on understanding expectations of the Common Core Learning Standards, student social and emotional development, and their role in promoting their child(ren)'s success at school.

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:			E		

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	E
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Debriefing Statement: The school leader has a collaboratively developed vision and plan for the improvement of the school. The school leader is making strategic decisions to deploy available resources to begin to meet the needs of the school community. Staff is beginning to develop systems to use data to strategically plan school, staff, and instructional efforts. The school leader has a system for observation and monitoring to hold all staff accountable for continuous improvement.

Strengths:

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

- The school leader has used student achievement data to implement structures and protocols that expand programs for additional learning time, and made effective use of available resources to meet the needs of the school community. According to the School Information Sheet, the number of students below proficiency is more than 90 percent of the enrollment in both math and English Language Arts (ELA). The school leader reported to the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) that the school provides supplemental instruction for students who are below the proficiency level. The school leader told reviewers that the school staff delivers math intervention after school for 100 minutes each week, using a specific curriculum and materials that the math department prepares. Additionally, staff provides reading interventions for all students during a class period in the regular school hours. The school has also developed partnerships with community-based organizations such as Stella Adler Acting studio, Creative Connections, and Sports and Arts in Schools Foundation (SASF) to provide after-school, enrichment, and arts programs. The students interviewed by the IIT discussed their interest and involvement in these activities and the attendance data reviewed by the IIT indicated significant student enrollment. Utilizing human resource supports, including the district’s talent coach and the Network achievement coach, and information from the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) process, the school leader has strategically made staffing adjustments and hiring decisions to align instructors with the subjects, and topics they are most qualified to teach in the core academic subjects. Postings and APPR reports, reviewed by the IIT, indicated that the school leader has set high expectations for eligible staff on committees and in professional positions in order to align and implement the goals outlined in the School Comprehensive Educational Plan (SCEP). The school leader told reviewers that because 37 percent of the current staff has less than three years of teaching experience, he established a structured mentor program that is monitored by experienced staff to support these teachers’ growth and development. Professional collaboration time has been prioritized in the master schedule for the core academic staff to meet with others teaching the same students, as well as those teaching the same content in order to maximize professional learning opportunities. The school leader has secured the positions of math and ELA coaches, in order to provide continuous high quality PD for staff. In addition, to support the development of positive behavior, the school leader has invested

resources to secure a full time behavior specialist position as well as a full time school social worker and guidance counselor. Through creative and collaborative balancing of the resources available to the school, the school leader has addressed many urgent needs of the students and staff to support increased achievement and school improvement.

2.4 **The school has received a rating of *Highly Effective* 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 has established a rigorous schedule of teacher observations, feedback, monitoring, and training that is aligned to the district's Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR). The 2013 Learning Environment survey reviewed by the IIT, indicates that 94 percent of teachers reported that school leaders "visit classrooms to observe the quality of teaching at my school" as well as 80 percent reported that "school leaders give regular and helpful feedback about their teaching." Through the review of the APPR documents and discussions with teachers, reviewers found that school leaders regularly provide targeted and timely feedback to staff that align with the domains of the Danielson framework addresses student performance concerns. The feedback reviewed in the formal and informal observation documents includes observed staff practices, and provides clear explanations of the administrative expectations for their performance, as well as next steps for improving their practice. During discussion with the IIT, school leaders indicated that they meet every four to six weeks with a talent coach from the district office to calibrate their use and understanding of the Danielson Framework ratings, which also helps to hone their capacity to engage in high quality dialogue with staff. The school leader informed the review team that he meets weekly with his leadership cabinet to monitor the observation schedule and to review the actionable feedback provided to teachers. Using the district supplied technology tool, *Advance*, the school leaders generate reports of teacher performance and uses that along with walkthrough notes, coaching reports, external mentor reports, and student performance data to prioritize PD offerings in the school. Reviewers noted that the scheduled PD topics on the calendar, closely aligns with the topics and needs identified in the reviewed reports and staff evaluation documents. The PD topics include classroom management, Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) curriculum, questioning and discussion techniques, student engagement and cooperative learning, and the Danielson framework for teaching. Staff members reported to the IIT that they regularly attend the PD sessions. The school has a fully functioning system for observations, monitoring, and support, which increases the staff's capacity to meet the needs of all students and allows leaders to hold all staff accountable for continuous school improvement.

Areas for Improvement:

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

- While the school leader created SMART goals/ mission and a vision, outlined in the SCEP, not all

stakeholders participated in the development of the goals and the SCEP. When interviewed by the IIT, the school leader indicated that the administrative cabinet set the priorities and goals for the year. Although the school assessment reviewed by the IIT, indicates that School Leadership Team (SLT), parents, and representative from TurnAround for Children were involved in creation of the SCEP, teachers interviewed by the IIT reported that only a few of their colleagues participate on the SLT to share ideas for improving the school and achievement. The school leader informed reviewers that he developed a poster to recruit staff to serve on a School Improvement Team (SIT). The school leader also said the SIT will assist in identifying and monitoring the goals to be included in the SCEP to ensure that collaboration is embedded in school improvement. However, this is not yet in practice to enable the whole school community to work together to fulfill the long-term vision for a data-driven mission to improve student achievement. In discussions with teachers, parents and students reviewers found that each constituent has a different understanding of what the school is trying to accomplish and how they can support the goals. The self-assessment indicated and school leader reported that the instructional cabinet, which consists of the principal, assistant principals (APs) and coaches, review the progress of the SCEP regularly. However, the school staff did not provide evidence of protocols for progress monitoring. Although the school leader has established goals and a long-term vision, the limited involvement of some constituents in the creation the goals, as well as the lack of clarity by stakeholders on the precise nature of the goals and an absence of rigorous strategies to ensure the goals are translated into practice hinders the school community from making progress toward the goals.

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 encourages the staff to use procedures and structures that are appropriately based on best practice and student performance data, but these structures are not yet interconnected to improve school wide practices. As reported by student support staff during the focus group and confirmed by a review of meeting minutes by the IIT, an attendance committee periodically reviews attendance data and brainstorms interventions. The Response to Intervention (RTI) team reviews report card and student behavior incident data to recommend ideas to teachers and support services staff, when support for individual students is requested. In addition, a staff member maintains a “section card” to log student behavioral information. During weekly grade-level meetings, the staff discusses information from the section card as needed. However, the IIT did not find evidence of formal mechanisms to share data and interventions between committees and teams. In addition, a review of documents show that staff inconsistently monitors and tracks the effectiveness of intervention strategies. The lack of effective integration of the structures and protocols to examine and monitor all practices outlined in the SCEP, hinders the school staff from making measurable progress toward critical school-wide goals.

<p>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.</p>	<p>Tenet Rating</p>	<p>D</p>
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Debriefing Statement: The school recently adopted curricular programs that reflect the CCLS and the instructional shifts, and is in the process of aligning these curricular programs with formative assessments in the development of unit and lesson plans. There are structures in place for staff to plan and work collaboratively, and some teachers receive professional development to implement the new curricular programs. However, as used, the newly adopted curricular programs do not yet lead to instructional practices that effectively support or meet the needs of every student.

Strengths:

All ratings for this Tenet are **Developing** 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, APs and instructional coaches reported that they encourage and support staff to use lessons aligned to CCLS and NYS standards through PD, the APPR process, and at staff meetings. However, the staff lacks a written curriculum development and implementation plan. The school leader has adopted programs such as, *Expeditionary Learning* for ELA and Connected Mathematics Project 3 (*CMP3*) for mathematics, an academic vocabulary program *Word Generation*, and *Just Words* a supplemental program for English language learners to guide teachers’ implementation of the CCLS. However, the review team did not find evidence of a comprehensive curriculum plan to implement the programs across all subject areas and grades. In discussion with the review team, some teachers indicated that they are unclear on how to use the new curricula effectively. During classroom visits, reviewers found that the lessons they observed did not reflect the CCLS. For example, lessons lacked rigor and did not include differentiation to meet t students’ needs. The lack of a comprehensive plan to implement curricula appropriately aligned to the CCLS, limits students’ access to a fully aligned CCLS experience to develop college- and career-readiness skills.

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 the school leader allows time in the schedule for common planning, during interviews with the IIT, the school leader indicated that the time allotted is not adequate to accomplish the goal of CCLS implementation. The master schedule indicated, and teachers reported, having a targeted work time to collaborate with content area colleagues one time each week and with their grade

level colleagues twice each week. However, a review of artifacts and outcomes of these teacher meetings indicate an inconsistent use of planning approaches and student data to design instruction that meets the demands of CCLS. The review team observed a subject team meeting where teachers reported that that CCLS is a baseline that they use. While teachers use the formative assessments in the CMP3 program and *I-ready* computerized intervention programs, there was limited evidence that assessments were customized. All staff members have the Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) scores of each student, and the ELA and social studies teachers use a shared writing rubric to measure student progress; however, the CCLS standards are inconsistently implemented and the language objectives and strategies in lesson plans do not reflect data use or adjustments based on student needs. When teachers were asked how they use the assorted data points to adjust curriculum, they described that pacing or grouping changes were made based on test scores, which indicates some data usage. However, the IIT found limited evidence of differentiation to support English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities in the pacing guide templates and partially completed lesson plan templates reviewed, and class lessons observed. Higher order thinking questions are identified in most lesson plans using a *Dimensions of Knowledge* approach. However, during the 37 classes visited by the IIT, reviewers observed teachers posing rigorous questions or opportunities for students to think deeply in only three classes. Overall, incomplete planning and a lack of development of strategies to meet specific student needs hinder students from showing growth in meeting the demands of the CCLS.

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

- Although the school leader and teachers have devised mechanisms for teachers to collaborate in content area and grade level teams, formal partnerships to specifically address interdisciplinary curricula are not yet in place. While varied opportunities exist for staff to share ideas related to after school programs with some community based organizations, master schedule programming, and grant opportunities in the arts, sports, and technology, reviewers did not find evidence that staff meet to plan and connect curricula across all grades and subjects. Staff indicated to reviewers that a few enrichment activities do exist, including OMNiLEARN, a science program, *Creative Connections*, which offers a weekly dance class with visiting artists, and *Stella Adler* acting studio, which provides instruction in connection with the current ELA curriculum. However, parents indicated via the 2013 School Survey, that 83 percent would most like to have stronger enrichment programs in the school. Students have few opportunities to engage in thoughtful and widespread cross-curricular activities, limiting one avenue of opportunities for improved academic 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.

- While some teachers use formative and summative assessments to guide planning, reviewers found that this practice is not consistent school-wide. A review of documents and interviews with staff

indicate that some teacher teams are beginning to implement protocols such as such as *I-Ready* reports in ELA and math, DRP scores, pre, mid, and post unit tests, as well as classroom performance tasks to collect and use student data to inform planning processes. However, this does not yet translate to strategic curricular planning which results in all teachers using the accumulated data to adapt the curriculum so that it leads to improvements in individual and sub-group achievement. At the present time, there is insufficient alignment between the curriculum and the available assessment tools to meet student need and differing abilities. Teachers are still in the process of developing feedback skills as indicated by focus group interviews, a review of documents, and observations carried out by reviewers. Students reported that teacher feedback is generally a numeric grade, but that rubrics are occasionally used in their classes, such as in math and science to introduce a project, or a writing rubric for an essay in ELA. Student work samples seen by the IIT during classroom visits, a review of documents and focus group meetings demonstrated that feedback is often characterized by a subjective comment like “excellent” or “good work.” When reviewers asked students what they needed to do to improve their work, students cited “study more,” “pay attention,” and “ask my older sister” as action steps. During the focus group, teachers shared perspectives on setting goals for students. One teacher said, I introduce rubrics to set goals, or to informally “check-in” on student goals. Another reported, “I have stepped back from setting goals with students because they do not own them.” The lack of alignment between the curriculum and assessment and inconsistent feedback provided to students does not support students in developing ownership of their learning, which limits opportunities for students to improve academic achievement.

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

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: Teachers meet regularly and have begun to collaborate to plan quality instruction. However, the school staff lacks consistent protocols for data use to inform instructional practices, which limits teachers ability to provide scaffolding opportunities for all students that address academic gaps and accelerate student achievement.

Strengths:

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

Areas for Improvement:

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

- School leaders and coaches are beginning to engage teachers in dialogue about aligning lesson plans and data so that the academic needs of students are better met. However, this process is at an early stage and there are no formal procedures in place for tracking and monitoring to action

items from the discussions to hold teachers and school leaders more accountable for improving student achievement. School leaders at all levels attend a range of meetings across the school including grade level, intervention committees, and PD offerings. However, reviewers found limited evidence of specific meeting outcomes that address student goals and intended improvements in student achievement. Lesson plans are developed and available for each class period. While the assessment of 11 plans by the review team using the Tri-State Rubric indicated that ten of the plans achieved a score of “Exemplar if Improved”, the review team found primary weaknesses in key aspects of instructional delivery and assessment. The team’s analysis of 37 lesson plans from class visits indicates that articulation of differentiation strategies, language objectives, and selection of flexible grouping techniques are not sufficiently detailed in order to meet the needs of students in individual classes, especially for students with disabilities and ELLs. The school’s self-assessment indicated that establishing the long- and short-term goals for students in all content areas as well as additional PD for supporting students with disabilities and ELLs is a “next step” for improvement in the school. However staff currently do not plan unit and lesson plans that meets the needs of all students, which limits opportunities for students to access instruction that promotes high levels of engagement and challenge and leads to higher achievement.

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

- The IIT reviewed written lesson plans and noted the instructional shifts and the CCLS are listed on a majority of plans. However, based on the observed math department lesson study and class observations across many subjects, the team noted that the appropriate matching of priority standards, instructional experiences, and performance tasks to assess mastery of the standards, were not fully aligned to the CCLS. Although teachers in the vertical teacher meeting discussed instructional shifts and indicated that they adopted a school-wide focus on citing textual evidence across content, this is not regular practice. When the IIT visited classrooms, reviewers noticed that the instructional strategies used and the limited feedback provided by teachers was not reflective of the CCLS shifts. Although the lesson plan template requires teachers to plan higher-level thinking questions, and this was observed in a few of the lessons, the majority of questions began with “what” and “when” and were basic recall, lacking depth or challenge to student thinking or learning. The lack of complex materials limits students’ points of access to the curriculum, contributes to low-levels of student engagement, and reduces the opportunity for higher levels of student achievement.

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

- While most constituents indicate the school environment is safe, some constituents indicate the learning environment is not safe for all students. The school has adopted a character traits program *Six Pillars* to guide the focus on school-wide expectations. The review team saw the character traits displayed in the hallways of the school and the student support staff reported that they form the basis of the Guided Discipline Plan as well as the topics covered in the town hall style “morning

meeting” conducted by the school leader. A behavior matrix is also displayed in hallways to articulate common conduct expectations within the school and aid implementation of the six themes. When asked by reviewers about the effectiveness of this program, school leaders reported that an anecdotal assessment of soft data indicates an improved tone within the school, but that formal monitoring has not yet occurred. All classrooms had a display of classroom expectations for acceptable behavior, but teachers report that each designs their own based on the style of their particular learning environment. Most classes had orderly environments and only a few required intervention and additional administrative presence to enforce behavioral expectations. The 2013 Learning Environment survey indicated 68 percent of students and 75 percent of teachers reported feeling safe in the school. In addition, 82 percent of students said that some students harass and bully others, some of the time to all of the time and 87 percent of teachers disagreed that order and discipline are maintained in the school. During the focus group interviews, students, parents, teachers, and staff unanimously indicated that the environment is conducive to learning within the school. Additionally constituents said that although bullying issues exist, this year they have noticed dramatic improvement in tone, safety, and order in the school. The students indicated that they meet with the school leader to request permission to hold events of their choice, but no further collaboration around a program for a responsive learning environment was indicated from the student or parents. Some teachers use generic strategies to acknowledge diversity among students, but most teachers do not use targeted strategies that address the changing needs of the student population, such as over-age students, homelessness, those with large gaps in formal education and speakers of languages other than Spanish and English. Although the school has implemented structures and practices to improve the learning environment, a tailored and responsive system is not yet fully in place to attend to the needs of all students.

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

- Teachers are beginning to use plans for adjusting student groupings and instructional strategies based on formative and summative assessments, but the practice is inconsistent across the school. *I-ready* assessments are used in math and ELA to screen and monitor student progress in assorted basic skills, but are not consistently aligned to the content of the curriculum maps. The school leader reported that these assessments are used by the math department to guide the development of the afterschool math intervention activities, but are not focused on the topics of the math curricular pacing guides of any given grade level. Teachers in the focus groups reported and lesson plans examined by the IIT, indicate that the staff uses the *Kagan* cooperative learning strategies to group students. Using Kagan, staff place students in groups of four for the year based on summative state assessments results (ELA, Math, NYSESLAT), which include a high performer, low performer, and two medium performing students. However, since more than 90 percent of the student population is not proficient in ELA and math, few students actually are high performers and thus most students have limited opportunity to observe or work with high academic role models throughout the school year. The self-assessment indicates that groups are re-designed at six-week intervals and lesson plans indicated that groups are based on DRP and MOSL assessments, but teachers and school leaders indicated in interviews that since the groupings are based on state assessments, they are configured annually. This illustrates an inconsistency of practice across the school. Although reviewers noted that, most classes had desks

arranged into group configurations of different sizes, reviewers observed limited student interaction for instructional purposes. In one instance, meaningful feedback, based on the criteria of a rubric was observed in the small student focus group as the student explained “in my writing, I have to add more specific details” and a few examples were posted on bulletin boards in classrooms. Although there were some examples of rubrics being used to assess student work and provide feedback, the practice was inconsistent and opportunities were missed for students to take ownership of their own learning to gain a better understanding of what is needed to improve their work. Although the need to use formative and assessments to measure, adjust, and provide feedback on instruction, is an expressed priority in the school, formal and effective protocols are not yet fully in place, which limits high levels of student achievement, especially in the identified subgroups of students.

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 has provides a safe learning environment where some strategies and partnerships support student social and emotional development. However, there is limited training or opportunity for constituents to learn how to strengthen a comprehensive system for social and emotional developmental health to meet the needs of all students.

Strengths:

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

- All stakeholders work together to develop a common understanding of the importance of their contributions in creating a school community that fosters student social emotional developmental health. A review of documents and interviews with staff indicate that the school has implemented several initiatives and research based activities to support the vision of a safe and supportive environment. The school community uses a school-wide Discipline Plan that was developed collaboratively in 2012-13 as an outgrowth of a citywide initiative, and incorporates protocols and processes for managing student behaviors. Expectations are posted in the hallways and are based on the six themes identified in the character traits program called *Six Pillars*. Teachers regularly use a log called a “section sheet” to record classroom based information about student behavior and share this with the dean of students. Reviewers read the meeting minutes from the grade level teams that indicated teachers meet weekly to review student behavior data and concerns. During the focus group discussion with the IIT, school support staff members informed reviewers that they attend grade level meetings, to offer interventions and share additional student information with the teaching team as needed. The RTI team meets regularly so teachers have the opportunity to recommend a student for review and study by the team. To support the development of positive behavior, the school leader has invested resources to secure a full time behavior specialist position as well as a full time school social worker and guidance counselor. An active Parent Teacher Association is in place and supports the work of the school in the area of student social emotional developmental health by providing programs for students and parents, and serving on school

committees, including the SLT and attendance improvement, and in facilitating a parent volunteer initiative. During interviews with parents, teachers, and students all constituents articulated that the school climate is safe and that the community works together to support students. All stakeholders are aware of the importance of their role in contributing to a safe learning environment, which enables the school community to work together to support students academically and socially.

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.

- In collaboration with some staff, the school leader uses some structures and activities to attend to the emotional developmental health needs of students, but these structures do not yet interconnect to form an overarching system that meets the needs of all students. Staff reported that the team settings, such as teacher grade level teams, RTI team and SLT, use information about student performance and behaviors to informally guide their agenda and outcomes and that this team approach allows each student to be known well by an adult. However, during class visits, the review team observed behaviors and students responses, often by ELLs and students with disabilities, which indicated that the social emotional and developmental health needs of all students are inconsistently supported. These behaviors included disengagement from directions and tasks, blank papers, cynical responses to teacher directions, and students appearing isolated from peers and adults on some occasions. Although some students reported that a peer mediation program is in place, that supports an increase in their personal self-confidence, several others in the focus group indicated little involvement with this activity. The implementation of a staff-student mentor program where teachers are voluntarily partnered with referred students to focus on absenteeism issues was described, but the list of participants reflected that less than 10 percent of students are involved in this effort. A referral form for the RTI team was described by staff that attended the student support focus group and a section sheet log guides the collaboration of the dean and teacher teams for behavioral intervention. However, during the vertical team meeting, when asked about proactive screening to identify all the needs of students and the referral processes, it was reported that “teachers just know if student needs go beyond” their control and then teachers go to the dean for guidance. There is a lack of formality and precise protocols to ensure all student needs are correctly identified and supported. Although positive activities and approaches to support the social and emotional developmental health of students are beginning in the school, the school lacks an overarching system to bring together consistent efforts used by all staff to include multiple sources of information to monitor the effectiveness, which reduces the school’s capacity to support every student proactively.

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 has a vision for social and emotional developmental health that aligns with a program, but lacks a comprehensive plan to ensure all constituents are exposed to learning experiences that enables them to support the social and emotional developmental health of all students. The school staff uses the character traits of the *Six pillars* program to promote school –wide behavioral expectations. However, staff in both the student support team and vertical team focus groups indicated to the IIT that instruction of the themes of the *Six Pillars* is limited to a five-minute exercise at morning meeting and selective programs offered by the behavior specialist and school guidance counselor for targeted students. When directly asked about PD opportunities to better understand the skills and behaviors that address the social and emotional development health of students, leaders cited activities in 2012-13, and noted that limited efforts have been provided in 2013-14 by the school support staff members and coaches. Although a review of the PD calendar and “*Lunch and Learn*” PD series indicate that topics support adult understanding of social emotional developmental health, a full program of learning experiences is not yet in place for staff, parents, or students. This reduces the schools ability to implement activities and strategies in a comprehensive way that will meet the goals and needs of social emotional developmental health of students.

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 staff has various protocols to log and collect some student data such as DRP scores, attendance, discipline, and class grades and targeted tier I RTI data. However, interventions are not identified on a school wide level to proactively review and support the needs of all students. The school leader and support staff members informed reviewers that while they have developed a referral form for the RTI team, it is used inconsistently by teacher teams, and only when select students escalate to the secondary (tier II) or tertiary (tier III) level of need. Reviewers read a comprehensive student study protocol that I is used at the teacher grade level team meeting to review the needs of an individual. Reviewer found that the scope of this process is narrow and leaves some students without support. Reviewers found limited evidence that staff consistently reviewed secondary and tertiary interventions for other struggling students in the areas of attendance, behavior, and academic performance during the various team meetings. A review of documents by the IIT showed limited evidence of school-wide communications and regular monitoring of interventions for effectiveness. Although teachers and school support staff have begun to consider data, a comprehensive process for assessing the needs of all students to consistently implement interventions and supports, is not fully in place, resulting in missed opportunities to increase students’ academic and social success.

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 staff is in the beginning stages of developing partnerships to engage families and community members in sharing the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being. However, there is limited reciprocal communication between families,

professional development for staff, and inconsistent sharing of data. Therefore, families have insufficient information and tools to support their student's academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being.

Strengths:

All ratings for this Tenet are **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 reports that the school communicates formally with parents in a variety of ways, using tools such as student/family handbook, school website, curriculum nights, and the work of the parent coordinator, but does not formally monitor the effectiveness of these modalities. While the school sets out to make its academic and other expectations clear to students and families parents interviewed by the IIT reported that many families do not receive information from the school and are further restricted in the partnership by language barriers and their own less than positive school experiences. Although the school follows its Title I parent involvement policy, the primary means of relationship with families is through the deployment of a parent coordinator, which limits the outreach of the school staff to all families. The school leader told reviewers that she revised the fall parent conference schedule to provide a 30-minute personal meeting between the teacher and each family to address topics of student progress, academic expectations and tools and tips for supporting their child. While promising outcomes were reported by teachers, this single appointment does not provide ongoing information to families or foster parents' ability to support their students increased achievement. During interviews with the student support staff and school leaders, some reported informal efforts to communicate with some parents to help them better understand the school expectations, but there is not yet a systematic review of effectiveness of the methods being utilized. Although some activities contribute to the expectations being known by some parents, not all families represented at the school receive information. The lack of a comprehensive plan to communicate with all families prevents some families from fully supporting their children.

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.

- While the school uses various tools to communicate with families, some modes of communication are not available to all families and the school lacks a plan to monitor communications protocols. During interviews with the IIT, the school leader reported that the school provides formal communication with families in Spanish and English, the most prevalent languages spoken by students at the school and the district's translation unit provides additional translations for other

languages as families make needs known to the school. The IIT reviewed the 2013 Learning Environment survey, where 98 percent of parents who responded, reported, “The school communicates with them in a language that they can understand.” However, reviewers found that the school website is in English only and the link on the website to the Spanish/English calendar is inaccessible to users that do not have the proper computer software. The school employs a full time parent coordinator that serves as the primary staff person responsible for home school connection and 59 percent of the reporting parents on the 2013 Learning Environment Survey said that they have communicated with the school staff more than three times in the year. While discussions with staff and some parents indicate that the PTA is involved in all aspects of the school and there is reciprocal communication and engagement on the SLT; the PTA members represent a small subset of the families in the school. Tools to facilitate parent communication were evident to the review team, but a plan to effectively implement and monitor a system of reciprocal communication is not yet in place, hindering opportunities for families to support the academic and social emotional growth of their child.

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

- Although, the school’s self-assessment describes a PD plan for parent engagement, a comprehensive plan to teach parents ways to support student learning and growth is not yet in place. The school leader reported that a parent coordinator provides ad hoc courses for parents, as well as information about employment opportunities. During the vertical teacher and student support meetings, participants reported to the IIT that they are not provided with training or PD to build partnerships with families or the community. The school has limited learning opportunities for parents and staff to support student learning and growth. As a result, not all students are benefitting from a robust home-school connection, which limits the support students receive to improve academically and emotionally.

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 school staff collects data on student learning and progress such as attendance, tardiness, health needs, academic success, and behavior incidents. However, the school did not have formal plans to work with the school's partnerships to share information pertaining to the needs of families. According to school staff, progress reports are distributed every six weeks and the school has recently implemented the parent portal tool of the *Engrade* student management system. Parents interviewed by the IIT, expressed frustration with the ability to access the system, and indicated challenges in timeliness of information and accessibility. School staff indicated that members of the school support staff, RTI Team, and grade level teacher teams meet with parents as needed, to provide relevant information about student progress and share ideas to support improvement. Although parents in the focus group reported that their needs have been met related to data sharing via report cards, phone calls, and emails, evidence from a review of documents and

interviews indicated that significant numbers of families do not yet understand the data, neither the school expectations, nor the requirements placed on their child in school. The self-assessment indicates that the school has identified a next step in supporting families as “consistently and systematically review data and survey parents to identify family needs.” However, this goal does not include a plan and research based action steps to empower the families of students in all subgroups to support student learning and achievement. The school staff shares data in ways that does not provide parents with sufficient resources and support to empower them to advocate and to provide guidance for their child, which limits progress toward higher 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: Include all relevant stakeholders in establishing the SMART goals/mission for school improvement as well as formal protocols for monitoring the effectiveness of implementation activities. Communication should be regularly provided to all constituents regarding the vision and SMART goals clearly, regularly, and in an understandable way for all constituents.
- 2.5: Prioritize and integrate the evidence-based structures used into a dynamic and comprehensive school-wide system in order to identify, plan and monitor interventions to meet the needs of every student, especially those in identified subgroups.

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 implement a CCLS curricula in all content areas across all subjects, including interventions, AIS/RTI and all electives using clear goals, PD schedule, and more effective shared meeting times. The plan should be regularly monitored for curricular rigor as well as fidelity of implementation.
- 3.3: Develop units and lessons that reflect the instructional shifts and meet the demands of CCLS across all subject areas and grades. Ensure that the units and lessons include activities and strategies to provide extensions for all students.
- 3.4: Plan and establish school-wide goals and collaboratively develop interdisciplinary curricula, with a focus on integration of technology and the arts, and provide opportunities for enrichment. The plan should include criteria and mechanisms for monitoring the impact of the interdisciplinary curriculum on student achievement.
- 3.5: Develop a comprehensive system that contains formal protocols and routine processes for using formative and summative assessment student data to modify the curriculum. Build the capacity of staff to provide feedback to students that will help them understand how to increase their progress and set goals for improvement.

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: Establish and implement a data analysis protocol to ensure that teachers uniformly interpret multiple data points and make appropriate adjustments to instructional plans in order to support students in reaching their established short and long terms achievement goals.

- 4.3: Build the capacity of staff to implement instructional practices reflective of the CCLS shifts for all students, including using content that is more rigorous and high level thinking prompts and questioning techniques.
- 4.4: Expand existing structures into comprehensive school-wide expectations and supports where all classroom expectations are aligned across grade levels and where behavioral expectations are explicitly taught and reinforced with students. Students should be included in the development of the system in order to incorporate their values and changing needs.
- 4.5: Establish and implement consistently a set of procedures and protocols for using the formative and summative assessment data to flexibly group students for targeted interventions. Build the staff capacity and hold them accountable for providing frequent and meaningful formative feedback to students during and after instruction in order to aid and increase their progress.

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: Expand and connect existing efforts into an overarching flexible system of referral and internal/external supports to meet the changing social emotional development health needs of all students in the school. Identify data points that will be used and analyzed to ensure continuous improvement of the system.
- 5.3: Expand the school vision for social emotional health by fully implementing a comprehensive and research-based curriculum to teach and support student social emotional development health. Build the staff capacity to implement the curriculum and monitor the effectiveness of the implementation regularly through multiple sources of data.
- 5.5: Establish procedures and protocols for universal screening, proactive planning, and targeted support for all students as a component of the overarching responsive system, based on multiple sources of data. All stakeholders should be taught and held accountable for their role in implementing the overarching and adaptive system.

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: Survey parents and assess the demographics of the families to develop and implement a comprehensive plan for regular communication of academic and behavioral expectations to parents. Regularly monitor the plan for effectiveness and make adjustments when needed.
- 6.3: Include in the comprehensive plan for regular and effective communication to parents and families, adaptive mechanisms in multiple languages and modalities that will support parents and families to engage in all aspects of the school, and identify clear ways for the school to measure the effectiveness of its communication efforts with parents and make modifications as required.

- 6.4: Develop a plan to build the staff capacity and hold them accountable for increasing and sustaining quality partnerships with community and families to support student learning and growth. Develop a plan to identify and implement strategies designed to provide more guidance to parents on how to support their child's learning.
- 6.5: In the comprehensive plan, identify and implement methods for data integration around student and family needs among the school staff, as well as relevant, purposeful, and regular two- way communication between the school staff and all families to increase parental awareness of and accessibility to data on how well their children are achieving and progressing.