

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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



2017-2018 School Year

School Report Written to the Tenet Level

BEDS Code	421800010033	
School Name	Corcoran High School	
School Address	919 Glenwood Ave, Syracuse, NY 13207	
District Name	Syracuse City School District	
School Leader	Tara Jennings	
Dates of Review	April 10-11, 2018	
School Accountability Status	<input type="checkbox"/> Priority School <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus School	
Type of Review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District-led Review	
Review Team	Name	Affiliation/Title
Representative for the District responsible for the quality of the report and the adherence to DTSDE protocols	Melinda Baiza	<input type="checkbox"/> District Employee <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District Outside Educational Expert
Additional members		
Zheadric Barbra	Assistant Superintendent of School Reform	
Anthony Davis	Assistant Superintendent of High Schools	
Deb Montroy	Coordinator	
Sarah Gentile	Supervisor of Fine Arts	
Melanie Cifonelli	Director of Mathematics	
Robert Leslie	Director of CTE	
Matthew Williams	Assistant Director of Special Education	

School Information Sheet for Corcoran High School

School Configuration (2017-18 data)					
Grade Configuration	9-12	Number of Students	1213	Number of Teachers	98
Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes (2017-18)					
# Transitional Bilingual	0	# Dual Language	0	# Self-Contained English as a Second Language	10
Types and Number of Special Education Classes (2017-18)					
# Special Classes	5	# SETSS	4	# Integrated Collaborative Teaching	0
School Composition (most recent data)					
% Title I Population	80.1	% Attendance Rate	88.6		
% Free Lunch	78.6	% Reduced Lunch	1.5		
% Limited English Proficient	16.2	% Students with Disabilities	19.1		
Racial/Ethnic Origin (most recent data)					
% American Indian or Alaska Native	1.5	% Black or African American	61.3		
% Hispanic or Latino	13.1	% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	3.3		
% White	17.9	% Multi-Racial	2.6		
Personnel (most recent data)					
Years Principal Assigned to School	1	# of Assistant Principals	4		
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	9.2	% Teaching Out of Certification			
% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Years of Experience	15.3	Average Teacher Absences	3.9		
Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools (2016-17)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	NA	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	NA		
Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (4th Grade)	NA	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (8th Grade)	NA		
Student Performance for High Schools (2016-17)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	64.3	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	68.6		
Global History Performance at levels 3 & 4	53.0	US History Performance at Levels 3&4	51.8		
4 Year Graduation Rate	62.0	6 Year Graduation Rate	68.3		
Regents Diploma w/ Advanced Designation	6.2				
Overall NYSED Accountability Status					
Priority School		Local Assistance Plan			
Focus School (indicate subgroups identified below)	√	In Good Standing			
Focus School Identified Subgroups	Black				
	Economically Disadvantaged				
Identify the school's top priorities (no more than 5) based on the school's comprehensive plan: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To increase instructional capacity of staff through collaboration, support, and targeted feedback to ensure continuous improvement in instructional practices. 2. Use a range of assessments to guide and inform their curriculum planning, giving students the feedback they need to ensure ownership of learning and improve achievement. 3. Use data and assessments to inform and adjust their instructional strategies and groupings while engaging students in self-evaluation through feedback and other approaches to ensure that students are learning at high levels. 4. Develop and implement a strategic plan to collect, analyze and utilize data to identify and address the social/emotional developmental health needs of all students. 5. Provide multiple and equitable opportunities for reciprocal communication to increase staff and families' understanding about student needs and further support student achievement. 					

Purpose of the visit

This school was visited because of its identification as a Priority or Focus School. The purpose of this review is to provide the school with feedback regarding the practices across the school and to provide a number of actionable recommendations to direct the school's work in the immediate future.

This report is being provided as a feedback tool to assist the school and to help identify areas for improvement. These areas can address the subgroups identified or they may be broader and cover additional subgroups or the entire school. The report below provides a critical lens to help the school best focus its efforts.

Information about the review

- The review was led by Melinda Baiza. The team also included Zheadric Barbra- Assistant Superintendent of School Reform, Anthony Davis - Assistant Superintendent of High Schools, Deb Montroy – Coordinator, Sarah Gentile - Supervisor of Fine Arts, Melanie Cifonelli - Director of Mathematics, Robert Leslie - Director of CTE, and Matthew Williams - Assistant Director of Special Education.
- The review team visited a total of 60 classrooms during the two-day review.
- The lead reviewer visited 3 classrooms with the Principal during the review
- Reviewers conducted focus groups with students, staff and parents
- Reviewers examined documents provided by the school, including curriculum maps, lesson plans, schoolwide data, teacher feedback, and student work.

SUCCESSSES WITHIN THE SCHOOL THAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD BUILD UPON:

1. The school community has rapidly retooled what they believe about themselves and their school community. By focusing on strengthening the climate and culture of the school, the staff has instituted CTF – Corcoran The Family. There has been an intentional focus on building community within the schoolhouse and parents. This focus has resulted in a visible change in climate and culture that continues to be enhanced.
2. Entering Corcoran High School, it is evident positive relationships are being created and fostered daily. Parents, students, and faculty have all shared they are happy with the current change in climate which is positive and instills a caring and supportive environment. The pride for the school is evident in the clean hallways and there are student pictures and work displayed.
3. One of the many ways the school leader has developed shared leadership on the campus is with the creation of the Principal Advisory Council. Students were nominated to be in the council and through a selection process a committee of students gather monthly to meet with the principal to discuss needs and wants of the campus student body.

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.

Recommendation for Tenet 2 – School Leader Practices and Decisions:

The school leader has provided many resources, structures, and processes that support school improvement efforts. The master schedule allows for grade level teams and grade level content teams to plan weekly. **To enhance the PLC structures, we recommend that by October 2018, the school leader should monitor the implementation of the PLC and identified instructional strategies that promote high academic outcomes for all students.**

Rationale:

Principal Jennings shared that grade level planning is happening in 9th grade, but planning for 10-12 is basically rooted in the content planning based on the master schedule. The schedule currently does not allow for staff in grades 10-12 to plan with their teams. There is an administrator that is present during the PLCs.

Principal shared that she and the administrative team conduct regular walkthroughs and data collected from the walk throughs is used to develop the focus of PLC meetings and faculty discussions.

The principal's expectations are for staff to plan by utilizing the CCSS standards for Math and ELA, Next Gen Standards for Science and Global Curriculum for Social Studies. Additionally, the teachers interviewed shared they have adequate resources to provide quality lessons and a budget for ordering materials.

Principal shared the teams created SMART goals for their PLC focus but they have not been monitored. The teams meet once every four days with a focus on targeted professional growth, instructional walk throughs, and administrative data conferencing. The principal articulated there is a need to monitor the SMART goals teacher teams created.

The principal shared there are expectations for what should be included in lesson plans although teachers are not required to turn them in. During walkthroughs, admin team does provide feedback on lesson plans as available.

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.

Recommendation for Tenet 3 – Curriculum Development and Support:

The school has embarked on strengthening the PLC collaborative structures that allow teachers to plan lessons utilizing the district provided curriculum and available resources. To further enhance this effort, we encourage the admin staff focus on components of the collaborative planning time. **Therefore, it is recommended that by July 2018, the school leader should identify a PLC structure with protocols and expectations to support the planning for individual student needs.**

- Revisit master schedule to support cross content planning
- Determine facilitators for each PLC
- Collaboration with content supervisors on content specific best practices
- Develop a support and accountability measure to monitor the effectiveness of PLC

Rationale:

The team reviewed lesson plans while visiting classrooms and verified that lesson plans included the components based on the principal’s expectations. However, they are not always aligned to the instructional delivery observed. Further, the plans reviewed varied in detail, length, and depth.

The teacher group observed during PLC time were analyzing the Regents exam data with an analysis on vocabulary as the driving issue for student mastery. During the meeting strategies were discussed to support ENL students although, no complexity of tasks was discussed during the meeting. Typically, meetings are attended by an instructional coach or administrator and notes are sent to the principal.

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.

Recommendation for Tenet 4 – Teacher Practices and Decisions:

Corcoran High School is primed to continue a targeted focus on instructional planning and lesson delivery. The schools focus on utilizing data and student engagement. This can be accomplished with a commitment on identified instructional strategies that can be observed in classroom observations. **Therefore, it is recommended that by May 2018, the school leader will work with content experts to determine instructional strategies that support high levels of engagement, thinking, and achievement.**

- **Develop a monitoring tool to ensure instructional strategy is in the lesson delivery**

Rationale:

Teachers utilized DIN (Do It Now) time at the start of classes as a starter to get students prepared for the lesson of the day.

Students shared they have a good understanding of their learning styles although they were not always able to identify the purpose of tasks completed or why they were learning certain content.

Data is being utilized at some level to create small groups and rotations although there was little evidence teachers were using current and ongoing data to improve achievement or high levels of engagement. Some tasks seemed compliance driven.

Special education teachers shared they use formative assessment to determine small group reteach lessons. Additionally, teachers interviewed shared they utilize technology as a means for checking for understanding.

Teachers shared they utilize real time data to guide their instruction.

Teachers shared they conduct student conferences at every marking period and utilize data to guide the conference and instill student ownership.

It was not evident that all students were not held to the same standards during classroom instruction. As an example; the same students were called upon multiple times by the teacher. Typically, classrooms provide a conducive learning environment.

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.

Recommendation for Tenet 5 – Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health:

The school leader has prioritized the efforts for establishing systems to support students’ social and emotional needs that remove barriers to allow for student learning. This emphasis on providing supports for students that are in currently in place should be assessed for effectiveness. **Therefore, it is recommended that by June 2018, the School Intervention Team should develop a system to evaluate the success of the supports provided to the students through the use of data and communication efforts to the teachers.**

Rationale:

There is an active Student Intervention Team (SIT) that meets weekly with a focus on reviewing student data to identify needs and prioritize based on intensity, review Behavior, academic, and grades (BAG). Members consist of grade level teachers, social worker, psychologist, and school counselors.

Principal shared they need to focus on closing the loop on supports given by reviewing and revisiting discussions with possible action plans in place to guide the work. Principal shared there is a need for a larger focus on including parents in this process.

There is evidence that the school leader has developed and published a Support Services Handbook for families and staff to communicated opportunities to address students’ social and emotional needs.

The teachers have received student mediation intervention training to support de-escalation strategies. This has resulted in fewer discipline referrals.

There is a tight process to identify and provide supports that begin with grade level meetings then followed by a SIT meeting. Principal shared she feels they need to do a better job at monitoring the supports provided. SIT information is updated to Office 365 on a regular basis with details about actions being implemented in support of specific students throughout the school. However, it was communicated to the visiting team that teachers do not access this information pervasively throughout the school.

Principal shared she felt there is improvement needed in the area of reporting back to the staff about what discussions are taking place in the SIT meetings.

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.

Recommendation for Tenet 6 – Family and Community Engagement:

The school leader is beginning to create structures that allow for parent engagement opportunities to support success. Much of the emphasis has been on creating one way communication methods to increase a culture of partnerships. **Therefore, it is recommended that by August 2018, the school leader will enhance the Corcoran Way to increase two-way communication whereby the school may:**

- **Participate in school town hall meetings**
- **Develop relationships with community members**

Rationale:

The school has gone on Corcoran The Way (CTW) roadshows to share highlights of the school with middle school students across the district. This roadshow was deemed a success!

Parents interviewed shared they are very impressed with Principal Jennings and her team and can reach out for the most part to anyone in the building for answers and support as needed.

Principal communication to staff- feedback from Parent Teacher conference indicated a need to enhance parent/teacher communication. Principal request- 10 parent phone calls monthly, logged with a focus on academics, behavior, and should share some positive actions by the student.

Principal shared parents receive a monthly newsletter that includes academic as well as social happenings. Additionally, parents receive messages via Robo calls and monthly newsletters.

The school counselor's focus has been getting information to parents regarding students' status and meeting with students one on one to progress courses for completion to graduation on-time.

According to the principal data is not always collected in order to determine impact of parental engagement efforts at the school.

Report Quality Assurance from the District

I certify that I have led this review on behalf of the district and assert that this District-led Review aligns with NYSED expectations and protocols.

School Reviewed	Corcoran High School
Name of Lead Reviewer	Melinda Baiza
Title	Focus District Consultant (OEE)
2017-18 District Lead Credential status (choose one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Issued by NYSED on _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Pending -- The requirements have been fulfilled, but I have yet to receive word from NYSED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pending -- I have not yet fulfilled the requirements, but plan on doing so by the June 30, 2017. I will be applying for: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> an Initial Credential (I have received initial approval and when the assessment is available I will complete that requirement) <input type="checkbox"/> a Renewal Credential <input type="checkbox"/> N/A This is the only District-led review I am responsible for.