



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	320900010313
School Name	School of Leadership Development 09X313
School Address	1600 Webster Avenue Bronx, New York
District Name	NYC CSD 09
School Leader	Ms. Lauren Wilkins
Dates of Review	January 7- 8, 2014
School Accountability Status	Priority School
Type of Review	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet for 09X313

School Configuration (2013-14)					
Grade Configuration	06,07,08	Total Enrollment	382	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	N/A	# SETSS	N/A	# Integrated Collaborative Teaching	2
Types and Number of Special Classes (2013-14)					
# Visual Arts	6	# Music	N/A	# Drama	N/A
# Foreign Language	N/A	# Dance	N/A	# CTE	N/A
School Composition (2012-13)					
% Title I Population	84.7%	% Attendance Rate		87.5%	
% Free Lunch	100.0%	% Reduced Lunch		0.0%	
% Limited English Proficient	34.3%	% Students with Disabilities		17.0%	
Racial/Ethnic Origin (2012-13)					
% American Indian or Alaska Native	0.2%	% Black or African American		27.7%	
% Hispanic or Latino		% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander		1.4%	
% White	0.2%	% Multi-Racial		N/A	
Personnel (2012-13)					
Years Principal Assigned to School	7.67	# of Assistant Principals		2	
# of Deans	N/A	# of Counselors/Social Workers		2	
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	N/A	% Teaching Out of Certification		16.3%	
% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Years of Experience	23.1%	Average Teacher Absences		11	
Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools (2012-13)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	2.8%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4		2.9%	
Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (4th Grade)	N/A	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (8th Grade)		10.1%	
Student Performance for High Schools (2011-12)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	N/A	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4		N/A	
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	Yes	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	N/A
White	N/A	Multi-Racial	N/A
Students with Disabilities	Yes	Limited English Proficient	Yes
Economically Disadvantaged	Yes		
Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics (2011-12)			
American Indian or Alaska Native	N/A	Black or African American	Yes
Hispanic or Latino	Yes	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	N/A
White	N/A	Multi-Racial	N/A
Students with Disabilities	No	Limited English Proficient	Yes
Economically Disadvantaged	Yes		
Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science (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	N/A	Limited English Proficient	Yes
Economically Disadvantaged	No		

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

1. By May 2013, curriculum calendars and units will have been developed in the major subject areas.
2. By May 2013, 100 percent of the teachers will use available data to set academic goals with the students and Professional Goals for themselves.
3. To develop a system for professional development of teachers and a plan for monitoring what the teachers have learned and how they are using strategies to inform instruction.
4. By June 2013, 80 percent of the teachers will have participated in at least 3 professional development opportunities as evidenced by professional conversation and feedback logs and teacher reflections.
5. To cultivate the development of overarching systems and partnerships that support and sustain social and emotional developmental health which will result in a one percent increase in attendance by June 2013 or a one percent reduction of incidents and or suspensions.
6. To increase parental involvement through a parent/school partnership which will result in a 5 percent increase in parent participation in the spring Parent Teacher conference or at parent workshops.

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 learning.			X	
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 3:				D	

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

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
4.2	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: School leadership has established a set of school-wide goals. However, these goals do not reflect rigorous expectations and cannot be fully articulated by all stakeholders. This impacts on the school-wide urgency to provide real and challenging opportunities for all subgroups of students. In addition, while there are some resources available to address the needs of the school community, the leadership has not taken a pro-active approach to long-term planning, community outreach and appropriate personnel utilization. As a result, all stakeholders are not used effectively or efficiently to improve student achievement.

Strengths:

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

Areas for Improvement:

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

- During the leader’s meeting, the school leader reported that the goals which were established for 2013-14 were appropriate, realistic and believed that they were not only known to all stakeholders but drive the school. The goals and mission statement are posted throughout the building, but not always in the diverse languages of the school community. Almost all documents posted in the common areas were only written in English and some information was out-dated. Further, these documents were not provided to the parents in their native languages preventing them from understanding what was expected of them and their children for the 2013-14 school year. Discussions with various stakeholders in a student meeting, a teacher meeting, and a school support team meeting revealed a consistent inability to identify some of these goals, except in the most general way. There was also a shared belief that documentation relating to the school’s vision and goals were written by the school leader with limited input from all other stakeholders. In addition, upon review of the SCEP document it was clear that goals such as “a 1 percent increase in student attendance, a 1 percent reduction in incidents or suspensions and a 5 percent increase in parent participation” are not rigorous or aligned to a long-term vision. The inadequate involvement in the development of real and rigorous goals and mission by all stakeholders and the limited on-going communication to all stakeholders, particularly the parents in their native languages, has resulted in a lack of a cohesive plan to address the needs of all the sub-groups of students and enable the school to make sustained academic improvements for all students.

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

- The school leader reported that the school's 2013-14 budget was significantly reduced this academic year due to a projected drop in enrollment. Upon review of student register data, the projected drop in enrollment did not happen. During the leader's meeting it was clear that the school leader made strategic decisions based on the projected lower funding levels. This concern about the impact of inadequate funding on all aspects of the school was voiced in meetings with each group of stakeholders. Discussions with the school support staff, vertical teacher group, and other stakeholders also indicated that some responsibilities have not been allocated appropriately, and as a result, staff have been directed to take additional roles outside of the purview, which has impacted the school's ability to ensure its needs are appropriately addressed. In addition, discussions among all groups of stakeholders revealed a lack of clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities of the leadership team and the general organization of the school. Stakeholders only spoke about the school organization in general terms and without any consensus. Based on observation and discussions, this has resulted in an inequitable distribution of responsibility of key staff members. Additionally, based on classroom observations and discussions there is a lack of clarity about the morning intervention program and the structure and purpose of the double period afternoon Academic Intervention Services (AIS). As a result, the morning AIS program is poorly attended and since monitoring is sporadic and consequences are unclear, students do not fully benefit from the potential support to be provided by these programs and services. These cumulative weaknesses in the effective use of resources impact adversely on student academic outcomes.

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 Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP) for 2012-13 and the school leader's self-assessment indicate that leadership would conduct nine classroom visits per day. Based on discussions with teachers, leadership and observations, that number has not been met. Based on the meetings with teachers and leadership, when the visitations do take place the follow-up and feedback is often done informally in a conversation. A review of written classroom observations by school leadership indicate that although some feedback provided is rigorous, at other times it is not targeted or comprehensive enough to provide a real framework for improvement. In the teacher meeting, staff reported that leadership facilitated and provided some professional development (PD) opportunities that were aligned to identified weaknesses in instruction and learning but that this was not routinely the case. Staff reported that while they were "overwhelmed with data," additional on-going PD for the appropriate and effective use of data was requested. Based on classroom observations, the use of data is sporadic and while it is reflected in some lesson plans, there was limited evidence of its use in grouping English Language Learners (ELLs) or students with disabilities. Further, staff reported that PD was at times sporadic and was not always aligned to a longer-term strategic plan to help ensure the consistent inclusion of information such as strategies for working with ELLs, methods for engaging over-age students, scaffolding and differentiation of

instruction. This information was supported by a review of PD logs that every teacher keeps. Based on interviews with leadership, PD for them is also sporadic and provided because the assistant principals themselves look for opportunities beyond the school for personal growth as academic leaders especially in the effective use of student and teacher data. The lack of a cohesive approach to aligning classroom observations to consistent and developmental feedback and focused and targeted PD opportunities reduces the potential impact on driving forward improvements in instruction and student learning.

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

- There is no clear school organizational chart with clearly delineated roles to provide a focus for the school stakeholders and support the achievement of the school’s goals. The school leader is not strategically utilizing the skills of other leaders and staff to monitor and evaluate the work of the school and to identify and structure interventions to bring about more rapid improvements in student outcomes. Based on the discussion with the school leader during the leader’s meeting, assignments are given based on the perceived strengths of the school leadership team. This results in an inequitable distribution of work and the view as expressed in two formal meetings that the school leader does not use all members of the leadership team as academic leaders but rather has one serving primarily as a disciplinarian. As a result, there is a focus on discipline that does not allow all members of the leadership team to work as instructional leaders to rigorously monitor how well the school is performing or the performance of different groups of students across the school. Consequently, school leaders do not uniformly establish rigorous expectations for all sub-groups of students and analyze data in order to develop appropriate strategies for ELLs and students with disabilities that lead to multiple points of entry and differentiation of instruction. There is a designated Attendance Teacher whose work load involves the daily monitoring of attendance, making home visits, tracking of over-age students and documenting chronic attendance issues. Based on information gathered in a teacher meeting and school support staff meeting it is clear that she does work with teachers to address absences, but it is also clear that there is no defined process for sharing information and follow-up with stakeholders. This lack of a formal communication plan between the Attendance Teacher and the stakeholders allows some students who might have been refocused to decrease chronic attendance issues. A lack of strategic planning to oversee the school’s academic performance and other key aspects of its work adversely impacts on the academic and social growth of students.

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 leadership is working to implement a curriculum that supports the Common Core Learning Standards. However, there is no on-going, long-term planning across all content areas

to support a uniform and rigorous interdisciplinary approach to instruction. In addition, while data is collected, it is not used uniformly or effectively to drive student success in the short-term and beyond into high school, college and the world of work.

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.

- Discussions with the school leader and with staff indicate that a written plan is being developed to support the implementation of CCLS. The plan indicates that opportunities have been provided for staff to work together and PD has taken place, both in support of the implementation of CCLS. Classroom observation and discussions during the vertical teacher meeting confirmed that the math coach works with the teachers to develop lesson plans based on the new CMP3 curriculum and aligned to the CCLS. He also visits classrooms and models teaching strategies for ELLs and students with disabilities and helps teachers to use data to improve student outcomes. In addition, this is the first year that the teachers are using the Expeditionary Learning curriculum for English language arts and leadership works closely with the teachers to ensure that their lessons are aligned to the CCLS. However, while all the curricula are research based and approved by the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE), teachers are not consistently monitored by school leaders to ensure that there is scaffolding, or instruction and rigor that meets the needs of all sub-groups of students. Classroom visitations confirmed the lack of rigor in questioning across all content areas. Additionally, because there was limited evidence of the use of New York State English Language Assessment Test (NYSELAT) data incorporated into the development of lesson and unit plans the needs of the ELLs are not fully met. The lack of a regularly scheduled monitoring by leadership to ensure that CCLS is implemented with fidelity and that teachers are using data and incorporating CCLS shifts, factors into the school's outcomes.

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

- The review of lesson and unit plans indicated that they are consistently aligned to the CCLS and New York State content standards. However, sequenced and scaffolded skills that are aligned to instruction are not provided for all sub-groups of students as evidenced in classroom visits. Additionally, there was limited evidence of the use of complex materials rather an emphasis was placed on work sheets and hand-outs that did not meet the needs of all students in particular those of the higher performing and achieving students. Evidence from discussions and curriculum planning

meetings and documentation indicate that there is not a strong focus on the use of data to drive curriculum planning. In every classroom that was visited, students were grouped, but in only two classes was there evidence that data was used to determine the groups. There was limited differentiation of instruction and the lessons were not focused on student needs. Discussions with teachers further revealed that there is limited expectation from leaders that they use information from the implementation of planning to adjust future curriculum intentions or expectations. As a result, teachers do not consistently ensure that higher-order thinking skills are consistently developed by providing additional extensions or supports based on an analysis of the implemented and evaluated curriculum.

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.

- Based on classroom visits and information obtained during the vertical teacher meeting, attempts are made between the core subjects teachers of ELA, social studies, mathematics and science to develop interdisciplinary lessons. However, these attempts were isolated and did not reflect a long-term plan between or among the subject areas. Discussions indicate that while teachers make individual choices to work with colleagues to provide a more inter-disciplinary approach to learning for students, a lack of a cohesive and rigorous concerted plan limits the effectiveness and continuity of these efforts. There are also occasions where efforts do not always have the desired effect. For example, in social studies, the teachers covered the Vietnam War Era of the 1960s and 70s in order to support the books being read in ELA. However, this resulted in confusion and a lack of understanding of the cause and effect of events and students were left with knowledge about isolated facts rather than a depth of knowledge and a full and complete historical picture. Although the school has invested in SMARTboards in almost all classes, in most instances they are used as an electronic chalkboard or not used at all. There was little evidence of the use of the arts to support learning in any classroom. The combined lack of opportunities for students to engage in cross-curricular activities reduces their ability to be academically successful.

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 at an early stage of using data to make and inform curricular decisions. Evidence from discussions with leaders and teachers, lesson observations and documentation review indicates that the school has not established a comprehensive system for using data to adapt the curriculum in response to academic improvements made by different groups of students. Teachers do not work together on a regular basis to assess and track the progress of different groups of students and this means that the needs of students are not consistently met. Based on student interviews and classroom observations, there does not appear to be a school-wide consistent grading policy. Students reported that they did not have opportunities to work one-on-one with their teachers to set their goals or assess their work. In classrooms and in the hallways student work was displayed

and some had comments written on post-its and others did not. These comments were usually brief and very general such as “Great” or “Do not use an exclamation point there.” Rubrics were often attached to the work, but three ELL students reported that it would be helpful to them if their teachers had shown them an exemplar first. Additionally, there was no use of on-going assessments in any of the classroom visited. However, there was the use of exit slips but what was done with them was unclear. This inconsistency in grading rubrics, the lack of student engagement and ownership in the setting of goals and inconsistent on-going feedback has resulted in confusion about what is really exemplary work and what steps are necessary in order to produce it. This results in an academic foundation that limits student achievement.

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

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: Teachers consistently create lesson plans aligned to the CCLS that target specific academic skills. However, strategic disaggregation of data is inconsistent and therefore is not used effectively to support rigorous and differentiated instruction for all students in pertinent sub-groups. As a result, student achievement, progress and improved outcomes are not maximized.

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.

- All teachers have lesson plans each day for all content areas but an evaluation of these lesson plans, lesson observations, and discussions with teachers indicate that insufficient use is made of different sources of data to guide and inform instruction. The review of lesson plans and classroom visits confirmed that there was limited evidence of instructional interventions based on data or varied instruction to meet student needs and goals although, students were consistently put into groups. There was limited evidence of the use of IEPs or student goals to determine placement in the groups. Rather, one student said, during the group meeting, “My teacher put me in this group because I talk too much to my friends.” When two teachers were asked to identify who are the ELLs and the students with disabilities in their classes, they were unable to do so. One teacher said, “I know that I have some students with disabilities and a lot of ELLs so I teach the class as if everyone is an ELL.” There was little evidence of scaffolding or match of instruction that supported individual student goals. Discussions with teachers indicate that teacher leaders and coaches are only at an early stage of discussing individual student goals with them and the interventions and strategies that are to be used to ensure that these goals are met. This lack of discussion and focus on goal

setting results in a paucity of learning trajectories being set for students of differing needs and abilities and reduces the opportunities for students to be academically successful.

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.

- Lesson plans were clear and appropriately aligned to the CCLS. However, there was only sporadic evidence of differentiation of instruction or multiple points of access when visiting classes. Most students, regardless of an IEP or NYSELAT results, were directed to work on the same lesson in the same way. As a result of specific student needs not being met, out of the 10 students with disabilities who were part of one visited class, only four students were on task and the other six students were hitting each other with rulers, talking about personal issues and passing notes. In another class, the lesson was conducted in Spanish, but the students were using duplicated hand-outs from a textbook written in English because there were not enough books for everyone. Lesson observations indicated that teachers across the school do not ask higher-order thinking questions that result in students being challenged and having to justify their views and opinions. In addition, instructional materials used by teachers do not routinely contain high levels of text and content complexity. Instead, simplistic worksheets often provide little to engage, motivate or challenge students and this together with other identified weaknesses prevents students from working towards and reaching their full potential.

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

- The students who participated in the group discussions all mentioned that they were proud of their various heritages and thought it was a strength of the school to have students from all over the world. This variety allows them to learn about other cultures and as one student said, "My friends from Santo Domingo help me to learn to speak Spanish." However, there is little evidence in the classroom, hallways or offices that there is a recognition of the multiple cultures that populate the school. All the students who participated in the large and small group meetings stated emphatically that they feel that their teachers value, respect and like them. They believe that all the teachers want them to learn and to succeed. They said that the teachers encourage them to do their best and always take time to answer their questions. However, there was limited evidence of formal communication between teachers and students in order to establish goals, address behavior issues or assess strengths and weaknesses. In addition, while classroom behavior was appropriate in all but two of the classes that were visited, there is no school-wide code of behavior that includes realistic consequences that can be consistently enforced. Both groups of students and teachers agreed that consequences are not always enforced and "some kids are always in trouble, but nothing happens to them." The lack of a school-wide behavior plan causes confusion among the students regarding what is acceptable and what is not. This lack of clarity and focus undermines not only student safety but rigorous and appropriate instruction and thereby limits their 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).

- There is data available for all teachers to use when determining lesson plans, student goals and appropriate assessment methodology. Classroom visitations showed some evidence of attempts to recognize student needs by pairing students with different levels of ability, but this practice is not consistent and not fluid. In addition, there was only sporadic use and inconsistent understanding of how the NYSELAT results can be used to drive instruction and improve outcomes. Further, limited time is allocated for teachers to conference individually with students in order to share data information, set goals and benchmarks. Instead, communication is informal and inconsistent. Discussions with students and an evaluation of student work further indicate that too few teachers are effective at using feedback, both oral and written, as a tool for making clear to students what they need to do to improve their work and achieve at a higher level. As a result, this prevents students from seeing themselves as active participants in the learning process and whose understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses is critical to their academic success.

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 articulates and supports an environment that nurtures the social and emotional developmental health of all students. However, a concrete, overarching system that incorporates specific structures and protocols that would prepare all students for experiences that result in academic and social success has not been embedded in the entire school culture.

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 stakeholders have made efforts to address the social and emotional health of the students. Based on the information gathered from the school support meeting and the formal discussions with students and school leaders the guidance counselor has worked one-on-one with 85 percent of the eighth grade class regarding their high school selections and graduation requirements. The school provides support for the students by having both a mono-lingual and bi-lingual psychologist, a bi-lingual social worker and a speech therapist. It was evident from the interaction at the meetings that they work as a team to try and provide support for the students.

However, their frustration was evident because the team is shared between the two schools in the building that are not working collaboratively with one another, and that has resulted in the inability for the School Support Team (SST) to work more closely with the teachers and service students in a timely manner. There is also an Attendance Teacher who works with teachers to address chronic student absences. However, there is no formal organized method for this communication and therefore it is inconsistent and not always timely or effective. The data provided by school leaders indicated that absenteeism continues to be a problem across all grades. However, according to the Attendance Teacher and school leader the chronic issue is with the over-age students, who choose not to attend.. Based on a review of the school leader's self-assessment every student in the building is supposed to be linked to an adult but evidence from discussions with students and staff indicate no formal protocol was put into place to ensure that this would happen. Instead, students say that they know that they can go to various adults in the building if they have a problem, but they make that choice based on the issue. The services and systems that are in place to support student social and emotional health are not embedded or established enough to lead to academic success for all student sub-groups.

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 provides additional social and emotional support for all students through the use of the after school with the Supportive Children Advocacy Network and Oasis Community Corporation which provides counseling, academic help and athletic opportunities. However, these programs are not systematically monitored for participation and improved student outcomes. Additionally, there is no program in place for the 35 students with interrupted formal education (SIFE). Consequently, while some programs are in place, they are not unified or cohesive to ensure a school-wide concerted effort to meeting the differing and diverse needs of all students. Discussions with school leaders, staff and an evaluation of documentation indicate that although there are PD opportunities offered to staff to increase their knowledge and expertise in meeting the social and emotional needs of students, the plan is not systematic or strategic to consistently ensure that staff training consistently aligns with the needs of students.

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.

- Based on observations, discussions and meetings with all groups of stakeholders it is evident that the students are respected and valued. They are greeted, spoken to appropriately, encouraged and made to feel welcomed by the teachers who were seen standing by their doors during the change of class periods. Additionally, based on observation of the leadership team both in the hallways, offices and classrooms it is obvious that they know the students by name and background. Repeatedly during the group meetings multiple stakeholders indicated that the school leader really knew all of the students

not only by name but also their personal histories. In addition, the staff is very open and expressed a willingness to learn better methods for supporting student well-being and improving student results but these are not always matched by a consistent approach to implement learnings from these activities in the classroom or an involvement from staff in the long-term strategic planning of activities so that they have a more cumulative impact on addressing student needs. This omission of staff from the long-term planning process also reduces their ability to be fully aware of and involved in the role they can play in providing appropriate supports for all groups of students. Additionally, discussions with parents and school leaders indicate that not all parents are made aware of the potential role they could play in achieving the school’s mission and vision pertaining to student social and emotional developmental health.

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.

- Discussions with school leaders and staff indicate an awareness of the importance of data in addressing the needs of students. However, the same evidence shows that leaders and staff are at an early stage of developing a formal and strategic plan to deliver and monitor the implementation of the appropriate supports based on an interpretation of the data. Further, during group meetings members of the support team and teacher groups stated that while some of the data is current some is not accurate and needs to be updated. School stakeholders indicated that behavioral goals for all students with disabilities have to be updated and that all IEPs of in-coming sixth grade students must be reviewed for accuracy because the requirements for elementary school are different from the requirements for middle school. The development, implementation and communication of this plan to all stakeholders does not yet ensure that all students are given the appropriate services and supports to support their academic and emotional developmental health growth.

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
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Debriefing Statement: The school leadership has made efforts to engage families in the academic, emotional and social health of their children. However, these attempts have met with limited success. This lack of parental engagement has resulted in the under-utilization of this invaluable resource and is a contributing factor in the inconsistent and limited achievement found across all sub-groups of students.

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.

- School leadership reported that letters are sent to parents regarding workshops, report cards, and Open School Night. The school leader stated that these opportunities are used to convey the school's academic expectations to parents and families. The letters are also sent in Spanish. Currently, the school does not connect with the increasing number of parents from various African nations whose children attend the school and so the conveying of the school's messages regarding academic expectations are not universally shared with parents. Evidence indicates that when parents visit the school, the opportunity is capitalized on to convey the school's academic expectations but this relies too heavily on parental visits to the school. Discussions with parents suggested that the school's website is used as vehicle to communicate with parents about the school and its drive for academic improvement but parents stated that not all parents have access to computers to access this information. Discussion with the school leader outlined the fact that the school is just beginning to evaluate its efforts of building relationships with parents and recognizes that much more work needs to be done to ensure that the relationship between home and school is strengthened to improve student opportunities for academic success.

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

- Teachers and support staff members do send notes and letters home but they are not always in Spanish or in the native language of the parent. Some of the signage in the hallways is very useful and in different languages but some is not current and is posted only in English. Further, there is no clear identification of the location of the school and because there is another school in the building parents are confused about where they need to go if they must meet with the school staff. This was evidenced by the fact that a parent said that although her child attends this school she inadvertently went to the other school's PTA meeting and was elected an officer before the mistake was realized. Although it is clear that the school stakeholders welcome parent involvement and recognize the usefulness of that support, the lack of written, timely and on-going communication that is delivered in their native language prevents communication from being stronger. One student said during the student group meeting, "My parents don't speak any English and when we get something from my teachers they ask me what it says, but I don't always know how to explain it." The school is developing a plan to evaluate the effectiveness of its communication strategies with families but this has not yet led to the improvements that are needed in order for parents to better support the work of the school and their child's academic achievement.

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.

- School leadership has partnered with Oasis Community Corporation which provides after-school academic and emotional support as well as opportunities to play sports. Additionally, the school uses the services provided by the Astor Foundation to support the emotional health of the students. These activities and links provide some opportunities for staff to develop skills to better support students in school. However, limited evidence is available as to how staff benefit from training to develop skills and expertise to develop and sustain relationships with parents and families, specifically designed to forge a strong partnership between home and school. The school leader, in interview, stated that the school is in need of such activities but that a strategic plan outlining PD activities has not yet been fully realized. A similar picture emerges with a plan to support and teach parents in ways to develop strategies to support their child's academic development. Such a plan is being discussed but the structures to transform it into practical activities are at an early stage. These weaknesses result in students not benefiting from a robust and focused home-school connection.

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.

- Besides the use of the Attendance Teacher who makes home visits and sends written communication to parents regarding attendance and achievement data, the school leadership identified a variety of other ways that they communicate about the use of data with all stakeholders. They include the use of the E-CHALK program that allows teachers to post assignments, grades and test scores and parents to access that information from their home computers. However, only half of the school staff has been trained in the use of this tool and as a result not all parents benefit from equal access to available data. The Achievement Reporting and Innovation System (ARIS), which is an internal data base provided by the NYCDOE allows parents to view test results and other relevant information as it relates to their children by the use of their personal computer. However, discussions with parents confirm that not all parents and community members are able to access this and other on-line resources. Parents also stated that they would welcome further support and guidance in interpreting the data to give them a clearer picture as to how well their child is performing academically. Documentation also indicates that not all information sent to parents is in the home language and this and other identified shortcomings means that parents are not always empowered to be advocates for student learning.

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: Ensure that the school's goals are rigorous and appropriate in order to positively impact on student success. Goals must be aligned to a long-term vision that will result in an increase in sustained academic achievement. Leadership should share the school-wide goals and mission statement with all stakeholders and the communication must be made in the languages of the school community and be timely and periodically up-dated to keep it rigorous and relevant.
- 2.3: Create an organizational chart that clearly delineates the roles of the administration and support services and communicate that information in written form to all stakeholders. Leadership must allow for the up-dating of coding for special education to ensure that the information is correct that the school funding is allocated correctly.
- 2.4: Ensure that the monitoring of instruction is rigorous and regular and provides timely feedback that leads to improvements in instruction. In addition, school leaders should ensure that PD is targeted towards weaknesses identified in instruction and all teachers implement the strategies learned from PD.
- 2.5: Introduce and rigorously implement protocols and procedures for monitoring the performance of the school. Weaknesses should be clearly identified and strategies utilized to address the areas of growth in a way that leads to improvements in instruction and student achievement.

Tenet 3: Curriculum Development and Support

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

- 3.2: Ensure school leaders rigorously monitor the implementation of CCLS so that it brings improvements in student learning, engagement and achievement. In addition, school leaders should ensure that the curriculum is scaffolded and adapted to meet the differing needs and abilities of students. Leadership must provide PD in order for all teachers to understand and use the NYSESLT data effectively.
- 3.3: Ensure that all teachers provide a challenging curriculum that is based on student data and uses this data to drive the instruction and curriculum. Teachers should ensure that curriculum planning and implementation makes effective use of higher-order thinking skills and challenging learning materials that lead to higher levels of student engagement and achievement.
- 3.4: Ensure that all teachers work towards implementing an inter-disciplinary curriculum that incorporates the arts and technology and provides students with learning activities that motivate and challenge in equal measure.
- 3.5: Provide teachers with PD that equips them with the skills to analyze and use data to inform curricular planning and decisions. In addition, teachers should develop rubrics and feedback procedures that are differentiated, task-specific and have prioritized next steps for learning for students.

Tenet 4: Teacher Practices and Decisions

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

- 4.2: Ensure school leaders hold teachers accountable for using data to guide and inform instruction and learning for all groups of students including those with disabilities. Teachers should, with guidance from school leaders and coaches, set challenging and achievable goals for all students.
- 4.3: Provide teachers with long-term on-going PD regarding higher order questioning, scaffolding and the use of instructional materials with high levels of text and content complexity. School leaders should monitor and evaluate the impact of this PD on student achievement.
- 4.4: Establish a school-wide behavior policy and code of behavior that includes realistic consequences that are consistently enforced. School stakeholders should create a learning environment that reflects the cultural diversity of the community and validates and respects the multiple cultures that make up the school community.
- 4.5: Use data to establish flexible and fluid student groups in order to vary instruction that meets students' different learning needs. Teachers should establish a schedule for classroom conferences and feedback in order to ensure data is shared with the students so that they become more accountable for their learning.

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: Create a learning environment where all students are known well by at least one adult and where all available data is shared among staff members so that the social and emotional needs of students can be fully met.
- 5.3: Implement a PD plan that ensures that all relevant staff is equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to fully meet the social and emotional needs of different groups of students.
- 5.4: Ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the role that they can play in meeting the needs of students. This awareness should then be built on further so that all stakeholders play an active role in fulfilling the school's vision pertaining to social and emotional developmental health.
- 5.5: Ensure that all available data is used effectively by all pertinent staff to identify and meet the needs of students.

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: Ensure that all opportunities are capitalized on to better inform parents and families about the school's academic expectations of students. School leaders and school stakeholders must ensure that the school website is always up-dated, relevant and user friendly. School stakeholders must communicate to the parents and

community the availability of on-line resources that can be used to assist students in order to prepare them for college and careers.

- 6.3: Ensure that all communications with parents are translated into home languages; ensure that all information posted in the common areas is current and written in the languages of the community and in addition, school leaders should ensure that they evaluate the quality of communication with parents and make improvements wherever necessary.
- 6.4: Provide training to staff so that they are equipped with the skills to build and sustain strong relationships and partnerships with parents; the school should also examine strategies for providing training and support for parents to empower them in supporting their child's education.
- 6.5: Ensure that all parents have access to data relating to their child's academic progress. School leaders should ensure any communication is translated into the home language of families and that information is accessible and easily understood.