



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



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|---|---------------------------------------|
| Name of principal: | Dr. Eva Williams |
| Name/number of school: | Van Duyn Elementary School |
| School address: | 401 Loomis Avenue; Syracuse, NY 13207 |
| School telephone number: | (315) 435-4660 |
| Principal's direct phone number: | (315) 435-4838 |
| Principal's e-mail: | ewilliams3@scsd.us |

School Information Sheet

| School Configuration (2014-15 data) | | | | | |
|---|----------|---|------|--------------------------------------|-----|
| Grade | PreK – 5 | Total Enrollment | 388 | SIG Recipient | Yes |
| Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes (2014-15) | | | | | |
| # Transitional Bilingual | 0 | # Dual Language | 0 | # Self-Contained English as a Second | 0 |
| Types and Number of Special Education Classes (2014-15) | | | | | |
| # Special Classes | 0 | # SETSS | | # Integrated Collaborative Teaching | 6 |
| 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 | 71% | % Attendance Rate | 93% | | |
| % Free Lunch | 67% | % Reduced Lunch | 4% | | |
| % Limited English Proficient | 0% | % Students with Disabilities | 19% | | |
| Racial/Ethnic Origin (most recent data) | | | | | |
| % American Indian or Alaska Native | 3% | % Black or African American | 71% | | |
| % Hispanic or Latino | 5% | % Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander | 1% | | |
| % White | 13% | % Multi-Racial | 7% | | |
| Personnel (most recent data) | | | | | |
| Years Principal Assigned to School | 2 | # of Assistant Principals | 1 | | |
| # of Deans | 0 | # of Counselors/Social Workers | 4 | | |
| % of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate | 0 | % Teaching Out of Certification | 0 | | |
| % Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Years of Experience | 8 | Average Teacher Absences | 1.06 | | |
| Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools (2013-14) | | | | | |
| ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4 | 4% | Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4 | 4% | | |
| Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (4th Grade) | 6% | Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (8th Grade) | N/A | | |
| Student Performance for High Schools (2013-14) | | | | | |
| ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4 | N/A | Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4 | N/A | | |
| Credit Accumulation High Schools Only (2013-14) | | | | | |
| % 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 (2013-14) | | | | | |
| Reward | | Recognition | | | |
| In Good Standing | | Local Assistance Plan | | | |
| Focus District | | Focus School Identified by a Focus District | No | | |
| Priority School | Yes | | | | |

Accountability Status

| Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA (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 | | | |
| Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics (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 | | | |
| 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 | | | |
| Describe the school's top priorities (no more than 5) based on the school's comprehensive plans (SCEP, SIG, DIP, etc.): | | | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase reading and math achievement scores 2. Increase student ownership of their learning and data 3. Increase teacher's use of best practices in lesson plans and teaching 4. Increase use of data to inform instructional plans and assessing student needs 5. Increase parent involvement in student education and social emotional developmental health (SEDH) | | | |

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.

| # | Statement of Practice | H | E | D | I |
|------------------------------------|--|---|----------|---|---|
| 2.2 | The school leader ensures that the school community shares the Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Results-oriented, and Timely (SMART) goals/mission, and long-term vision inclusive of core values that address the priorities outlined in the School Comprehensive Educational Plan (SCEP). | | X | | |
| 2.3 | Leaders make strategic decisions to organize programmatic, human, and fiscal capital resources. | | X | | |
| 2.4 | The school leader has a fully functional system in place aligned to the district's Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) to conduct targeted and frequent observation and track progress of teacher practices based on student data and feedback. | | X | | |
| 2.5 | Leaders effectively use evidence-based systems and structures to examine and improve critical individual and school-wide practices as defined in the SCEP (student achievement, curriculum and teacher practices; leadership development; community/family engagement; and student social and emotional developmental health). | | | X | |
| OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 2: | | | E | | |

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

| # | Statement of Practice | H | E | D | I |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3.2 | The school leader ensures and supports the quality implementation of a systematic plan of rigorous and coherent curricula appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards | | | X | |

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|------------------------------------|--|--|--|----------|--|
| | (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. | | | 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 | |

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| | OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 5: | | E | | |
| 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: | | E | | |

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

Effective

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

- The school has a mission, vision and SMART goals in place created by a representative group of stakeholders and a plan to work together for these outcomes to be realized, wherein progress is monitored and strategies are adjusted throughout the school year. The school leader stated that they are working to improve academic achievement by 20 percent and increase student and teacher attendance with targets of 93 percent and 96 percent, respectively. These goals were observed both in the SCEP and posted in the main hallway of the school. The school leader also stated that another goal of the school was to “make students college and career ready by creating a student-centered environment, establishing a culture of respect for all individuals, and valuing each person’s contribution to this community”. The school leader noted that the vision and goals are communicated and reinforced using multiple methods: students reciting the school pledge each morning, key messages broken down and reinforced through the morning announcements and classroom meetings, the school newsletter, and robo-calls that go out to parents. Reinforcements of the school’s goals and values were observed in the morning announcements and classroom meetings while daily attendance data was seen posted throughout the school (both in the main office hallway and outside each individual classroom). Furthermore, interviewed parents stated the school’s goals to be “improving academic achievement by 20 percent on state standardized tests; molding strong citizens that will be able to interact and communicate with others; and life readiness – not just writing or math, but being ready for college, careers and the community.” Parents also noted that these goals are reinforced through weekly newsletters and robo-calls from the school leader, and that every conversation or event starts with a focus on student achievement. In addition, the school leader stated a focus on working with parents to understand students’ academic achievement data and how that has been implemented by teaching parents about reading Lexile scores and an upcoming meeting on Achievement Network benchmark assessment scores. As a result, the school’s goals are uniformly seen, heard, and known by various stakeholders.
- The school leader uses collaborative systems for programming for students and teachers as well as hired and sustained personnel that allow staff to focus on meeting the needs of students. In an interview, the school leader stated that she collaborated with Talent Management and the Turnaround School Team to interview all potential candidates for hire. She also shared that they were “able to hire a team who shared the vision of the school and believe in the work we do. All but two staff members were retained between last year and this year – one left for family reasons and the other was not a fit for the school.” In addition, the school leader spoke of the increased and more strategic use of the Pearson consultants where after identifying a greater need, she worked with them to plan a realignment of the curriculum to further academic progress. Moreover, the school leader stated that staff, parents, and community members convene to determine the use of Title I funds and that she monitors the use these resources. She also shared that School Improvement Grants are used to fund academic field trips; teachers are required to fill out field trip proposal forms at the beginning of the year, including the specific learning objectives that the trip addresses. Moreover, she spoke to how various community agencies have provided materials, time and services to positively contribute to

learning opportunities. Van Duyn partners with SUNY ESF to provide hands-on enrichment to students during the school day, and afterschool programs are used to “provide a safe space and additional enrichment opportunities” (i.e. a leadership program through the YWCA, art or music programs through the YMCA, the tennis club, or the Good News Club). The school leader also noted services that the on-site clinic provides to students during the school day, minimizing the loss of learning time. Furthermore, in the parent interview, it was noted that the school leader responded to the community’s need for more early childhood programs. One parent stated, “Last year, we had to take our kids to other schools but now we can bring them here. That wouldn’t have happened unless the principal was really listening to the people saying that we need more early childhood programs available in our community. The school showed that they cared about our families and opinions.” As a result, the strategic collaboration and allocation of fiscal, human, and programmatic resources ensures that the immediate needs of the school community are met during the current school year.

- Using the Teaching and Learning Rubric aligned to the district’s APPR, the school leader and administrative team have created a system to conduct weekly walkthroughs of classrooms and track progress of teacher practices. The school leader provided weekly action plans that included a schedule of the walkthroughs and a copy of the feedback provided to the teachers. In an interview, teachers said that they receive “relevant and timely feedback” with “specific action steps” that are aligned to the Teaching and Learning Rubric. Teachers also noted that this has been a positive change from last year. The school leader mentioned and data was reviewed that indicates the leadership and instructional team analyze walkthrough data via TeachScape on a weekly basis to identify trends, and then they plan aligned professional development for staff. Some teachers do have formal plans for development and accountability per the district’s guidelines. However, it was confirmed in a follow-up conversation with the school leader that there is no system for prioritizing teacher walkthroughs, nor is student academic data used in the observation and feedback process. Though it does not include the use of student academic data, the administrators and staff are being held to participation in the district’s Annual Professional Performance Review process and are accountable for continuous improvement.
- The school leader requires the staff to use systems that are interconnected and is working to develop an evidence-based system to monitor and revise staff practices. She noted the use of academic and behavioral data being used to adjust school-wide practices. For example, she described how attendance data was analyzed to identify twenty families that have chronic attendance issues and then potential causes, supports, and incentives were determined to reach them. In interviews, teachers also mentioned that, “the expectation is that data is brought to and used at every meeting to drive conversations and decision-making.” Members of the Support Team and Vertical Teacher Team noted that they analyze data from Educator’s Handbook to determine what behavioral and academic supports are needed for specific classrooms and students. Thus, there are systems in place to analyze and respond to data; however, the impact is limited as there is no evidence of measurable progress being made.

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.

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| Tenet Rating | Developing |
|---------------------|-------------------|

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

- Van Duyn Elementary School is in the process of implementing several structures to support the implementation of rigorous, CCLS aligned curricula and the inclusion of a plan that addresses goals and the needs of all students and subgroups. In the principal interview, the school leader spoke about how she noticed misalignment between Pearson and district curriculum as it was implemented last year, so in response to this, she led a gap analysis with the consultants and the school's instructional leaders. As a result of laying out the various curricula and rearranging the scopes and sequences of them, the curriculum became more aligned and additional professional development was provided to staff with a focus on supplementing the curriculum. In teacher interviews, the realignment of Pearson and CCLS was noted as a positive shift in the school's instructional program. Moreover, horizontal team meeting time is included in the current schedule, but the school leader mentioned that vertical team meeting did not fit this year. Furthermore, a yearlong schedule of professional development dates and topics was reviewed, and in teacher interviews, it was confirmed that these topics have indeed been covered according to schedule. In separate interviews, both teachers and the school leader mentioned that the school is beginning to analyze data in a more systematic manner in order to adjust instruction and set targets for sub-groups of students. When asked about responding to teacher's needs, the school leader and teachers both talked about additional, voluntary professional development held after school or on Saturdays that supplements the existing schedule. The school leader mentioned and sign-in sheets showed that there has always been at least one grade level representative at these voluntary sessions. Finally, student work observed around the building notes which CCLS it is aligned to. Therefore, the curriculum is still evolving to reflect the CCLS shifts and meet the needs of all students to achieve college and career readiness.
- General and special education teachers across a grade level develop unit and lesson plans collaboratively to meet the demands of CCLS and data-driven instruction; however, lesson plans inconsistently use complex materials to scaffold and sequence the development of such skills. In both the plans provided and those seen during classroom observations, the aligned CCLS is noted; however, there was inconsistent evidence of sequenced and scaffolded skills to meet that end. In addition, lesson plans did not include ongoing checks for understanding, questioning, or formative assessments to gauge student understanding and make adjustments accordingly. Accommodations and modifications were written into a lesson plan for students who receive special education services; however, no modifications were noted for students who have shown, according to data, that they have either mastered the content or are simply struggling but do not have a formal IEP. Furthermore, in a teacher interview, it was noted that there is not yet an ongoing plan to adjust instruction according to student feedback/data; however, there is a plan to create student groupings using data from the first round of Achievement Network assessments when it becomes available. Although common plans are developed, given the lack of scaffolding and differentiation within them, not all students are able to show growth in meeting the demands of CCLS across all grade and subject areas.
- The school leader and teachers address interdisciplinary curricula and develop partnerships in absence of a plan and are beginning to provide opportunities to incorporate the arts, technology and other enrichment opportunities. This year's schedule at Van Duyn does not include interdisciplinary meetings which is different from last year, according to the school leader and teachers; during the teacher focus group, teachers spoke about the need for such time and have requested that one faculty meeting per month be used for interdisciplinary planning time. The school leader stated that time will be added to meetings starting next month to allow for interdisciplinary collaboration. Additionally, the

ELA instructional coach mentioned several examples to show how the Pearson curriculum includes an interdisciplinary approach to reading despite the lack of formal time to plan for it. The school leader also noted that SUNY ESF, the school’s enrichment program, solicited feedback from her in order to tailor the program to the school’s mission and vision. With the current structures in place, there are minimal opportunities for students to engage in cross-curricula activities and, as a result, there has been minimal impact on students’ abilities to be academically successful.

- Teachers are beginning to develop a system to analyze and use data to make curricular decisions and are in the process of developing multiple types of assessments and providing feedback to address student ownership of learning. In teacher and principal interviews, it was noted that staff use summative and standardized data to make overarching decisions about instruction; however, the use of formative and teacher-created assessments in practice was not consistently observed across grade levels and subject areas. The use of rubrics and criteria for mastery were also inconsistently observed throughout the school. When teachers were observed giving feedback to students, it was general in nature and more often tied to behavioral expectations rather than academic performance. Students stated that the feedback they receive from teachers is primarily numerical. Although summative assessments are used, the lack of formative assessments and quality feedback given to students is hindering the impact that strongly aligned curriculum and assessments would have to improve student achievement.

Recommendation:

- Provide professional development and support to teachers on how to increase the frequency and quality of formative assessment practices in order to assess mastery, provide meaningful academic feedback to students and build student ownership of learning. Data acquired from these formative assessments should be used to make short-range adjustments to the curriculum as well.

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

Developing

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

- School and teacher leaders are beginning to engage teachers in conversations about aligning plans to data and providing instructional interventions to students as well as establishing short and/or long-term goals for student sub-groups. Observed lesson plans indicated whole-group instruction for the majority of the classrooms. In a teacher interview, one mentioned, “summative standardized assessment data is being used on the surface level to provide access to most students.” The school leader also stated that grades three through five grouped students and departmentalized instruction, according to baseline data from the beginning of the year, in order to target students at their instructional level. On a continuous basis and with regard to student sub-groups, the dialogue about how to use data both in planning and in the moment is in the beginning stages, as noted by the school’s instructional coach. Furthermore, the math instructional coach was observed leading teachers in data analysis with a focus on grouping students wherein the coach noted that this practice has just recently started. As they currently stand, the school’s instructional practices are having a minimal

impact on student engagement, inquiry and, as a result, academic achievement.

- Lesson plans are appropriately aligned to CCLS; however, focus on the CCLS shifts and instructional practices to promote these are inconsistent, as well as the use of higher-order thinking questions. While the Pearson curriculum that is used does account for high levels of text and content complexity, as noted by the school's instructional coach and the district-level decision to use the curricula, questions were those that could be found directly within the text and/or answered without providing textual evidence. Teachers are beginning to develop lesson plans and use instructional practices aligned to CCLS shifts, yet the impact on achievement is unable to be discerned.
- Teachers use a plan that promotes a common understanding of the classroom environment and explicitly teaches student behavioral expectations, yet only some teachers use strategies that acknowledge diverse groups of students and reflect student values and perspectives. The school leader explained that teachers use resources such as Eighty Morning Meeting Ideas, Morning Meeting and Afternoon Wrap Ups, Teach Like a Champion and GESA to establish classroom culture and expectations. Common practices during morning meetings were observed consistently across the school. It was observed that each classroom has a daily check-in to set the tone for the day, address any issues, and reinforce school values and expectations. In an interview, a member of the Student Support Team spoke to how the common language and daily teaching allowed for all staff members to reinforce the idea of a safe and respectful school and classroom environment. In student interviews, students of all grade levels answered 'yes' to feeling comfortable to ask for help or make a mistake, and in all classrooms, students were observed asking a question and/or stating that they did not understand a concept. Students also noted that they always receive help from teachers when they ask. Moreover, observed classrooms showed students encouraging and celebrating each other's success, in addition to school-wide incentives being provided to reward students meeting the academic and/or behavioral expectations. In the parent interview, all nine stated that their student loves school. One stated, "They have so much pride in their school and they love their teachers. When teachers wear their Van Duyn shirts, that's what my student wants to wear, and they don't want you to pull them out early for any reason." Furthermore, the Student Support Group noted that students who previously had behavioral issues are eager to go to class and do not ask to be removed while the nurse also stated that there has been a decrease in the number of passes being issued to her office. However, most observed classrooms did not reflect developmentally appropriate strategies (hands-on activities, time of direct instruction without a check for understanding or movement break, for example) for academic instruction. Accommodations and modifications were written into a lesson plan for students who receive special education services; however, no modifications were noted for students who have shown, according to data, that they have either mastered the content or are simply struggling but do not have a formal IEP. While parents, students, and teachers all articulated that the classroom is a physically safe environment, structures and strategies to meet the diverse needs of learners is hindering the impact of the aforementioned efforts.
- Teachers are beginning to use plans for adjusting student groupings, use summative (but not formative) assessments to inform instructional decision-making and provide limited data-based feedback to students. In a teacher interview, it was mentioned that, "summative standardized assessment data is being used on the surface level to provide access to most students." Teachers and the school's instructional coach shared that benchmark data is used to design fluid groups, but not for responsive instructional strategies or feedback. The school leader and instructional coach spoke about the plan in place to use upcoming Achievement Network data to inform and adjust instruction.

Students across all grade levels brought data binders to the student interview, but their understanding of the binder was inconsistent. During the interview, students in the upper grades showed a deeper understanding of their math data tracking and were able to speak to the frequency and way in which it was used; however, they were unable to do this for other content areas. Meanwhile, students in lower grades showed data tracking on behavioral expectations rather than academic achievement. Students stated that the majority of feedback they receive is numerical and overall limited. Thus, the current use of assessment data to inform instructional decisions as well as the limited amount of timely and meaningful feedback of those results is not adequately driving data-driven instruction to promote greater student achievement.

Recommendation:

- Provide professional development and support for teachers on how to use a variety of data to inform differentiated instructional practices and student groupings. Ensure teachers can analyze student work, use checks for understanding that measure mastery of specific sub-skills, and take students' current performance level to determine the appropriate intensity and duration of instruction.
- Incorporate more opportunities to discuss these components of data-driven instruction amongst teachers and staff as well as students and parents to ensure diverse student needs are being met during instructional planning.

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

Effective

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

- The school leader has established a system that allows all students to be known by an adult, ensures that staff use research-based practices for referral and support and data to identify areas of need as well as leverage its resources to promote student social and emotional behavioral development. In various conversations, several staff members made the comment of, “we all own all the students here.” In a parent interview it was noted that, “There’s teamwork here. Teachers will stop you at the grocery store to talk about your student,” and, “When you leave your child at the school, you can see how more than one staff member talks to them as they walk to their classroom – they know them.” According to both parents and students, the PBIS system is implemented consistently; this was observed in classrooms and transitions. One parent stated, “I know what a student needs to do to earn a CHAMPS ticket... so if my granddaughter hasn’t earned the incentive, I know what to talk with her about and focus in on for next time.” In interviews, the Student Support Team members also mentioned that the team is structured so that there are defined roles and responsibilities and they have built working relationships amongst themselves in order to effectively provide appropriate services to students. In addition, interviewed staff spoke about the positive impact of a new early identification and At-Risk referral process, and they feel that services are being provided in a timely manner. Teachers, both in a teacher interview and the Student Support Team interview, noted that the Behavior Intervention Center room is effectively used – students are assisted, if needed, in processing their challenges and then return to class ready for instruction. Moreover, it was reported that data (current interventions and progress to date) is being used by the Student Support Team but not by the

entire staff. Therefore, the implemented systems effectively address barriers to the social and emotional developmental health needs of students and their academic success.

- There is a program that incorporates research-based practices that facilitates the teaching of social and emotional developmental health as well as professional development, as noted on the year's PD schedule, to support teachers' use of skills and practices as well as a plan to monitor and adjust to build adult capacity to promote a safe and healthy school environment. The school leader explained that teachers use resources such as Eighty Morning Meeting Ideas, Morning Meeting and Afternoon Wrap Ups, Teach Like a Champion and GESA to establish classroom culture and expectations. Common practices during morning meetings were observed consistently across the school. It was observed that each classroom has a daily check-in to set the tone for the day, address any issues, and reinforce school values and expectations. It was also observed that each classroom has a greeter – a student that welcomes a guest and orients them to the classroom. When asked about this, the school leader explained that this role was created by a teacher in response to a student that was not engaging socially with anyone. Assigned as the classroom greeter, this student learned to interact appropriately, share the class's academic focus, and accept peer feedback in regard to their role. The student embraced these opportunities and all faculty saw a positive shift in her social interactions. This success story led to the school-wide practice of a classroom greeter. The Student Support Team spoke to the effective and timely service provided by external partners, which has allowed them to spend more time supporting teachers with academic and behavioral accommodations and modifications. All observations noted that positive and developmentally appropriate language is used, and that more time is spent acknowledging positive behavior rather than corrective. During a parent interview it was mentioned that the school leader changed the mascot of the school to be more developmentally appropriate and aligned with the school's mission. "When I asked her about this she asked me to think about the qualities of a dragon (the former mascot). We talked about how everything I could think of instills fear and a sense of dominance. She then asked me to think about a cardinal and the school's new values... it's something kids can relate to and work towards becoming. I thought that was really smart of her to make that change. It shows that she knows kids." While the school will benefit from continuous monitoring of the existing structures in order to adjust practices and maximize impact, students are currently able to learn in a safe healthy learning community.
- The school community has and uses a plan that incorporates processes to address stakeholders' roles in contributing to student supports, and they work together to have an active role for parents and teachers to monitor and respond to student social and developmental health needs. Reviewed agendas, minutes, and conversations about the Principal's Advisory Group all indicate that students have a voice and are able to share their perspective on the school. As stated previously, parents also articulated an understanding of how PBIS is implemented. Moreover, anyone (parent, TA, teacher, etc.) can fill out an At-Risk referral for a student and it is continually monitored. The school leader stated, "reaching out to the family is the first step we take," and students' parents corroborated this statement. "We're partners. You're never treated like you're a bother, even if you don't fully understand something initially. Teachers work with you to help you get it and best support your student. They treat you in a way that shows they know you want the best for your student." In a teacher interview, it was stated that the school's BIC is working more effectively in previous years. Staff stated that in the BIC there is a conversation with the student about what led to the removal from class and strategies are provided to the student on how to re-enter the classroom environment. The school leader, teachers, and parents all spoke positively about the outside agencies and the on-site

clinic that provide services to students. While the school will benefit from progress monitoring their existing strategies and systems, all school constituents are able to articulate how the school community is a safe learning environment that meets student social and emotional developmental health needs.

- The school leader and support staff are developing a plan for teachers to begin to understand how to use data to address student needs as well as ways to best use data that is collected. “Even if we can’t figure out a kid, we don’t give up,” is the sentiment expressed by the Student Support Team. They stated that 100 percent of their conversations and actions are in response to data, both reactive and proactive. The team has also found that as teachers are entering more data into the Educator’s Handbook, the interventions and support are more targeted resulting in fewer referrals. While the school leader and Student Support Team are currently using established systems and structures to address students academic and social emotional developmental health needs, the use of data and structured plan to deliver supports and services to students by the school community have yet to increase the opportunities for students to become academically and socially successful.

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

Effective

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

- The school leader makes it a priority for all students and their families to be aware of the expectations pertaining to graduating from the school and implements a plan to foster conversations about these expectations while staff members reflect on their efforts to build strong family-school relationships. The school leader noted that the vision, goals and expectations are communicated and reinforced using multiple methods: students reciting the school pledge each morning, key messages broken down and reinforced through the morning announcements and classroom meetings, the school newsletter, and robo-calls that go out to parents. Reinforcements of the school’s goals and values were observed in the morning announcements and classroom meetings; daily attendance data was seen posted throughout the school, both in the main office hallway and outside each individual classroom. The Monday Matrix is used to communicate with parents on a weekly basis, a document that captures their student’s academic (85 percent on a math test, for example) and behavioral (if the student went to the Behavior Intervention Center room) performance for the week. Parents sign these reports, with the opportunity to make comments and ask questions. Filled in and signed Monday Matrices, on various grade levels, were provided by the school leader. During a classroom observation it was noted that teachers and parents use the student planner to also communicate. For example, a teacher was looking at planners and responding to a few parent comments in writing. In interviews, parents stated the school’s goals to be “improving academic achievement by 20 percent on state standardized tests; molding strong citizens that will be able to interact and communicate with others; and life readiness – not just writing or math, but being ready for college, careers and the community.” Parents also noted that these goals are reinforced through weekly newsletters and robo-calls from the school leader, and that every conversation or event starts with a focus on student achievement. The school leader also stated a focus on working with parents to understand students’ academic achievement data such as the meaning of reading Lexile scores and an upcoming meeting on Achievement Network benchmark

assessment scores. Parents also articulated an understanding of how PBIS is implemented. One parent stated, "I know what a student needs to do to earn a CHAMPS ticket... so if my granddaughter hasn't earned the incentive, I know what to talk with her about and focus in on for next time." Parents voiced a shared belief that the entire staff wants their child to succeed and is intentional about building partnerships with families. Teachers and parents, in separate interviews, both mentioned that every conversation starts with an academic focus. "We know more about what they (our students) need than they do, and it can be overwhelming for some of them. But I know that my child is reading at a J and the teacher has told me that I can do this, this and this at home to help them move to an M by the end of the year," a parent noted as an example of teachers equipping families with the knowledge and tools to support their student. Another parent shared how she was nervous that her daughter was behind in Kindergarten, "I didn't like to read as a kid so I was being hard on my daughter about the importance of reading. Then I went to a parent night and learned that she's on track for her age and the teacher gave me suggestions on what to do and not do to encourage her to read at home. I wouldn't have gotten that if I didn't feel comfortable talking to the teacher." In addition, the school leader shared that the practice of an academic focus was not the initial approach, "some teachers didn't know how to have a parent conference and they were frustrated that no progress was being made. So, I modeled what an effective parent conference looks like, we talked about the differences in strategies, and then we practiced with each other. After that, I have observed parent conferences to give teachers feedback." As a result of regular and effective communication with families, the relationship between school and families contributes to students' needs being met.

- The school staff uses multiple means to communicate with families about school and student issues, student progress and needs while monitoring the effectiveness of such strategies. As previously noted, the Monday Matrix is used to communicate with parents on a weekly basis, and during a classroom observation it was noted that teachers and parents use the student planner to also communicate. In addition, the school leader stated that information is also shared with parents through the school newsletter, robo-calls, and the parent bulletin board. In a parent interview, a parent shared, "teachers are available and they don't act like you're bothering them. I know with this teacher we can communicate in the planner, and with this other teacher we will text if one of us has a question or concern. I'm never unaware of what's going on." Furthermore, the school leader clarified that the current student population does not include any English Language Learners and, as a result, they do not need to translate any communication. She also stated that all families are invited to Family Fun & Learning Nights, which includes an academic activity that they can make and take home. Sign in sheets indicate that attendance at Family Fun & Learning Night has increased each time. Thus, the school engages in effective and reciprocal communication with families, which positively supports the academic achievement and social emotional growth of students.
- During observations, the dates of community engagement events were seen scheduled, published, and posted on the parent bulletin board. The school holds Parent University, a series of workshops and book studies that focus on various academic and social emotional needs of students. In an interview, parents cited the Parent University as a means of supporting their student. Teachers also noted that attendance at Parent University is steadily increasing. Moreover, all families are invited to Family Fun & Learning Nights, which includes an academic activity that they can make and take home to reinforce learning, and provided sign in sheets indicate that attendance at these events has increased each time. In interviews, parents and teachers both spoke to parents understanding Lexile scores and what skills their student is working on to progress to the next level. A parent also shared, "teachers provide you

with the resources and strategies to work with your student at home and in a way that empowers me, not making me feel inadequate as a parent. I came in for a meeting with one teacher and we talked about where my student was struggling. I went to meet with another teacher and before I left the school the first teacher came to find me. In that time, she had put together books and worksheets and showed me what to do at home.” Moreover, the Student Support Team noted that parents of students with specific academic or social emotional needs are communicated with regularly to provide progress updates and assess any change in the student’s needs. The school leader stated that targeted professional development is provided to staff on how to effectively engage and partner with families. She shared that the practice of an academic focus was not the initial approach, “some teachers didn’t know how to have a parent conference and they were frustrated that no progress was being made. So, I modeled what an effective parent conference looks like, we talked about the differences in strategies, and then we practiced with each other. After that, I have observed parent conferences to give teachers feedback.” As stated previously, the school leader also shared that the practice of an academic focus in conversations was not the initial approach so she provided support on how to better structure parent conferences. With the current structures in place, students are benefitting from a robust home-school connection, and parents are effectively being reached to support students’ academic, social and emotional health.

- The school community inconsistently shares data regarding student learning needs and successes that families can access and understand, but the need is recognized to better share and integrate current data systems. The Monday Matrix is used to communicate with all parents on a weekly basis on both students’ academic and behavioral performance. The school leader provided copies of the Monday Matrix for review; teachers, students and parents all spoke of this system as a way of regular communication between the school and families. Some Monday Matrices were consistently not signed by the parent. Teachers provided copies of parent communication logs, by individual students, and it was observed that some logs were blank. Moreover, the school leader and instructional coach shared action steps from a plan, developed with the school’s Achievement Network coach, to share data from upcoming standardized assessments (running records and benchmark assessments) with all students and families in a way that supports learning and growth. In an interview, the Student Support Team noted using mostly behavioral data to identify student needs and supports, but that data is currently not being used to identify family needs and provide targeted support. As a result, the school community empowers some, but not all, families to understand and appropriately support their student’s learning needs and academic achievement.

Remarks on How to Prioritize the Recommendations:

Though there is no single way to approach school improvement, in order to achieve optimal results efficiently, here is how the Outside Educational Experts would have thought about prioritizing the provided recommendations (note: you will have to put some thought into which of these recommendations can be implemented concurrently, and which may only be able to be addressed partially for the time being given your available time and capacity):

- Provide professional development and support to teachers on how to increase the frequency and quality of formative assessment practices in order to assess mastery, provide meaningful academic feedback to students and build student ownership of learning. Teachers need to develop effective mechanisms to

regularly collect data and ensure that it provides concrete evidence of whether or not students are able to complete the skill aligned with the stated objective. Frequent opportunities for students to practice and demonstrate their learning are necessary in each class period, and will provide teachers with a clear picture of where students are on the continuum of learning. Formative assessments should be written throughout and/or included with the daily lesson plans so that it is evident that these areas have been intentionally thought through and planned for in every class period. Teachers, perhaps by grade level, should establish processes and systems for communicating this data with students on a regular basis and in a way that will invest them in their own learning.

- Once teachers have concrete student achievement data, provide professional development and support on how to use the data to make short-range adjustments to the curriculum, and inform differentiated instructional practices and student groupings. Modifications to the content should be made for students who have demonstrated mastery of certain skills in order to further their learning, as well as for students who are struggling but have no formal modification or accommodation plan. Using data to adjust instructional practices and content will ensure that students have multiple access points to the learning and are able to take the appropriate steps to make progress.
- Finally, incorporate additional opportunities to discuss components of data-driven instruction amongst teachers and staff, as well as students and parents. These conversations will ensure diverse student needs are being met during instructional planning and that all stakeholders are aware of the role they may play in supporting student achievement.