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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE) CONCEPTUAL FRAME 4 REVIEW

2018-19 School Year

BEDS Code	660900010000
School Name	Grimes School
School Address	58 S.10th Avenue, Mount Vernon, NY 10550
District Name	Mount Vernon School District
School Leader	Erik Van Gunten
Dates of Review	January 16, 2019
School Accountability Status	☐Priority School ☐Focus School
Type of Review	☒ Conceptual Frame 4 Review (A district-led review of SOPs 2.3, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.5)

Review Team	**Name**	**Affiliation/Title**
School Leader	Erik Van Gunten	Principal
District Representative	Dr. Waveline Bennett-Conroy	Assistant Superintendent
Additional Team Members	Dr. K. Dunkley	Lead Reviewer
	Roxie Johnson	Math Specialist
	Michael Selkis	Special Education Specialist
	Lana Flemming-Thomas	English Language Arts Specialist

School Information Sheet for Grimes School

School Configuration *(2017-18 data)*					
Grade Configuration	K-7	**Total Enrollment**	443	**SIG Recipient**	Yes
Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes *(2017-18)*					
# Transitional Bilingual	0	**# Dual Language**	0	**# Self-Contained English as a Second Language**	0
Types and Number of Special Education Classes *(2015-16)*					
# Special Classes	5	**# SETSS**	2	**# Integrated Collaborative Teaching**	0
Types and Number of Special Classes *(2015-16)*					
# Visual Arts	1	**# Music**	1	**# Drama**	0
# Foreign Language	1	**# Dance**	0	**# CTE**	0
School Composition *(most recent data)*					
% Title I Population		100	**% Attendance Rate**		93.9
% Free Lunch		100	**% Reduced Lunch**		0
% Limited English Proficient		6.9	**% Students with Disabilities**		22
Racial/Ethnic Origin *(most recent data)*					
% American Indian or Alaska Native		0	**% Black or African American**		84.8
% Hispanic or Latino		19.9	**% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander**		2.2
% White		12.9	**% Multi-Racial**		0
Personnel *(most recent data)*					
Years Principal Assigned to School		2.5	**# of Assistant Principals**		1
# of Deans		0	**# of Counselors/Social Workers**		2
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate		0	**% Teaching Out of Certification**		0
% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Years of Experience		15	**Average Teacher Absences**		3.5
Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools *(2017-18 or most recent data available)*					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4		33.6	**Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4**		26.3
Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (4th Grade)		67.1	**Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (8th Grade)**		
Student Performance for High Schools *(2017-18or most recent data available)*					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4			**Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4**		
Credit Accumulation High Schools Only *(2017-18 or most recent data available)*					
% 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 *(2017-18 or most recent data available)*					
Reward			**Recognition**		
In Good Standing		X	**Local Assistance Plan**		
Focus District			**Focus School Identified by a Focus District**		
Priority School					

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA *(2014-15 or most recent data available)*			
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 *(2014-15 or most recent data available)*			
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 *(2014-15 or most recent data available)*			
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.):

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

1. Close-reading and responding to text.
2. Math problem-solving
3. Student goal-setting
4. PBIS Tier II supports
5. Data-Driven Instruction

Information about the review

Dr. Karren Dunkley, led the review in collaboration with Dr. Waveline Bennett-Conroy, Assistant Superintendent.

- The review team visited a total of # classrooms during the review.
- Reviewers conducted # interviews with the principal and students.
- Reviewers conducted # focus groups with the teachers.
- Reviewers examined documents provided by the school, including lesson plans, instructional artifacts such as the leadership directory, student worksheets, rubrics, and snapshots of schoolwide data, teacher feedback, and student work.

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	Stage 4	Stage 3	Stage 2	Stage 1
2.3	Leaders make strategic decisions to organize programmatic, human, and fiscal capital resources.			X	

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	Stage 4	Stage 3	Stage 2	Stage 1
3.2	The school leader ensures and supports the quality implementation of a systematic plan of rigorous and coherent curricula appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) that is monitored and adapted to meet the needs of students.			X	
3.3	Teachers develop and ensure that unit and lesson plans used include data-driven instruction (DDI) protocols that are appropriately aligned to the CCLS and NYS content standards and address student achievement needs.				X

3.5	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	
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	Stage 4	Stage 3	Stage 2	Stage 1
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	
4.5	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

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**	**2**

2.3 **The school is in Stage 2 for this Statement of Practice:** Leaders make strategic decisions to organize programmatic, human, and fiscal capital resources.

Debriefing Statement

The school leader stated that he put substantial time into scheduling common planning periods with grade teams and in ensuring that each grade team has a leader who facilitates meetings. The school leader emphasized that during the lunch periods, specialists provide targeted instructional support. The school leader discussed the related challenges of the school transitioning to a middle grades configuration. Specifically, he noted that sixth and seventh grade operated on a different bell schedule and as such he had to create a master schedule that addressed the academic needs of the lower grades as well as the middle school grades. The school leader articulated his commitment to the hiring process noted that he took the process "seriously casting the net far and wide [even] sending openings out to Long Island." The principal also shared that he pushed for and asked for new personnel when needed from the district.

Additionally, the school leader emphasized that the school's growing population of English Language Learners (ELLs) necessitated the hiring of a new English as a New Language (ENL) teacher. He highlighted the high caseload of the reading specialist who was maxed out in terms of the number of students receiving tiered reading intervention services. The school leader also acknowledged that through the School Improvement Grant (SIG) the school obtained the services of a Math and Literacy Coach. As aforementioned, the Literacy Coach provides tiered reading intervention services, and the Math Coach focuses on building students' math skills such as problem-solving in small groups.

The school leader reported that the learning community extends learning time for students by: 1) identifying students in need of tiered instruction, 2) providing tutoring during recess, and 3) implementing an Academic Power Hour(APH) program with ninety-eight students in attendance. The great majority of students who attend APH are test-taking students enrolled in grades three to seven.

He also discussed how the Hoops and Homework afterschool program provided tiered instructional support in Math. The school leader noted several enrichment programs that students benefit from during the extended day. For example, he noted that the track team provided an opportunity for students to participate in Sports and commended the volunteer efforts of the coach who donated his time to the elementary track program. Students also have options to participate in student government and other activities that build school spirit.

The school leader mentioned that the master schedule ensured common planning daily, and vertical and grade-level professional learning community (PLC) meetings to foster teacher collaboration.

The school leader discussed the implementation of specific structures to increase student achievement as measured by the New York State (NYS) assessments. For example, the principal described how the learning community implemented structures such as: 1) extending PLC time to fifty minutes to provide teachers with sufficient time to reflect on the best instructional practices and protocols, 2) strengthening the use of schoolwide instructional protocols such as accountable talk to build continuity of learning as students progress to the next grade, and, 3) a Character Education program to support a positive learning environment where students in second grade receive forty minutes of instruction.

Notably, the principal and assistant principals facilitate the PLC exploring best instructional practices and protocols. The master schedule afforded each PLC group to meet with fidelity on a six-day cycle. During PLC time, teachers engaged in a collegial inquiry on what practices would be most impactful for the particular age group of students they taught. Importantly, PLC meetings connected to curriculum meetings and teachers analyzed exams using an agreed upon data analysis protocol.

The principal also emphasized that the learning community uses data to target teaching practices and student interventions. The school leader stated that for the 2018-2019 school year, the instructional foci of the PLC include: 1) differentiation in every lesson throughout the day, 2) checking for understanding, 3) tiering learning activities, 4) guided reading support for tier two students, and 4) re-imagining the Response to Intervention (RTI) period as What I Need (WIN) period to give students tiered supports. The principal highlighted that reviewers should observe the use of: 1) student questioning, 2) checking for understanding/formative assessments, and 3) teachers using students' level of understanding in a very purposeful manner to sequence learning tasks.

Commendations

- Students expressed their views articulately and were outspoken and well-spoken
- The physical environment was clean with bright lighting and beautiful walls and floors
- The majority of observed interactions between adults and students were positive
- In self-contained classrooms, teachers demonstrated proficiency in checking for understanding
- Mathematical charts were visible in the majority of classrooms

Recommendations

- Leverage the PLC structure to increase and strengthen the collaboration between the resource teacher and general education teacher.

The results of these programs demonstrate that sufficient evidence exists to show that the school leader utilizes systems, including a professional learning community structure and expanded learning time, to organize operations and appropriate resources to bolster student achievement.

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**	**2**

3.2 **The school is in Stage 2 for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader ensures and supports the quality implementation of a systematic plan of rigorous and coherent curricula. All curricula are appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), which teachers monitor and adapt to meet the needs of students.

Debriefing Statement

During the interviews, the school leader and staff discussed how the school develops and offers a rigorous Common Core-aligned curriculum that includes a plan to address the needs of all students. During the review, the school leader described how the school met the needs of students through: 1) the inquiry process, 2) a focus on students designated in RTI tiers two and three during the WIN periods, 3) a systemic approach to data-driven instruction that includes a data period in each six week cycle during which classroom teachers review student data and research-based interventions in order to meet the various academic needs of all learners. Notably, the school's self-assessment report stated that teachers could participate in a data consultation period to discuss student performance data and review the next steps regarding instructional planning.

The school leader shared how the PLC created targeted learning goals that were supported by the consultant coaches. Concretely, coaches created professional goals aligned with the school goals and weekly PLC meetings examine data trends that teachers should address through specific interventions and strategies focused on student engagement and checking for understanding. The learning community also uses PLC time to analyze data, share best practices, and conduct inter-class visitations. Notably, several teachers have volunteered to have lessons videotaped.

Additionally, the principal instituted a distributive leadership structure comprised of various committees that provided an opportunity for teachers to self-select their participation based on interests or area of expertise. The school leader provided a leadership directory artifact, which delineated the list of committees that teacher served on and the Vertical Leadership Team staff assignments by teacher and grade.

The school leader emphasized that based on student data, teachers receive ongoing professional development in guided reading for grades two and three, including support on how to best employ research-based reading strategies. During the review, the teachers stated that they ensured students' access to a rigorous curriculum through the use of technology, i.e., both hardware and software to aid students' mastery of the standards. Specifically, teachers mentioned that they utilized SMART boards and laptops in a SMART way. One teacher described how she used class dojo to promote student ownership of learning. Teachers also noted that they

supplement written instructional materials with the content from various websites. For example, one Math teacher stated that they used the Envisions website Math videos for every lesson. Two teachers discussed concrete instructional strategies and activities that they used to ensure that they exposed students to a rigorous CCLS-aligned curriculum. For example, one teacher mentioned the use of plickers for students to respond to questions on the board where they receive instant feedback.

During the review, teachers cited targeted practices that they utilize to ensure students with individual learning plans (IEPs) have access to a rigorous curriculum. Several examples of these practices include: 1) providing pullout services based on grid of services and accommodations, 2) giving each teacher a copy of the IEP for students they teach (by grade and class), 3) integrating student-driven instruction (SDI) in daily instruction through checklists that are outlined and discussed on the teacher grid. The teachers also emphasized that teaching assistants provide valuable support in the implementation of the SDI checklist. Teachers also highlighted the role of the consultant teachers in pushing-in to help build their capacity in using visual cues, and multi-modalities' teaching techniques.

In addition, teachers articulated how they differentiated resources for ELLs and Multilingual Learners (MLLs) to expose them to a curriculum that leads to college and career readiness. For example, teachers expressed that they reduced the anxiety around reading by modifying the texts that ELLs/MLLs used during the lesson and by creating innovative learning experiences. For example, one teacher cited how students positively responded to reading the various text in English when they read to pets instead of people.

Teachers expressed that the ELL push-in model steers away from lessons in isolation and offered a promising practice since students no longer had to miss classroom instruction. One teacher stated that the push-in support model for MLLs "allowed them to stay with their class as the support was provided in the classroom." Teachers also shared that they use PLC time to discuss "strategies and skills for each lesson and to find resources on the students' level so that that they can master the same skill and strategy as other students."

Teachers provided copies of lesson plans that did not reflect a standard level of content and scope of pedagogical approaches. For instance, one reviewer noted that the lesson plans produced were scantily developed. The lack of uniformity regarding the breath and depth of lesson plans resulted in poorly planned and executed lessons. The delivery of lessons did not exhibit carefully sequenced and differentiated instructional activities. As a result, the dearth of evidence regarding proficient lesson planning makes it challenging to conclude that all students receive access to rigorous curricula leading students to a common expectation of college and career readiness.

Areas for Improvement

Although the instructional staff described how they implement specific structures and practices to offer rigorous and coherent curricula to all students, the cohesiveness of the academic program provided to all students requires precise attention. Specifically, teachers need coaching and support in executing structured interventions at learning stations during the RTI block also known as WIN (What I Need).

During one RTI block, the observers noted a palpable level of disorganization. Explicitly, the teacher had students assigned to stations, but it took several minutes to get the students on task in the teacher-led small group. Furthermore, the students who had independent tasks seemed unsure what to do. When one observer inquired about the learning expectations for the period, two students stated that they were new to the school and not quite sure what to do. One student shared that he forgot his Math goal but shared that he had a paper with it that he retrieved from his binder. The paper showed that his Math goal was to improve in Operations. Another student responded that his goal was to become a better mathematician but when asked to share his goal sheet answered that he "was absent on the day we did that."

During the classroom observations, the reviewers reported that generally, the lesson flow appeared fragmented with minimal use of teachers regularly checking for understanding to monitor the implementation of the curricula. In particular, one reviewer noted that in most ELA classes it was difficult to identify if teachers utilized the curriculum maps to provide all students with access to the core standards.

Significantly, based on the majority of the 37 lessons observed, reviewers concluded that: 1) lessons were primarily delivered using whole class instruction, 2) the use of worksheets was commonplace, and 3) teachers did most of the talking and thinking during the lessons. In many cases when students were asked to articulate what they were learning and why, students did not use academic language to express their thinking. For instance, when one reviewer asked several students to explain key vocabulary used in their Math class, (i.e., quotient, decimal, and dividend) students were able to show the reviewer examples of each term but unable to explain the concept and the relationship of these terms to each other.

Notably, the pre-review self-assessment recognized the need for the learning community to: 1) focus on lesson and unit planning, and 2) use formative and summative assessment in the professional learning cycles.

Next Steps if Developing or Ineffective

Align lesson planning, and walkthroughs to focus on Danielson's Domain 1: Planning and Preparation

- Teachers should construct clear instructional objectives (accessible to students, teachers, and observers) linked to the content (district curriculum maps) and a relevant mathematical, literacy or learning task.

➢ Danielson Correlation: 1a; 1c; 1e; 2b; 3a; 4

- Immediately begin to maximize PLC time by having teachers collaboratively plan lessons with each other using targeted technical assistance from staff members who have expertise in content as well as the ability to integrate the district's curriculum maps and instructional resources.

➢ Develop model lessons and conduct focused lesson studies during inter-class visitations and school leadership walkthroughs.

- In ELA and Math classes ensure that teachers incorporate data-based groups and use varied level resources/text to support students on different levels. Consider outfitting every classroom with a leveled library that contains narrative and informational text across all grade levels.

- Academic vocabulary development should include curriculum-driven opportunities to determine the meaning of general and domain-specific words and symbols.

➢ Danielson Correlation: 1a; 1b; 1c; 1e; 2b; 4e

- Provide students with an authentic opportunity to use the vocabulary words/phrases in context.

- Targeted Lesson Flow Focus: Develop a 15-30-60 day companion action plan to focus on lesson flow and content during ELA and Math. The goal is to implement a school-wide lesson flow and corollary instructional strategies for ELA and Math.
- Identify the protocols (lesson elements) that must be included in each lesson flow and implement across the PLC-(across grades and vertically).

- Determine the structure and flow of all of the RTI blocks.

3.3 **The school is in Stage 1 for this Statement of Practice:** Teachers develop and ensure that unit and lesson plans they use include data-driven instruction (DDI) protocols that are appropriately aligned to the CCLS and NYS content standards and address student achievement needs.

Debriefing Statement

No clear evidence exists to demonstrate that teachers attempt to develop collaborative unit and lesson plans, which include -- and are monitored -- using data-driven protocols. Additionally, the delivery of observed lessons demonstrates that lessons do not fully incorporate data-driven instructional protocols that teachers monitor to address student achievement needs. Reviewers visited a total of 37 classrooms. The school leader shared that the learning community activated a data-driven instruction initiative that facilitated teachers' participation in a data prep period in six-week cycles. During the data prep period, teachers work on their data binders. Importantly, the data consultant and school administrators meet with teachers to provide them with data from the iReady, Dibels, and NYS assessments, and the data tracker that the school leadership maintains for Math and ELA. The school leader reported that teachers use the various data sets to assess students' performance and to align instruction and provide targeted support during RTI.

During the interviews, the staff stated that they use a multi-pronged approach to implement data-driven protocols. Specifically, the teaching team discussed: 1) the use of the iReady diagnostic online reading comprehension data in September to inform small group instruction, 2) the implementation of formative, interim and summative data, (i.e., performance on the mock ELA diagnostic in the middle of the year, the use of exit tickets, information garnered from PLICKERS, and other teacher made assessments), and 3) designing lessons for students in small groups and RTI –WIN time based on end of lesson assessments and iReady data.

Both the school leader and teachers described how the learning community reviews student data during PLC

time to determine the most effective instructional techniques. The school leader also noted that he ordered a scantron machine to facilitate teachers being able to engage in item analysis for test and end of unit assessments.

Areas for Improvement

Although teachers cite school-wide data-driven instructional (DDI) protocol, aligned to the NYS assessment, the review team concurred that the learning community unevenly implements DDI protocols. The review team described the gaps demonstrated by students regarding their understanding of specific individual learning goals and academic progress indicators.

The review team reported that limited evidence existed to support the learning community's use of rubrics in a systematic matter. During the student interviews, several students appeared familiar with the writing rubric attached to each piece of writing. The students were familiar with the rubric used to assess their completed writing pieces, but the students weren't sure or had not processed or written down goals based on their teacher's feedback. Several students were able to describe the RACES rubrics. In a few cases, students were able to articulate what they had learned in the completion of the assignment and unit. On the other hand, many students seemed unsure of how their teachers utilize rubrics to support teaching and learning.

In general, methods of using DDI protocols to drive teaching and learning -- as well as the use of rubrics -- appeared in an inconsistent pattern across the learning community. In three classrooms the data binders did not contain any updated information since October 2018. One teacher mentioned "the decision to print out data sheets as a stop gap measure until provided with the up to date data sheets. This level of inconsistency regarding DDI-coupled with the lack of intentionally sequenced and scaffolded lessons make it challenging to lead students towards a common expectation of college and career readiness.

Recommendations

• Implement "Student Data Conversation Week" each month. Use the conversations to inform students of their learning goals and the progress they make towards goal attainment. During this week, and during other designated class times, teachers should use RTI time to discuss student learning goals. Student conversations should include clear next steps so that students know what they need to focus on to improve learning outcomes.

- Align the student data conversations' week with the six week data cycle period for teachers.

  Introduce the use of rubrics more evenly across the PLC and have students interact with rubrics at the beginning of the unit to set expectations for work products. Use the rubric as a self-assessment tool for students during conferencing and as an end of unity activity for students to track and own their learning. Concretely, teachers should provide detailed assignment rubrics, standard NYS rubrics and provide feedback aligned to these rubrics so that students have a clearer understanding of shared

expectations.

- The middle school teachers should provide students with an outline of the learning unit i.e., "unit plan summary" for each content area with the objectives for topics. These unit plan summary outlines will provide clarity for students and families regarding the concepts and skills that students should master and serve as a tool for self-monitoring and self-assessment.

- The unit plan summary outline should include: 1) a student's reading level,2) the checklist for completion of lesson activities and, 3) a section for student reflection.

3.5 **The school is in Stage 2 for this Statement of Practice:** Teachers implement a comprehensive system for using formative and summative assessments for strategic short- and long-range curriculum planning that involves student reflection, tracking of, and ownership of learning.

Debriefing Statement

The school utilizes data from multiple sources to identify trends and to inform small group instruction to "really target lessons to meet the needs of all students." The school leader and teachers described how they: 1) utilized the Dibels benchmark to determine interventions for students in the lower grades, 2) implemented close reading strategies to foster students' abilities to respond to text, 3) convened in small groups by grade level to align Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) strategies, 4) incorporated sample Math-NYS assessment questions aligned with the current topic under study, and 5) determined the most high leverage strategies for use during the RTI-WIN period.

Both the school leader and teachers discussed how the school uses the iReady benchmark data as a baseline in September and throughout the year to provide appropriate interventions for students. The school leader also shared that teachers in second and third grades have been trained in guided reading to provide targeted instruction to students.

The school leader and teachers described how the learning community uses different types of formative and summative assessments to inform short- and long-range curriculum planning. Examples of these assessments include: 1) beginning of year and middle of year data to roster students for academic power hour and RTI, 2) the use of exit tickets to inform student groupings for the next day's lesson, 3) accuracy of responses to learning tasks during class time, 4) designing lesson plans for teaching during RTI and/or re-teaching during regular class to address learning gaps or deficiencies. Both the teachers and school leaders mentioned the use of data from summative assessments such as: 1) iReady, 2) District benchmarks that feed into the data tracker, and 3) Teacher-made assessments. Teachers stated that they differentiated classwork by modifying instructional resources and learning activities based on the data that summative and formative assessments provide.

Areas for Improvement

During the debrief, the reviewers noted that minimal evidence of formative assessments (checking for understanding) was observable in the majority of classrooms. Several reviewers expressed that checking for understanding that they observed were primarily consisted of thumbs up and thumbs down. Also, one reviewer reported that in eight of the ten classes visited that only two classrooms demonstrated visible evidence of teachers, 1) scaffolding learning activities, 2) using complex materials to engage students, and, 3) challenging students' thinking through higher order thinking tasks and discussion. Importantly, reviewers consistently pointed out that they were unable to review uniform lessons plans to ascertain how teachers planned for formative assessments because lesson plans varied in content, scope, and depth. Reviewers noted that teachers did ask questions during the lesson, but in many cases did not give students enough wait time.

Furthermore, the majority of instructional tasks tended not to foster critical thinking skills. For example, in one ELA class, the teacher routinely asked level one questions: Does the maid want to kill her? Does the maid have a reason to kill her? The teacher could have prompted students to extend their thinking by explaining whether or not the maid was justified in her cause to have the character killed. Lesson observations – coupled with the lack of lesson plans -- revealed little evidence of teachers using multiple types of formative assessments or in-depth checks for understanding.

Although students referenced taking the iReady test, a significant number of students stated that they were unsure of their reading levels. One student noted that his teacher just shared his learning goal with him while he was on the way to the library to participate in the student interview. Another student shared that she took the IReady test but did not do well because she rushed through it and speculated that she thought she scored on a 6th Grade level. Many of the students who participated in the interview were unsure of their reading levels.

Additionally, based on the examination of student learning artifacts coupled with the information garnered in the student interviews, the review team concluded that direct and consistent feedback from teachers was uneven. One reviewer noted that when she inquired about how students improve assignments by responding to feedback –a student shared a teacher response in the form of a rubric. In this sample, the teacher circled the corresponding grade for that particular part of the work on the rubric and included a one-sentence commentary at the bottom of the sheet for the student to read. Based on the conversations with students it was difficult to detect how teachers regularly utilize data to inform learning goals and how students accessed these goals during conferencing or RTI periods. Importantly, the review team acknowledged that pockets of teachers using data and providing feedback do exist. However, when delving deeper into the systems that addressed the needs of all students, an irregular system of informing students about their learning goals became apparent.

The absence of various types of formative assessments coupled with the uneven practice of providing regular feedback to students made it challenging to accurately assess daily teaching and learning outcomes to ensure that students are adequately prepared to meet 21st-century college and career readiness standards.

Recommendations

- Conduct a formative assessment, i.e., checks for understanding lesson study across all grades and content areas. Embed the lesson study as a component of the structured lesson protocols and flow in ELA, Math and other content areas.

- The learning community should determine select techniques to check for understanding that they will implement with fidelity to help students to process learning. Refer to the "Tools for Formative Assessment," compiled by K. Lambert as a guide to frame the PLC's thinking and action plan. Actively review these techniques during PLC time.

- Organize formative assessment lab classrooms and pair teachers across the grade levels and vertically to strengthen the use of formative assessments across the PLC.

- Align the formative assessment processes with clear protocols for providing regular and explicit feedback to students across all grade levels and subjects.

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**	**2**

4.2 **The school is in Stage 2 for this Statement of Practice:** School and teacher leaders ensure that instructional practices and strategies are organized around annual, unit, and daily lesson plans that address all student goals and needs.

Debriefing Statement

The school leader and staff described how the PLC implements student-centered instructional practices and strategies to organize annual, unit, and daily lesson plans that address student goals and needs. Specifically, teachers discussed the specific use of strategies such as: 1)letting students do the heavy lift in terms of thinking and producing work products, 2) using targeted AVID-aligned strategies such as Costa's levels of HOT questions, think/pair/shares, learning carousels, accountable talk stems to give feedback to their peers, and individual whiteboards to personalize student learning.

One teacher highlighted that students set daily goals in his Math class to reflect the Growth mindset. Additionally, several teachers stated that they promoted an atmosphere of intellectual curiosity in their lessons by allowing students to engage in productive struggle when and while learning new content and skills. One teacher reported that they required students to reflect at the end of each Math lesson by writing their thoughts on a post-it. In some cases, students placed their feedback on the board as a part of a parking lot to address any questions that remain based on specific lessons. A teacher also stated that they were excited to implement the Exemplars program in Math as it provided their students with an opportunity to develop critical thinking and reasoning skills. One teacher referenced that students utilized CUBES as a problem-solving strategy to "focus on understanding the language and concepts" in Math.

Both the teachers and school leader emphasized that the learning community's focus on close reading strategies across the curriculum and problem-solving techniques in Math should result in higher levels of student learning. During the review, teachers articulated how common planning time and the PLC meetings fostered consistent collaboration among staff members to set learning goals. Explicitly, teachers shared that during RTI-WIN meetings they were able to discuss targeted interventions and review how best to modify instruction. One teacher shared that she appreciated participating in inter-class visitations as it provided her with an opportunity to engage in reflective practice.

Summarily, the school leader articulated that responding to text, applying close reading strategies across the curriculum, and integrating Math problem-solving techniques served as the cornerstones of the instructional program for the 2018-2019 school year. As a result, he expected teachers to incorporate these elements during daily instruction.

Teachers also elucidated how the coaches provided support to enhance teaching and learning outcomes. Specifically, teachers shared that the coaches assisted with: 1) providing teachers with fresh ideas for teaching a skill or strategy, 2) implementing AVID procedures and protocols, and 3) acclimating teachers who were new to the district in using new Curriculum materials such as Collections in ELA, and 4) helping teachers to develop students' organizational skills.

The Math coach also described how she provided small group support for learners in need of intensive intervention.

Areas for Improvement

During the review, observers reported limited evidence of high impact instructional techniques within daily instruction to promote student engagement and inquiry. Reviewers also indicated that they observed minimal evidence of students using close reading strategies or writing across the curriculum in the lessons they saw.

In eight out of the ten classes visited, one reviewer reported that teachers dominated the lessons by standing at the board or the carpet -modeling and doing most of the thinking and work for the students. The majority of

reviewers did not observe differentiated groups to meet the needs of varying levels of learners. Also, the use of a variety of instructional materials such as books or manipulatives was not visible in the majority of classrooms. However, teachers did post AVID related and Mathematical charts in the majority of classes.

Despite the learning community's robust discussion on engaging all students as learners and promoting authentic inquiry, the high frequency of teacher-centered lessons negated the quality of evidence-based instructional practices that support high levels of student engagement and inquiry.

Recommendations

- Implement a gradual release model of instruction in tandem with the organized lesson flow during daily instruction in ELA and Math.
- Develop a common understanding and language among PLC members regarding student engagement and inquiry (IC) and identify strategic ways to make each element visible and utilized as a foundational element in checks for understanding.

4.3 **The school is in Stage 2 for this Statement of Practice:** Teachers provide coherent, and appropriately aligned Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)-based instruction that leads to multiple points of access for all students.

Debriefing Statement

Both the school leader and teachers discussed how they instituted specific structures to provide instruction that is: 1) coherent, 2) appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLCs), and 3) leads to multiple points of access for all students. Primarily, the principal and teachers stated that the: 1) use of a myriad of formative and summative assessments such as Dibels and iReady, 2) implementing Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) instructional strategies that promote inquiry and engagement, and 3) building academic vocabulary through close reading led to multiple points of access for all students.

To share an example, one teacher discussed how she fostered student engagement by utilizing Costa's level of questions and requiring students to respond to their peers using accountable talk stems. Teachers also emphasized that they provide targeted interventions during the RTI-WIN periods to students in need of more intensive support. During the interviews, teachers mentioned that they created spaces for students to engage in HOT questioning and discussion during lessons to provide entry points and to ensure access for different subgroups.

Teachers stated that students access rigorous instruction through: 1) writing across the curriculum, 2) close

reading strategies, and 3) leveraging technology to increase engagement in learning tasks during daily instruction. Several teachers explained how they ensured multiple points of access for students with special needs through modified instruction, resource room and co-teaching models.

Areas for Improvement

Although the PLC articulated how teachers ensured multiple points of access for students, the review team discussed the evidence of limited student engagement across the learning community. Notably, in the primary grades, one observer documented the use of worksheets, rote assignments, and whole class instruction. Moreover, the early learning classrooms were not print rich (word walls, sight words, word family charts/rings, teacher made reference charts). The review team also discussed that the bulletin boards reflected minimal authentic student work. Again, the review team did not observe the use of varied resources or manipulatives essential for early childhood learners.

Even though some teachers used academic vocabulary, many students were not able to accurately speak to the meaning of the vocabulary in context. Significantly, the review team indicated that teachers mainly taught whole group lessons that showed minimal differentiation. Whole classroom instruction stymies multiple points of access for all students.

Consequently, only a few teachers tackled the CCLS instructional shifts by engaging students in high order thinking activities and vocabulary development. These instructional practices limit students' ability to participate in intellectual discovery and rigorous thinking.

Recommendations

- **Focus Intently on Domain 3**
  Teachers should implement all components of the district's Math and ELA lesson flow, achieved through a gradual release of responsibility model

- Specifically, teachers should:
  Include learning activities and questions that compel students to demonstrate higher order, collaborative and critical thinking skills
  The school should use the PLC to implement with fidelity the foundational elements of effective pedagogy-Back to Basics of Effective Teaching
  Utilize select AVID strategies such as Costa's levels of questions
    - Teachers should use the Marzano's Essential Nine included in the lesson planning template as a checklist for each lesson
      Revisit and develop model literacy and math classrooms that reflect exemplary practices of Danielson 3b, 3c, and 3d (challenges student thinking, i.e., rigor and engagement)
    - Focus a lesson study on rigor and the quality of student engagement
    - Discriminate the instructional strategies by grade and content-do less but dig deeper and get students to mastery

Focus on Math

- Develop a 15-30-60 day Math Action Plan in concert with content and pedagogical experts that is focused on lessons characterized by a balance of procedural fluency and conceptual understanding (dual intensity)
- Ensure the consistent use of manipulatives to teach abstract mathematical concepts (decimals, dividends, and quotients) -Danielson Correlation: 1a; 1b; 1c; 1d; 1e; 1f; 2b; 2c; 3a; 3b; 3c

- Convene a planning meeting with the administrative team, instructional specialist and early childhood staff to establish revised instructional expectations in early childhood classrooms. The team should promote teacher buy-in by including a representative from each grade level to develop a "Vision of an Early Childhood Classroom at the Grimes School." Specifically, what do we want to see? What don't we want to see? What should we see in our classroom environment?

- The instructional specialist should collaborate with each grade level team to discuss ideas at grades K-2, early childhood meetings. The group should arrive at a consensus regarding the early childhood plan and determine next steps for implementation. The administrative team should consult with and garner the support of the vertical committees.

- Provide multiple points of access for all students by incorporating the use of technology (laptops), whiteboards, and teacher made worksheets. Deliver targeted instruction in small groups-use data to inform student groupings.

4.5 **The school is in Stage 1 for this Statement of Practice:** Teachers inform planning and foster student participation in their own learning process by using a variety of summative and formative data sources (e.g., screening, interim measures, and progress monitoring).

Debriefing Statement

The learning community discussed how they used a variety of formative and summative data sources to inform planning and foster student participation in their learning. Specifically, both the teachers and the school leader stated that they use DIBELS, iReady, and Waterford to progress monitor students. Teachers also articulated that they used teacher-made assessments, end of unit exams, and Plickers to tier students and provide support during the RTI-WIN periods. The school leader expressed that he recently ordered a data board to display the individual achievement levels of students and patterns by grade level and content area.

The principal stated that teachers utilize the various data sources to target students for interventions and to determine instructional strategies. During the review, both the school leader and teachers discuss how students received actionable feedback including specific recommendations and next steps to improve learning. Additionally, several teachers mentioned that students regularly engaged in academic goal setting.

Areas for Improvement

Limited evidence exists to support that the learning community uses a variety of formative and summative data to drive instruction. The learning community must solidify how teachers use formative and summative data to promote student participation in -- and ownership of -- learning. During the student interviews, the majority of students struggled to share a particular learning goal and to explain how they applied teacher feedback to improve learning outcomes. Based on these observations, the learning community needs to urgently address how teachers provide students with meaningful feedback consistently and frequently to strengthen students' ownership of learning.

Although teachers discussed the use of various assessments, many students were not aware of how these assessments contributed to their grade. Additionally, the students indicated that they did not consistently use rubrics or apply teacher feedback to set learning goals. Notably, the students took pride in their work as they presented their portfolios and were able to articulate their strengths and weaknesses for their assignments and classes.

Moreover, the observations revealed that the learning community did not foster student participation in their own learning. Since the majority of classes were teacher-dominated, the students become passive learners. The review team reported that student voice was limited even in lessons where the reviewer remained for fifteen to twenty minutes.

Also, the evidence did not support that students regularly receive feedback based on data. In some instances when teachers used the "Thumbs Up/Thumbs Down" technique to get a quick glimpse of who understood the lesson at a particular time, the results rarely propelled the learning experience in a new direction.

Recommendations

- Make visible the use of data to inform student groupings and in-class differentiation for different tiers of learners.
- Ensure that students know and can explain their individual learning goals and the next steps they need to take to make progress or increase achievement.

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.

Name	Karren Dunkley, Ed.D.
Title	Lead Reviewer
District Lead Credential status (choose one)	X Issued by NYSED on _____ ☐Pending -- The requirements have been fulfilled, but I have yet to receive word from NYSED ☐Pending -- I have not yet fulfilled the requirements, but plan on doing so by the June 30, 2019. ☐N/A This is the only School Review with District Oversight and District-led review I am responsible for.