



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	660900010008	
School Name	Cecil H. Parker School	
School Address	461 South 6 th Avenue, Mount Vernon, NY 10550	
District Name	Mount Vernon School District	
School Leader	Natalie Dweck	
Dates of Review	March 13, 2019	
School Accountability Status	<input type="checkbox"/> Priority School <input type="checkbox"/> Focus School	
Type of Review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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	Natalie Dweck	Principal
District Representative	Dr. Waveline Bennett-Conroy	Assistant Superintendent
Additional Team Members	Dr. Karren Dunkley	Lead Reviewer
	Lori Bennett	Mentor Reviewer
	Roxie Johnson	Math Specialist

School Information Sheet for Parker School

School Configuration (2017-18 data)			
Grade Configuration	Pre-K-7	Total Enrollment	345
		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		# SETSS	
		# Integrated Collaborative Teaching	0
Types and Number of Special Classes (2015-16)			
# Visual Arts		# Music	
		# Drama	0
# Foreign Language		# Dance	
		# CTE	0
School Composition (most recent data)			
% Title I Population		% Attendance Rate	91.6%
% Free Lunch		% Reduced Lunch	
% Limited English Proficient	1.8%	% Students with Disabilities	13.1%
Racial/Ethnic Origin (most recent data)			
% American Indian or Alaska Native	0.6%	% Black or African American	90.4%
% Hispanic or Latino	17.3%	% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1.8%
% White	7.2%	% Multi-Racial	
Personnel (most recent data)			
Years Principal Assigned to School		# of Assistant Principals	
# of Deans	0	# of Counselors/Social Workers	
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	0	% Teaching Out of Certification	0
% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Years of Experience	0	Average Teacher Absences	
Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools (2017-18 or most recent data available)			
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	32.6%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	26.6%
Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (4th Grade)	97.4%	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (8th Grade)	
Student Performance for High Schools (2017-18 or 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		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.):			

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 29 classrooms during the review.
- Reviewers conducted interviews with the principal,, teachers and students, respectively.
- Reviewers examined documents provided by the school, including lesson plans, instructional artifacts such as student portfolios, and snapshots of schoolwide data.

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 she began the 2018-2019 school year by creating a schedule that ensures learning occurs without much disruption. The school leader noted that the plan provides for preps in the upper grades first thing in the morning or before lunch. The principal also emphasized that she departmentalized the middle grades' classes in the morning, noting that the schedule included a break for the younger grades to provide developmentally appropriate learning segments during the day. The school leader shared that she scheduled teachers based on the students' needs. For example, teachers' schedules organize around students who need special services such as occupational therapy. The principal emphasized that students' schedules focus on ensuring that "the child isn't pulled out at the same time for two hours each day if they have speech and resource room."

The school leader noted that the master schedule provides for grade-level common planning time and includes a dedicated block for weekly grade-level Professional Learning Community (PLC) time for teachers to meet horizontally. The school leader expressed that teachers arrive early in the mornings to tutor students who come in before the regular school day. The school leader emphasized that teachers participate in the afterschool to support the extended-learning-day program.

The school leader highlighted that she budgeted field trips for K-7 and implemented a Positive Behavior Intervention Support–Check-In Check-Out program to support the social-emotional needs of students.

The school leader stated that the professional learning community (PLC) extends learning time for students by, 1) implementing an Academic Power Hour (APH) program three times per week on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays in English Language Arts, and Math and a Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) program in partnership with Just Inspire on Fridays.

The school leader emphasized that the learning community utilized data to focus on instructional areas in Math and Writing. The school leader discussed that the school "achieved more level fours this year than ever" and that a STEM teacher and half-time literacy teacher provides enrichment at least three times per week for the high level three students or for the students in the upper grades who lacked basic skills. The principal also noted that she worked with teachers to incorporate fluency as the learning community still needed "a lot of work in our Math as students still struggled with basic facts."

The school leader articulated that the PLC needed to ensure "consistency with strategies such as Claim,

Evidence, Evidence (CEE) and the K-2 writing action plan that focused on “a lot of modeling this year--making students understand that writing is your thoughts on paper.” The principal noted that in some instances, students recorded themselves and then transcribed their recordings into notes to jumpstart their writing. The principal also acknowledged the role of the Math coach in advancing core instructional strategies to improve students’ ability to engage in standards-aligned mathematical thinking.

The school leader discussed the implementation of specific structures to foster collegial inquiry among staff. Concretely, the principal described how the learning community activated PLC structures to 1) provide teachers with an opportunity to analyze data and student work to determine the focus standards for re-teaching and spiraling, 2) collaborate with the interventionist to solidify the use of the response to intervention (RTI) protocols, and 3) share best practices regarding what pedagogical practices work well and what other strategies may work for the different tiers of learners.

The school leader highlighted that the RTI team has a block from 8:45 a.m. to 9:22 a.m. every morning since March 1, 2019, to assess where students need to make progress. The principal also noted that the RTI team provides support for new students who enter the school, punctuating that the school has welcomed five new students in March from in-school transfers.

The principal stated that due to the six-day cycle for the 2018-2019 school year, it was more challenging to monitor and support the PLC and RTI team. However, the school leader shared that both teams couple at times to discuss students’ needs and ensure that the learning community meets these needs during daily instruction.

The school leader expressed that for the 2018-2019 school year, the instructional foci of the learning community include: 1) literacy enrichment in reading and writing, 2) content area reading, 3) select tools to promote student engagement such as turn and talk. The principal emphasized that during classroom visits, the reviewers should observe: 1) the younger grades on the rug engaged in peer-to-peer learning and 2) students involved and talking to each other.

Commendations

- A learning environment characterized by mutual respect between staff and students.
- Clear evidence of support staff addressing student-learning needs.

Recommendations

- Clarify instructional coherence across the PLC. Identify and apply the school’s core philosophy about teaching and learning to lesson planning, pedagogical practices, instructional walkthroughs, teacher feedback and the professional learning strands during PLC time.
- Institutionalize student ownership of learning. Empower students to be able to 1) explicitly discuss their learning goals, 2) identify the progress they need to make, and 3) commit to core instructional practices that they need to adapt to accelerate learning outcomes.
- Establish and communicate high expectations for learning across the learning community exemplified

by teachers and students taking intellectual and conceptual risks. Teachers should challenge students' thinking and provide spaces for students to speculate on concepts taught and engage in productive academic struggle.

The results of these programs demonstrate that sufficient evidence exists to show that the school leader implements systems, including a professional learning community structure and expanded learning time, to organize operations and appropriate resources to increase 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 addresses the needs of all learners. During the review, the school leader and the teachers discussed how the school meets the diverse learning needs of students through, 1) unpacking the standards and aligning the standards to tasks and lessons, 2) implementing the district's common core-aligned curriculum maps and pacing calendars for the Envisions Math and Journeys ELA curricula, 3) bookmarking on computers and underlining action verbs that speak to specific standards, 4) using specially designed instruction to develop personalized modifications and accommodations for students with individual education plans (IEPs) and, 4) creating flexible groupings to provide tiered supports based on the beginning of the year (BOY) baseline assessment data.

Importantly, the school leader emphasized that the learning community scaffolds instruction in Math and English Language Arts (ELA) based on the district's pacing guides and standards identified as power performers- "as some standards were more critical than others."

The school leader stated that during PLC meetings, teachers discuss how best to sequence lessons to address concepts that students struggle to master. The principal also shared that the learning community examines what the students need to concentrate on to perform well on the New York State (NYS) exams and that teachers do "a lot of spiraling and adjusting weekly" to focus on critical standards-aligned lessons.

The principal mentioned that teachers use understanding by design (UBD) to inform lesson planning and to

pace and scaffold daily instruction to meet individualized student goals.

The PLC also uses common planning time to refine lesson pacing and to collaborate with the Math and Literacy coaches to explore how best to teach Math vocabulary and provide core instruction in content area reading in grades four and six, respectively.

During the review, the learning community discussed several ways in which they modified the curriculum to ensure students with individual education programs (IEPs) have access to a rigorous CCLS-aligned curriculum. Several examples of these practices include: 1) providing pullout and push-in services with the resource room teacher and consultant teacher, 2) providing targeted resources on students' grade level to introduce concepts or skills, 3) integrating specially designed instruction (SDI) in daily lessons through a myriad of accommodations and modifications, 4) exposing students to activities that activate background knowledge, and a positive learning environment, and 5) using videos and visuals to scaffold and enrich the curriculum.

The teachers also expressed that the instructional specialists and interventionists collaborate and communicate closely to support the learning needs of multilingual language learners (MLLs) and students with disabilities (SWDs). To provide an example, the resource room teacher and consultant teacher organize a library of books on different areas of study so that the sixth-grade students can master content if they are at a fourth-grade level. Once the sixth graders learn the fourth-grade level work in decoding and comprehension, then teachers begin to expose students to the next level of work. The consultant teacher also referred to using specially designed instruction (SDI) modifications and accommodations such as reading directions and texts to SWDs to ensure that they can access content during core classes.

During the review, the teachers stated that they ensured students' access to a rigorous curriculum through a plethora of techniques to advance students' mastery of the standards. Explicitly, teachers mentioned that they, 1) target power standards to get students prepared for the NYS exams, 2) implement a focus wall with advanced vocabulary including academic vocabulary that students should master and use in their writing, and 3) build in depth of knowledge (DOK) questions so that "students can function higher, dig deeper and not simply give yes or no answers" to add rigor to the curriculum.

One teacher described how she has students 1) creating questions and leading questions, 2) using a graphic organizer to distill the story elements such as setting, and 3) conferring with their partner in a group about the text to take ownership of lessons. Another teacher shared that she ensured a rigorous curriculum by challenging students through project-based learning and flexible groupings.

Additionally, teachers discussed specific strategies that they utilized to ensure that they exposed students to a rigorous CCLS-aligned curriculum. For example, the learning community shared how they, 1) use visuals and activate prior knowledge to build students' connections to the concepts teachers previously taught, 2) utilize instructional strategies such as Q-TIPS, and CEE and 3) implement small group instruction to bolster students' mastery of complex concepts.

Teachers also discussed how they differentiated resources for Multilingual Learners (MLLs) to lead them towards a standard expectation for college and career readiness. For example, one teacher described how she leveraged online access to the curriculum to print third-grade work so that she could differentiate and isolate specific standards that students have difficulty mastering. This teacher noted that the entire district curricula were online with supplemental resources for teachers except the curriculum for Science.

Areas for Improvement

Although the learning community discussed how they implement collaborative structures and common instructional practices to ensure a rigorous and coherent curriculum to all students, the cohesiveness of the academic program provided to all students requires surgical attention. Specifically, the review team concluded that lessons primarily occurred in whole class instruction with the majority of classes dominated by teacher talk and low student engagement.

Additionally, based on the examination of student portfolios coupled with the classroom visits, reviewers observed an uneven pattern of teachers monitoring and adapting the curriculum. During the debriefing session, one of the reviewers reported that two of the three students in her group did not have any authentic writing or evidence of CCLS standards-aligned work in their portfolios. Additionally, one fourth-grader stated that he was unfamiliar with the term and use of rubrics. Also, another seventh-grade student articulated that “a rubric is what to include in the project, so you get a good grade.” However, the Black History Month project in the seventh-grade student’s portfolio did not have written, rubric-aligned feedback. Overall, the absence of CCLS-aligned ELA work, and the inconsistent use of rubrics made it difficult to assess how teachers promote student ownership of learning and progress to mastery of standards through actionable and sustained feedback.

Furthermore, many of the lesson plans reveal scant descriptions of content and lacked explicit instructional strategies to meet the needs of all learners. For instance, one reviewer noted that some lessons identified particular strategies to differentiate instruction for SWDs and MLLs, while other lesson plans included only the learning targets and page numbers for the teacher’s textbook or the name of worksheets. Furthermore, teachers did not appear to collaborate on lesson planning or receive feedback on their lesson plans thus not strengthening teachers’ planning practices. During one observed Math lesson, a reviewer noted that the classroom teacher and consultant teacher needed to establish a clear partnership regarding lesson delivery and support of all students.

Generally, students stated that they were not aware of their SMART goals and did not recall making or reviewing these goals with their teachers. Taken together, The lack of uniformity regarding how teachers support the diverse learners in their classes, the inability of students to discuss their learning goals or how they utilize rubrics to improve academically makes it challenging for all students to receive access to rigorous curricula that lead them towards a standard expectation of college and career readiness.

Recommendations

- Clarify instructional coherence across the learning community by implementing a professional strand during vertical and horizontal PLCs on collaborative lesson planning and align companion instructional strategies differentiated by grade, content, and students' levels.
- Teachers should ensure that during daily instruction students complete a learning cycle aligned to the gradual release model of instruction including a lesson summary and closure activity to inform the next day's lesson and to differentiate content for re-teaching and spiraling.
- Provide PLC professional development and support in organizing small group instruction based on data to tier in-class supports for students.
- Create lab classrooms, and schedule interclass visitation and walkthroughs focused on specific standards and a repertoire of instructional techniques to promote critical thinking and high student engagement.
- Strengthen the consultant/ resource teacher's collaboration with the classroom teacher to support learning for all levels of learners.
- Teachers should construct a list of higher-order questions and formative assessments that they will include in each lesson to challenge students' thinking and push them towards content mastery.

3.3 **The school is in Stage 2 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

Limited evidence exists to demonstrate that teachers attempt to develop collaborative unit and lesson plans, which use data-driven protocols. Reviewers observed that in some instances, lessons do not fully incorporate data-driven instructional protocols that the learning community uses to complement curricula materials. The school leader stated that the learning community implements a data tracker to provide a tiered system of support to learners identified as tier one, tier two and tier three. The teachers stated that they cross-fertilize data points from the iReady, end of unit assessments, and NYS assessments to identify students' academic levels, and provide tiered instruction during the RTI block.

During the interviews, the staff stated that they use a multi-faceted approach to implement data-driven protocols. Concretely, teachers discussed: 1) the use of Running Records by the reading specialist to assess students' levels in reading developmentally appropriate texts, 2) the use of the iReady diagnostic online reading comprehension and Math data every five to six weeks to determine tiered instructional support, 3) the implementation of the Math data tracker to make sure that students are on track to passing the NYS assessment, 4) the use of DIBELS as a benchmark to guide instructional groupings, 5) the use of the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) to determine the instructional level for MLLs, and 6) the RTI and Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) data to inform the practices of the interventionists and reading specialists during RTI designated periods and daily instruction.

The learning community describes how the staff analyzes data 1) to identify domains that students need to master, 2) determine evidence-based instructional strategies for content areas that prove particularly challenging for students to understand, 3) plan flexible groupings for a structured number of weeks, and 4) implement guided reading daily to give students multiple opportunities to use context clues and decode texts. The school leader also stated that the learning community explores PBIS trends to build a positive school culture through rewards and incentives. The principal also shared that teachers administer weekly tests and quizzes, noting that each teacher maintains a data binder and that each classroom has a data wall that uses a unique identifier to show students' progress.

Areas for Improvement

Although the PLC discussed school-wide data-driven instructional (DDI) protocols, the review team concluded that the learning community unevenly implements DDI protocols. During the interview, the majority of students were unable to explain how they use rubrics to improve their work and could not articulate their individual learning goals. The review team also deduced that not all teachers maintained a data binder or data system. In some cases when teachers did have a physical binder, as some teachers kept an electronic data binder, the physical data binders lacked consistency in terms of the data contents. In several instances when observers noted student groupings, it was not evident that teachers used discernable data to place students.

Additionally, the learning community does not appear to use rubrics as an instructional tool aligned with a system of giving students feedback in a systematic manner. Reviewers did not observe visible evidence of teachers using rubrics to grade standards-aligned work or to provide clear and actionable feedback to students. To give an example, a seventh-grade student stated that he knows about the one- and two-point writing rubric but did not have any examples of work all academic year graded with feedback using this rubric or any rubric. One student stated that her teacher only provided her with one-word feedback, but that she wished this feedback could be written down. A fifth-grade student shared that his teacher gave him verbal feedback, because "she talks on the side telling us what we can do to get a better grade on the test."

As a result, across the PLC, feedback appears incongruent with the practices espoused by the learning community and does not provide a gateway for students to improve.

Summarily, methods of using DDI protocols to support teaching and learning were not consistent across the PLC. Taken together, the level of inconsistency regarding DDI, coupled with the lack of rubrics as an instructional tool and clear feedback protocols for students, makes it challenging to lead students towards a common expectation of college and career readiness.

Recommendations

- Establish a plan to communicate and discuss students' individual learning goals aligned with the data cycles. During these discussions, the teachers should explain students' learning goals and share the progress that students need to achieve mastery. The learning goals discussions should include clear

benchmarks so that students know what they need to focus on to improve learning outcomes.

- Introduce the use of rubrics more evenly across the PLC and frontload rubrics at the beginning of projects and units to set expectations for work products. Use the rubric as a self-assessment tool for students during conferencing and as an end-of-unit project or activity for students to track and reflect on their learning. Teachers should review standard NYS rubrics and provide feedback aligned to these rubrics so that students have a clearer understanding of shared and high expectations for learning.
- Develop common expectations for electronic and physical data binders. The learning community should analyze the same data contents to assess student achievement. Teachers should engage in data analysis using the materials of their data binders and ensure that they update binders periodically.
- Streamline DDI protocols-Create a PLC focused strand on data-informed instruction, i.e., the staff should triangulate data from the multiple formative, interim and summative sources to create flexible instructional groups. The instructional team should follow up to make sure teachers structure small groups to target student feedback and support.

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 learning community utilizes data from multiple sources to examine achievement trends and to modify instructional practices to meet the diverse needs of students. Both the school leader and teachers described how they: 1) employed the DIBELS and Running Records benchmark to determine interventions for students in grades pre-K to one, 2) wrote conferring notes to progress monitor students on a daily basis, 3) used the iReady benchmark data at the beginning of the year (BOY)-end of September, and middle of the year (MOY)-end of January to provide appropriate interventions for students, 4) triangulated formative and summative assessment data to explore convergence and divergence trends, and 5) implemented high-leverage intervention strategies agreed upon by the data and literacy team during the RTI block.

The pre-DTSDE self-assessment document noted that learning community's focus on common assessments led to increased achievement on the fourth grade Science test.

The school leader and teachers described how the learning community uses multiple 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 the RTI program, and academic power hour, 2) the use of end-of-unit assessments and checking for understanding to identify students in need of additional support, 3) accuracy of responses to formative assessments such as fist to five, I understand/I don't understand, thumbs up/thumbs down, color cards and exit tickets during class time, 4) designing leveled assignments and homework based on the Envisions Math data tracker to address students designated as on track, intermediate or accelerated.

One teacher referenced a promising practice in one Math class where based on formative assessments- students can ask to go to the back of the class for real-time support from the teacher after fluency and decoding exercises. One of the reading specialists discussed that she utilizes Fountas and Pinnell's progress monitoring to determine explicit teaching of vocabulary strategies such as the Frayer model.

Teachers highlighted the use of data from summative assessments such as 1) iReady, 2) District mock ELA and Math exams, and 3) end-of-unit assessments, and 4) Math and ELA data trackers to assess students' mastery of content.

Areas for Improvement

During the debriefing session, the review team concluded that the PLC inconsistently utilized formative assessments during the twenty-nine classes the reviewers observed. Several reviewers noted the teachers' checks for understanding consisted of lower-level-thinking questions and the thumbs up/thumbs down strategies. Notably, in a few classes, teachers circulated throughout the room to check in with students during instruction; however, this practice did not yield adjustments.

One reviewer shared that of the ten classes visited, only three classrooms demonstrated visible evidence of teachers: 1) having CCLS-aligned student goals, 2) rubrics, or 3) student reflection. Several reviewers shared that teachers needed to stimulate students' thinking through higher-order-thinking questions and extend class discussion through high leverage student engagement discussion and collaboration strategies.

The lesson observations – coupled with the lack of coherent lesson planning -- revealed limited evidence of teachers using multiple types of formative assessments or in-depth checks for understanding.

Furthermore, a significant number of students articulated that they were unable to discuss their current academic levels. One student expressed, "My teacher never told me." When a reviewer asked him about personal goals that he established for himself, this student stated that he "wanted to improve--study more/harder--for tests in Math and ELA."

The reviewers acknowledged that there were pockets of teachers using data to inform lesson planning and tiered interventions. However, the learning walks did not support that the PLC uniformly utilized the data with fidelity in lesson planning for differentiated groups or to target daily instruction. Moreover, the examination of student learning artifacts coupled with the responses during the interviews and classroom visits showed an uneven pattern of feedback across the learning community. Concretely, none of the student portfolios that the team reviewed during the student interviews or classroom visits included work with written feedback that promoted student ownership of or reflection on learning.

Taken together, the lack of in-depth checks for understanding coupled with the uneven practice of providing

regular feedback to students resulted in fewer opportunities to engage students in developmentally appropriate, challenging tasks that lead to a common expectation of college and career readiness.

Recommendations

- The PLC should actively implement and model select CFU techniques from the “Tools for Formative Assessment,” compiled by K. Lambert.
- Strengthen the use of formative assessments across the PLC by creating model classrooms for teachers to observe and apply best practices.
- Align the formative and summative assessment tools with clear protocols to determine and communicate individual student learning goals and provide ongoing and direct rubric-based feedback to students on progress towards reaching these goals.
- Update all data walls and make them visible.

<p>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.</p>	<p>Tenet Rating</p>	<p>2</p>
--	----------------------------	-----------------

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 learning community implements practices and strategies to organize annual, unit, and daily lesson plans that address student goals and needs. For instance, teachers discussed the specific use of strategies such as, 1) Students identifying learning targets that allow them to visualize, and use descriptive language to express the instructional focus orally or in writing, 2) high student engagement strategies such as Math solve and shares, and turn and talks, and 3) the use of projects to deepen students’ interest in learning and content mastery.

Both the principal and the teachers stated that the learning community implemented the district’s curriculum maps and pacing guides. Additionally, several teachers shared that they stimulated student thinking during the

modeling and guided practice components of the gradual release of instruction. One teacher reported that she required students to provide evidence of why the author selected a particular theme in a story. Another teacher mentioned that she addressed students' goals and needs by asking students to "develop their own rubric so they can produce a relatively good piece of work."

The ENL teacher also shared that she 1) utilized visuals, 2) had students point to pictures, and 3) incorporated higher-level comprehension strategies through the use of graphic organizers, text structures, and question stems for different grade levels.

Both the teachers and the school leader highlighted the PLC's focus on using close reading strategies and reading and writing in the content areas during daily instruction. During the review, teachers stated that they used vertical planning meetings, common planning time and curriculum meetings to unpack lessons and related instructional practices to meet the needs of all students. One teacher shared that she modified the curriculum for SWDs by applying the SDI principles with fidelity to scaffold instruction.

Teachers shared that they collaborated with the interventionists and special education teachers to advance students' mastery of Reading, Math and Science comprehension skills. The reading specialist and Math coach also assisted teachers with, 1) modifying texts and learning activities, 2) implementing strategies to build vocabulary and academic language based on progress monitoring, 3) providing small group instruction pullout support for tier-three learners during the RTI block and 2) pushing in classrooms to support tier-one and -two learners based on mid-year scores.

The school leader stated that at least one of the reading specialists had to attend each PLC meeting. During PLC meetings, the reading specialists discussed the schoolwide data trends, "how some students changed or moved," and the next steps in lesson planning and instructional practices to build on students' progress.

Areas for Improvement

During the review, observers reported limited evidence of instructional strategies that fostered high student engagement and collaboration within daily instruction. Also, reviewers observed minimal evidence of students participating in content area reading or writing across the learning community.

Notably, the review team identified a model Math lesson that demonstrated students using academic language to express thinking and engaging in a fun and rigorous manner through hands-on activities and peer-to-peer collaboration.

In the majority of classes, teachers provided students with explicit modeling. However, at times the learning cycles appeared incoherent during the transition from teacher modeling to guided and independent practice. Also, reviewers noted that lessons tended to abruptly come to an end with no distinct activity for lesson closure or summary. Of the ten classes that one reviewer visited, only one teacher had students complete a lesson summary activity that was an exit ticket. Although instructional materials such as manipulatives were visible in the majority of classrooms, reviewers were uncertain if the learning community used these tools

consistently to aid students' conceptual understanding in Math.

Despite the PLC's robust discussion on engaging all students as learners and fostering student engagement, the high frequency of teacher-dominated lessons, and incomplete learning cycles negated the quality of evidence-based instructional practices that promote high levels of student engagement, inquiry and collaboration.

Recommendations

- Conduct a gradual release model of instruction training coupled with the in-depth CFU differentiated by the elementary and middle grades.
- Focus a PLC learning strand on leveraging high student engagement techniques and promoting critical and higher-order thinking in daily instruction. Teachers should refer to Webb's DOK question guide to frame different types of questions.

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

The learning community described how they developed intentional structures to provide instruction that is: 1) coherent, 2) appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLCs), and 3) demonstrative of multiple points of access for all students. Explicitly, the school leader and teachers stated that the following strategies and protocols lead to multiple points of access for all students: 1) using formative and summative assessments such as DIBELS, NYS assessment, NYSELAT and iReady, 2) implementing a repertoire of instructional strategies that promote student engagement and collaboration in the elementary and middle grades, and 3) focusing on reading and writing in the content areas.

To share some examples, teachers discussed how they ensured multiple points of access to the curriculum by 1) utilizing small group instruction, 2) close reading strategies that focus on text annotations where students underline unfamiliar words or language, 3) providing visuals and graphic organizers for MLLs, and 4) employing instructional techniques such as claim, evidence, evidence (CEE), Q-TIPS, expanded worksheets, and content-specific word walls to personalize instruction.

Several teachers referenced using the SDI checklists to ensure targeted accommodations and modifications for all students with individualized education plans, noting the importance of movement and learning tasks that reflect multi-modalities of learning.

Teachers also shared that they ensured multiple points of entry for all subgroups of learners through checks for understanding such as thumbs up and thumbs down, and exit tickets during daily lessons. One teacher

mentioned the use of the Envisions Math curriculum to differentiate for on track, intermediate and accelerated learners. The PLC members also stated that students access rigorous instruction through: 1) close reading and writing across the curriculum and 2) scaffolding learning activities during the RTI block.

One teacher emphasized that she ensured multiple points of access for students with special needs through modified instruction, and co-teaching partnerships with the reading specialist and special education teachers. The pre-DTSDE self-assessment noted the learning community implements a “Go Back Folder” to ensure that students are constantly challenged on their independent reading level. The self-assessment also stated that the “gifted and talented teacher worked with targeted students to engage them in academic challenges once a week.”

Areas for Improvement

Although the learning community discussed how teachers ensured multiple points of access for students, the review team did not observe various points of entry for students. For example, in several classrooms, students were unable to explain academic vocabulary that emerged during the lesson. Generally, students were unable to convey what they were learning and why.

During the review, observers concluded that teacher feedback to students was not detailed or specific to the learning tasks. One student expressed that she did not feel comfortable talking to her teacher about her grades. She articulated that she thought that talking to her teachers or questioning her teachers about her grades was “disrespectful.” This student’s portfolio did not contain any student goal sheets or rubrics. Additionally, this student like many of her counterparts was not aware of the definition of a rubric, and how to use rubrics to advance learning. This student also expressed that she was not informed of her reading and math levels.

Reviewers observed strong evidence of teachers predominantly relying on whole class instruction as the core instructional strategy. In the majority of classrooms, students used the same texts and completed the same learning activities. Overall, the instructional strategies lacked differentiation and led to a low or moderate engagement of students.

Significantly, the self-contained classes were exemplary in using technology and having all adults support personalization and differentiation. In one self-contained classroom, a student solved a problem on the computer, and a second student worked with his adult partner to solve the Math problem.

Overall, teachers mainly taught whole group lessons that showed minimal differentiation that resulted in limited points of access for students. These instructional practices impede students’ ability to participate in intellectual discovery and rigorous thinking.

Recommendations

- Teachers should create learning tasks that reflect various modalities and use higher-order thinking activities and questions to push students to demonstrate higher-order-, collaborative-, and critical-thinking skills.
- Implement flexible groupings and re-organize groups of students as they acquire mastery.
- Build students' capacity to own their learning by having them memorize and practice core strategies that work for them.
- Leverage Academic Power Hour as the time for students to continue to "hone-in" on the skills needed to master core content and skills.
- Continue to differentiate instructional materials, instructional processes, and instructional tasks for the three tiers of learners. Provide enrichment for your on-track, intermediate and accelerated learners inside and outside of the classroom.

4.5 **The school is in Stage 2 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

Both the school leader and teachers described how they used a plethora of formative and summative data sources to progress monitor and promote student ownership of and reflection on learning. The members of the learning community discussed how they use, DIBELS, iReady, NYSELAT, and Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) to assess students' mastery of content and to determine the corollary academic intervention services (AIS). Teachers also shared that they used Math Envisions' end-of-unit assessments to designate on-track (O), intermediate (I) and advanced (A) academic supports. The data and PLC teams also organize the RTI periods based on these three levels of learners.

Importantly, several classrooms had a visible data display that showed students' mastery of ELA and Math standards. The school leader and teachers stated that they maintain data binders and updated achievement data into a district data Math and ELA tracker to inform which content to spiral and reteach. The school leader reiterated that students who show learning gaps or who are at risk of scoring below proficiency on the NYS assessments receive targeted AIS services during APH, RTI, and SGI.

During the review, teachers discussed how they provide students with actionable feedback to improve work products and advance learning. Several teachers highlighted that the learning community participates in a social and emotional professional learning strand to increase teachers' capacity to apply a trauma-informed lens to teaching and learning.

Areas for Improvement

The learning community uses a variety of formative and summative data. However, it is difficult to distinguish how the PLC uses the data to inform student groupings and small group instruction, engage in lesson planning and determine individual learning goals. Consequently, the PLC must activate concrete strategies to help 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 explain their academic progress and found it challenging to describe a specific learning goal. Additionally, observers noted an uneven pattern of feedback to students.

Based on these observations, the learning community needs to immediately address how teachers provide students with meaningful feedback in a manner that is meaningful and consistent to strengthen students' ownership of learning. Also, it is critical for teachers to push the learning experience in a new direction based on the formative assessment data garnered during daily instruction.

Although teachers discussed the use of multiple assessments, many students were not aware of how these assessments contributed to their learning goals and academic progress. Furthermore, many students stated that they did not routinely use rubrics or apply teacher feedback to establish and benchmark learning goals.

Recommendations

- Make visible the use of data to inform student groupings and implement clear differentiation strategies for diverse learners during daily instruction based on patterns and trends.
- Engage students in quarterly data conversations regarding their individual learning goals and benchmarks so that students know and can describe what they need to focus on to make progress.

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 _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Pending -- The requirements have been fulfilled, but I have yet to receive word from NYSED <input type="checkbox"/> Pending -- I have not yet fulfilled the requirements, but plan on doing so by the June 30, 2019. <input type="checkbox"/> N/A This is the only School Review with District Oversight and District-led review I am responsible for.