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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)

BEDS Code	421800010027
School Name	Porter Elementary School
School Address	512 Emerson Avenue, Syracuse 13204
District Name	Syracuse
School Leader	William W. Mecum
Dates of Review	March 30-31 2015
School Accountability Status	☒Priority School
Type of Review	☒SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet

School Configuration (2014-15 data)					
Grade Configuration	PK-6	**Total Enrollment**	563	**SIG Recipient**	Y

Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes (2014-15)					
# Transitional Bilingual	0	**# Dual Language**	0	**# Self-Contained English as a Second Language**	0

Types and Number of Special Education Classes (2014-15)					
# Special Classes	5	**# SETSS**	0	**# Integrated Collaborative Teaching**	0

Types and Number of Special Classes (2014-15)					
# Visual Arts	1	**# Music**	2	**# Drama**	0
# Foreign Language	0	**# Dance**	0	**# CTE**	0

School Composition (most recent data)			
% Title I Population		**% Attendance Rate**	92
% Free Lunch	78	**% Reduced Lunch**	2
% Limited English Proficient	18	**% Students with Disabilities**	20

Racial/Ethnic Origin (most recent data)			
% American Indian or Alaska Native	3	**% Black or African American**	33
% Hispanic or Latino	12	**% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander**	8
% White	34	**% Multi-Racial**	10

Personnel (most recent data)			
Years Principal Assigned to School	2	**# of Assistant Principals**	1
# of Deans	0	**# of Counselors/Social Workers**	1
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	0	**% Teaching Out of Certification**	0
% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Years of Experience	9	**Average Teacher Absences**	3%

Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools (2013-14)			
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	2.3%	**Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4**	8.4%
Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (4th Grade)	68.7%	**Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (8th Grade)**	NA

Student Performance for High Schools (2013-14)			
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4		**Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4**	

Credit Accumulation High Schools Only (2013-14)			
% of 1st year students who earned 10+ credits		**% of 2nd year students who earned 10+ credits**	
% of 3rd year students who earned 10+ credits		**4 Year Graduation Rate**	
6 Year Graduation Rate			

Overall NYSED Accountability Status (2013-14)			
Reward		**Recognition**	
In Good Standing		**Local Assistance Plan**	
Focus District	Y	**Focus School Identified by a Focus District**	
Priority School	Y		

Accountability Status – Elementary and Middle Schools

Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA (2012-13)			
American Indian or Alaska Native	-	**Black or African American**	x
Hispanic or Latino	-	**Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander**	-
White	x	**Multi-Racial**	-
Students with Disabilities	x	**Limited English Proficient**	x
Economically Disadvantaged	x		

Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics (2012-13)			
American Indian or Alaska Native	-	**Black or African American**	x
Hispanic or Latino	-	**Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander**	-
White	x	**Multi-Racial**	-
Students with Disabilities	x	**Limited English Proficient**	x
Economically Disadvantaged	x		

Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science (2012-13)			
American Indian or Alaska Native	-	**Black or African American**	-
Hispanic or Latino	-	**Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander**	-
White	-	**Multi-Racial**	-
Students with Disabilities	-	**Limited English Proficient**	-
Economically Disadvantaged	Yes		

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS WRITTEN BY THE SCHOOL:
1. Raise student proficiency in ELA to at least 12%
2. Raise student proficiency in math to at least 15%
3. Reach student attendance goal of 95%
4. Maintain teacher attendance goal of 97%
5. Increase the percentages of Effective and Highly Effective teachers to 97%

Information about the review

- The review was co-led by an Outside Educational Expert (OEE) and a representative from the New York State Education Department. The team also included a district representative, a district-selected Outside Educational Expert, a Special Education School Improvement Specialist (SESIS) representative, and a representative from the Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN).
- The review team visited a total of 59 classrooms during the two-day review.
- Reviewers conducted focus groups with students, staff, and parents
- Reviewers examined documents provided by the school, including curriculum maps, lesson plans, school wide data, teacher feedback, and student work.
- The school has not carried out parent, student, or staff surveys.

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 Statement of Practice. Provide the letter rating in the OVERALL RATING row as the final overall tenet rating.				
#	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).	☐	☐	☒	☐
2.3	Leaders make strategic decisions to organize programmatic, human, and fiscal capital resources.	☐	☐	☒	☐
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.	☐	☐	☒	☐
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).	☐	☐	☒	☐
	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.	☐	☐	☒	☐
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.	☐	☐	☒	☐

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
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.	☐	☐	☒	☐
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.	☐	☐	☒	☐
	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.	☐	☐	☒	☐
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.	☐	☐	☒	☐
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.	☐	☐	☒	☐
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).	☐	☐	☒	☐
	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.	☐	☐	☒	☐
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.	☐	☐	☒	☐
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.	☐	☐	☒	☐
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.	☐	☐	☒	☐
	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.	☐	☐	☒	☐
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.	☐	☐	☒	☐
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.	☐	☐	☒	☐
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.	☐	☐	☒	☐
	OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 6:			**D**	

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

The school has received a rating of *Developing* for Tenet 2 – School Leader Practices and Decisions.

- The school leader reported that he has worked with the school's turnaround team of key staff and the school community to promote a long-term academic vision to help drive school improvement. Interviews with staff, parents, and students showed that they understand this vision. While the school set data driven goals, the review team found that these goals are not are not challenging enough or regularly monitored and evaluated to assess progress toward intended outcomes. For example, the school has goals to increase student proficiency in English language arts (ELA) to only 12 percent and math to only 15 percent. Further, there is no goal related to student social and emotional developmental health apart from the attendance target.

- The school leader has implemented changes to the school's program to create an extended day and develop an after-school program, which offers re-teaching opportunities for students. While students stated that they value these opportunities, there is little evidence to indicate that these programs are having a sustained impact on raising student achievement. School leaders, parents, and staff stated that staff appointments have strengthened the teaching team and have increased student engagement in learning, but the review team found inconsistent evidence of student engagement and instructional rigor during classroom visits. Core subject teachers reported that the school leader has brought in substitute teachers to provide time for staff to plan and work on assessments with coaches and grade level teams, which has enhanced their instructional practice. However, the impact of this additional planning time on instruction was not evident during classroom visits. Although the school leader has made some strategic resource decisions, the review team found that the school leader has not evaluated these decisions to determine the impact on student achievement.

- Documents and staff interviews demonstrated for the review team that the school has a framework in place for lesson observations and teacher feedback. However, teachers reported that observation and walk-through feedback from school leaders is not consistent and includes few specific pointers for improving instruction. The school uses the district classroom observation rubric. However, the review team found that current classroom observations do not focus on monitoring student engagement, learning, and academic progress, but instead focus on planning for Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) alignment, learning objectives, and behavior expectations.

- A review of documents and interviews with the school leader and staff demonstrated that the school leaders are starting to implement evidence-based systems to drive improvement. However, the review team found that additional work is needed in the classroom observation process to secure accelerated improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. Discussions with the school leader and teachers, and classroom visits demonstrated that some teachers are starting to use summative assessment data to drive instruction and make curricular adjustments, but few teachers use formative assessment or data to monitor and evaluate the academic performance of subgroups of students.

Recommendation:

The school leaders, as represented by the turnaround team, should create SMART goals for student academics and social and emotional developmental health and establish benchmarks to monitor closely the progress toward those

goals, including reference to the performance of sub-groups.

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**

The school has received a rating of *Developing* for Tenet 3 – Curriculum Development and Support.

- The school leader has a plan to align teacher instructional practices to the CCLS; however, there are no targeted goals set by school leaders or teachers to specifically address the needs of all students and sub-groups. Commercially produced curricular programs that reference the CCLS in ELA and math have been introduced as part of the school's iZone partnership. Further, the school leader has implemented a framework of daily horizontal collaborative meetings for teachers run by ELA and math coaches to help establish effective CCLS-aligned planning and instructional practices, but discussions with the school leader confirm that he has not rigorously monitored the impact of these meetings on student achievement. Teachers confirm the school leader works with coaches to develop annual long-term plans for PD around the CCLS, but the school leader stated that he does not consistently check that the content of PD is implemented consistently in all classrooms.
- During classroom visits, the review team found inconsistent teacher planning for the adaptation of the curriculum to meet the needs of individuals and subgroups of students. Although some teachers plan and prepare texts with a range of complexity levels, other teachers solely use texts provided by commercial programs, and do not supplement them to meet diverse student needs. Teacher planning identifies learning objectives, standards, central questions, and concept development. However, lesson plans do not consistently specify higher-order questioning to extend student thinking or scaffolding steps to support students. In addition, lesson plans do not identify the needs of English language learners (ELLs).
- Discussions with the school leader confirm that the school has not developed an interdisciplinary curriculum. However, some practices are in place to coordinate the teaching between core and non-core subjects so that learning in ELA, math, and science is reinforced in different content areas across grades. The school provided the review team with an integration binder in which ELA, math, and science teachers document themes and key concepts that the art, music, and gymnastics teachers review and align their own lesson planning to; however, this practice is informal and interdisciplinary learning does not consistently take place across classrooms.
- A review of lesson plans demonstrates that most teachers use summative data to establish student groupings and a few teachers use this data to make adjustments to curricula planning. However, these practices are not consistent and in many of the 59 classes visited by the review team, teachers did not plan and deliver instruction to meet the diverse needs of all students. In addition, classroom visits and lesson plans demonstrated that formative assessment is not used on a consistent basis to assess student learning. Most students interviewed stated that they do not receive feedback from teachers on assessments.

Recommendation:

The school leader should make expectations clear that all teachers should plan in advance for formative assessment strategies that assess whole-class understanding and the school leader should monitor planning to check that these expectations are consistently implemented.

	Tenet Rating	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.		

The school has received a rating of *Developing* for Tenet 4 – Teacher Practices and Decisions.

- The school leader stated that he requires teachers to use data to develop short and long term instructional plans that address students' diverse learning styles and needs. The school leader shared he has passed on the responsibility of monitoring teachers' use of data and the CCLS implementation to the ELA and math instructional coaches. These coaches meet daily with grade level teams, provide feedback on teacher practice, and work with staff to create and adapt instructional plans. However, reviewers found a disconnect between the school leader's expectations and practices in the classroom, as in many of the lessons observed by the review team teachers did not provide a range of tasks and materials to meet the needs and learning styles of students of varying ability levels.

- The school leader shared that teachers use commercial curricular programs for ELA and math that are broadly aligned with the CCLS. During classroom visits by the review team, inconsistent evidence was found of teachers using a range of complex texts, as many teachers provide all students with the same level text and with no supplementary materials or strategies to extend learning. In many classrooms, teacher questioning is low level, and teachers accept brief or single-word responses from students. Classroom visits also indicated that not all teachers fully implement the CCLS instructional shifts. For example, grade five students did not use the correct academic vocabulary in a math lesson, but instead used colloquialisms.

- Classroom visits demonstrate that teachers use strategies to develop an intellectually safe environment, such as referring students to the guidelines for behavior in the classroom. However, there is little evidence of strategies to address the needs of diverse groups of students. Classroom visits demonstrate most teachers' questioning and instruction is not tailored to the needs of students. Students stated that in a few classrooms they are reluctant to express opinions and advance hypotheses in front of their peers.

- Teachers stated to the review team that they use data to form student groupings, but classroom visits demonstrate that learning tasks are not matched to the differing abilities and needs of students. Classroom visits demonstrated that teachers do not regularly employ formative assessment strategies during instruction and do not adjust their instructional practices to meet the diverse needs of students. Discussions with students and a review of student work demonstrate that teachers do not consistently provide constructive and helpful feedback to students to help them improve their work or achieve at a higher level.

Recommendation:

Teachers need to verify all students' learning at key points during whole group instruction through formative assessment strategies, such as whiteboards, response cards, and other techniques that assess all students' conceptual knowledge and use the information to adjust instruction so that it better meets the needs of all 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

The school has received a rating of *Developing* for Tenet 5 – Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health.

- Documents demonstrate that the school vision statement is predominantly focused on academic achievement and does not include expectations for student social and emotional developmental health. The school leader confirmed that he is developing a system for the student support team (SST) to work with teachers to regularly monitor classroom behavior and attendance data to identify the social and emotional developmental health needs of students and to target interventions. In addition, a referral system is being established for the teachers to refer students to the SST for social and emotional developmental health support. Both these systems are new and are not yet effective at identifying and meeting the needs of all students. Students state that they have a designated adult they can turn to if they have concerns and this is usually their classroom teacher or an SST member.

- The school leader stated there is no curriculum to support and promote the teaching of student social and emotional developmental health. However, the review team found that the school leader is developing practices to address this including a two-day induction program for students at the start of each school year focused on behavior expectations in different areas of the school, bullying lessons, and the adoption of a school-wide code of behavior displayed in all classrooms. The review team observed teachers referring to this code and reinforcing it when dealing with behavior issues in their classrooms. However, these strategies are not fully embedded and the school leader confirmed that there has been insufficient PD for staff to equip them with a wide range of skills to fully meet the social and emotional needs of students.

- Documents show that the school has a referral process for staff and parents to use in order to address the social and emotional developmental health needs of students. Teachers described the procedures they follow to refer students to the SST. Parents interviewed by the review team stated that the school leader and staff have involved parents in improving the school climate. However, the school's vision does not include expectations for student social and emotional health and discussions with staff, students, and parents demonstrated that the school leader has not made clear the roles of all stakeholders in supporting student social-emotional health.

- The school is developing a plan to use data to address student social and emotional developmental health needs, but this is a work in progress. Discussions with the school leader and staff indicate that the SST monitor data related to individual student social and emotional developmental health needs, such as attendance, teacher notes in Educators Handbook, an online referral and data system, and referrals. However, discussions with the school leader confirm that a structure is not in place to coordinate all the individual student social and academic data to identify needs and trends, and to better target resources to support students.

Recommendation:

The school leader and key staff should review the school aims to incorporate a vision for student social and emotional developmental health that is shared with all stakeholders and establish a curriculum to promote the teaching of student social and emotional developmental health.

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

The school has received a rating of *Developing* for Tenet 6 – Family and Community Engagement.

- The school leader is developing communications with families about the expectations for student academic achievement. Parents interviewed by the review team stated that they know the school's general academic performance goals, which the school leader and staff communicated at parent days, during parent teacher organization (PTO) meetings, and through written communications to home. However, parents stated that communication between staff members and families vary in quality and that some teachers do not make student academic expectations clear. The school leader stated that he has not evaluated how teachers communicate their academic expectations to families.

- School leader, teachers, and parents stated there is limited reciprocal communication between the home and school. Parents interviewed stated that while there had been an increase and improvement in communication from school to home, the school does not formally communicate with families in native languages. However, the school leader shared that a multi-lingual notice accompanies letters home advising parents to translate school communication.

- Parents report that while they have a general awareness of the school's expectations for student academic success, the school does not make clear to parents how they can support their children's learning. The school leader stated that the school does not have a strategic, formalized approach to address parent concerns in this area, but is beginning to provide some support to parents. For example, during PTO meetings and monthly family engagement nights, the SST shares data with families and presents strategies that parents can use to support their children's learning. Additionally, teachers stated that some teachers and grade level teams communicate directly with parents to explain how to help their children. However, the review team found this is not consistent across the school. Teachers shared that the school does not have a systematic approach to provide staff PD on developing effective home-school partnerships. As a result, the school's ability to create and sustain home-school partnerships is limited.

- The school leader stated that the school is developing data systems to identify student and family needs, such as the SST's weekly reviews of student social and emotional developmental health needs and academic performance. Documents demonstrate that the school works to connect students and families with appropriate services, such as counseling programs and mental health support agencies. The school leader shared that data on student achievement and behavior is sent home weekly from the ClassDojo program and that the school is developing ways to help parents understand data through parent events. However, parents reported they do not always understand data, which hinders their ability to support student success.

Recommendation:

The school leader should meet with the turnaround team of key staff members to come to a common understanding of what constitutes reciprocal communication with families. Identify and implement two ways of reciprocal communication between now and June.