



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



2015-2016 School Year

BEDS Code	441600010016
School Name	South Middle School
School Address	33-63 Monument Street Newburgh, NY 12550
District Name	Newburgh Enlarged City School District
School Leader	Jessica Layne
Dates of Review	May 27 – 29, 2016
School Accountability Status	<input type="checkbox"/> Priority School <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus School
Type of Review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District-led Review

School Information Sheet for

School Configuration (2015-16 data)					
Grade Configuration	Grade 6-8	Total Enrollment	758	SIG Recipient	no
Types and Number of English Language Learner Classes (2015-16)					
# Transitional Bilingual		# Dual Language		# Self-Contained English as a Second Language	
Types and Number of Special Education Classes (2015-16)					
# Special Classes	32	# SETSS		# Integrated Collaborative Teaching	21
Types and Number of Special Classes (2015-16)					
# Visual Arts	11	# Music	22	# Drama	0
# Foreign Language	21	# Dance	10	# CTE	0
School Composition (most recent data)					
% Title I Population		73	% Attendance Rate		92
% Free Lunch		61	% Reduced Lunch		7
% Limited English Proficient		10	% Students with Disabilities		18
Racial/Ethnic Origin (most recent data)					
% American Indian or Alaska Native		1	% Black or African American		37
% Hispanic or Latino		37	% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander		2
% White		22	% Multi-Racial		1
Personnel (most recent data)					
Years Principal Assigned to School		1	# of Assistant Principals		2
% of Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate		0	% Teaching Out of Certification		3
% Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Years of Experience		3	Average Teacher Absences		8
Student Performance for Elementary and Middle Schools (2014-15)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4		15	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4		10
Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (4th Grade)			Science Performance at levels 3 & 4 (8th Grade)		47
Student Performance for High Schools (2014-15)					
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4			Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4		
Global History Performance at levels 3 & 4			US History Performance at Levels 3&4		
4 Year Graduation Rate			6 Year Graduation Rate		
Regents Diploma w/ Advanced Designation			% ELA/Math Aspirational Performance Measures		
Overall NYSED Accountability Status (2014-15)					
Reward			Recognition		
In Good Standing			Local Assistance Plan		
Focus District		x	Focus School Identified by a Focus District		
Priority School					

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

DID NOT MEET Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA (2013-14)			
American Indian or Alaska Native		Black or African American	x
Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	
White	x	Multi-Racial	
Students with Disabilities	x	Limited English Proficient	x
Economically Disadvantaged	x	ALL STUDENTS	x
DID NOT MEET Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics (2013-14)			
American Indian or Alaska Native		Black or African American	x
Hispanic or Latino	x	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	
White	x	Multi-Racial	
Students with Disabilities	x	Limited English Proficient	x
Economically Disadvantaged	x	ALL STUDENTS	x
DID NOT MEET Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science (2013-14)			
American Indian or Alaska Native		Black or African American	x
Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	
White	x	Multi-Racial	
Students with Disabilities	x	Limited English Proficient	
Economically Disadvantaged	x	ALL STUDENTS	x

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

1. Create a positive climate and culture between students and staff.

Information about the review

- The review was led by the deputy superintendent. The team also included a district representative from Special Education and a district representative from Curriculum and Instruction.
- Reviewers conducted focus groups with students, staff and parents.
- Reviewers examined documents provided by the school, including curriculum maps, lesson plans, school wide data, teacher feedback, and student work.
- The school provided results of a student survey that 526 completed.
- The school provided results of a staff survey that 53 completed.
- The school provided results of a parent survey that 20 completed.

Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions: Visionary leaders create a school community and culture that lead to success, well-being and high academic outcomes for all students via systems of continuous and sustainable school improvement.

#	Statement of Practice	Stage 4	Stage 3	Stage 2	Stage 1
2.2	The school leader ensures that the school community shares the Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Results-oriented, and Timely (SMART) goals/mission, and long-term vision inclusive of core values that address the priorities outlined in the School Comprehensive Educational Plan (SCEP).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.3	Leaders make strategic decisions to organize programmatic, human, and fiscal capital resources.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.4	The school leader has a fully functional system in place aligned to the district's Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) to conduct targeted and frequent observation and track progress of teacher practices based on student data and feedback.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.5	Leaders effectively use evidence-based systems and structures to examine and improve critical individual and school-wide practices as defined in the SCEP (student achievement, curriculum and teacher practices; leadership development; community/family engagement; and student social and emotional developmental health).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 2:					1

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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.4	The school leader and teachers have developed a comprehensive plan for teachers to partner within and across all grades and subjects to create interdisciplinary curricula targeting the arts, technology, and other enrichment opportunities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 3:					1

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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4.4	Teachers and students work together to implement a program/plan to create a learning environment that is responsive to students' varied experiences and tailored to the strengths and needs of all students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 4:					1

Tenet 5 - Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health: The school community identifies, promotes, and supports social and emotional development by designing systems and experiences that lead to healthy relationships and a safe, respectful environment that is conducive to learning for all constituents.

#	Statement of Practice	Stage 4	Stage 3	Stage 2	Stage 1
5.2	The school leader establishes overarching systems and understandings of how to support and sustain student social and emotional developmental health and academic success.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.3	The school articulates and systematically promotes a vision for social and emotional developmental health that is aligned to a curriculum or program that provides learning experiences and a safe and healthy school environment for families, teachers, and students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.4	All school stakeholders work together to develop a common understanding of the importance of their contributions in creating a school community that is safe, conducive to learning, and fostering of a sense of ownership for providing social and emotional developmental health supports tied to the school's vision.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

5.5	The school leader and student support staff work together with teachers to establish structures to support the use of data to respond to student social and emotional developmental health needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 5:					1
Tenet 6 - Family and Community Engagement: The school creates a culture of partnership where families, community members, and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being.					
#	Statement of Practice	Stage 4	Stage 3	Stage 2	Stage 1
6.2	The school leader ensures that regular communication with students and families fosters their high expectations for student academic achievement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6.3	The school engages in effective planning and reciprocal communication with family and community stakeholders so that student strength and needs are identified and used to augment learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6.4	The school community partners with families and community agencies to promote and provide training across all areas (academic and social and emotional developmental health) to support student success.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6.5	The school shares data in a way that promotes dialogue among parents, students, and school community members centered on student learning and success and encourages and empowers families to understand and use data to advocate for appropriate support services for their children.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 6:					1

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	STAGE 1
<p>The school is in Stage 1 for Tenet 2 – School Leader Practices and Decisions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school lacks a mission/vision statement as well as SMART goals. Transition of the new school administration during the summer did not afford time for a comprehensive needs assessment. The leadership team was focused more on the task of opening the school and did not work on a mission or vision statement. The SCEP (School Comprehensive Education Plan) was created based solely on the recommendations of the DTSDE (Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness) report. Without a mission/vision statement or SMART goals, school improvement is hindered. Strategic decisions are not made to organize programmatic, human, and fiscal capital resources. Reductions in the Arts, CTE (Career and Technical Education) and foreign language, in addition to an ineffective master schedule negatively impacted student acquisition of required units. The 7th grade is the only team with scheduled common planning time. The school did not embrace the resources available through the Community Schools Grant in a timely manner. The lack of strategic decision-making limits school improvement and student success. Systems to track teacher practices are not in place. The school leader conducted frequent walkthroughs and provided feedback to teachers in the beginning of the year. The assistant principal did not conduct walkthroughs. Formal observations were not completed within the district’s expected 		

time frame. The administrative team has not analyzed interim data or feedback to inform decisions. Without systems in place to monitor the staff’s instructional capacity, high-quality instruction throughout the school is limited.

- Systems to track and monitor individual and school-wide practices are not in place. The self-review done prior to the school DTSDE visit indicated that the school leadership team had only just begun to look at school data to inform decisions. The school leader reported meeting with the administrative team primarily to address incidents that occurred during the day to determine consequences. Content area team meetings are scheduled, yet there are no formalized expectations as a result of the collaborative meetings. School-wide practices were not known by all school leaders or faculty. Without systems and structures in place to monitor school functions, informed decision-making and continuous school improvement cannot be achieved.

Recommendation:

- By September 2016, the school leader should implement a professional learning community with school administrators that will minimally include an observation cycle which incorporates a protocol for calibration and a walkthrough protocol aligned to NECS D expectations which includes debriefing on a monthly basis with all administrators, resulting in targeted actions.

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

STAGE 1

The school is in **Stage 1** for Tenet 3 – Curriculum Development and Support.

- There is no school-wide vision for, or formalized system in place to, monitor or adapt the curriculum. Teachers in grades 6 and 8 do not have scheduled common planning time to discuss curriculum. Aside from district provided curriculum materials, there was little evidence of teacher developed school or classroom units aligned to either the district’s curriculum or the CCSS (Common Core State Standards). A system defining how to make data-driven adaptations to the curriculum to meet all students’ needs was not evidenced. As a result, not all students have access to a rigorous and coherent curriculum which leads to continuous academic achievement.
- Utilizing appropriately aligned Common Core units and lessons based on the most currently available data is not a school-wide practice. A majority of lessons observed reflected textbook readings and worksheet activities. No data was shared in regards to lesson design. Teachers shared that data use was limited to state assessments and report card grades; no other data sources were identified. No common school or district-wide assessments were evidenced. When requested, not all teachers could provide current unit or lesson plans. The use of effective lessons and data-driven instruction that meet the needs of all students are not practices that permeate the school and therefore cannot ensure continuous student and school improvement.
- There is no comprehensive plan in place for interdisciplinary curriculum planning. The school leader stated there is no current expectation for cross-curricular planning. Parents expressed concerns that there is no coordination between subject area teachers in regards to strategic planning for testing students and its impact on student work load. Student engagement varied between classrooms visited. Lessons incorporating the arts, technology or other modalities were not observed. This results in a lack of student engagement and a lack of student understanding of the curriculum, limiting academic success.

- There is no formalized system for using formative or summative assessments for strategic planning or adapting the curriculum to best meet student needs. There is also no school-wide expectation regarding feedback to students or student reflection. From conversations with teachers and the school leader, it was evident that report card grades were the sole source of student performance. No evidence of short or long-range curriculum planning was provided or viewed. No written feedback on student work was evidenced. There was very little student work displayed throughout the school. Without a variety of assessment data utilized for curriculum planning, effective modifications to the curriculum cannot be made. The lack of written feedback on student work as well as the lack of student reflection limits the cultivation of student ownership of their work, therefore hindering improved academic achievement.

Recommendation:

- Beginning immediately, the school leader should work with district curriculum administrators to implement a process which produces school based units and classroom lesson plans that are based on NECSO expectations, aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and reflective of the academic and social-emotional learning data that determined needs of the students.

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

STAGE 1

The school is in **Stage 1** for Tenet 4 – Teacher Practices and Decisions.

- No formalized structures or school-wide expectations are in place regarding the implementation of instructional practices based on the diverse needs of students. Other than during formal observations, routine visits to classrooms and walkthroughs have not been conducted since the first quarter of the school year. Formal walkthroughs conducted in September and October by the school leaders did not result in feedback to grade level teams. There was no evidence of strategic planning or goal setting by grade level/content area teachers that addressed specific subgroups or select groups of students. Differentiated lessons were not evidenced either in classroom visits or in lesson plans. High student engagement is not pervasive throughout the school which is impeding increased student achievement.
- Levels of student engagement are inconsistent across classrooms. Student behaviors observed in many classrooms prevented instruction. Students were observed with heads down, some with hoods over their heads, with no redirection or prompting from teachers. Students and teachers reported regular disturbances in hallways which interfere with instruction. With few exceptions, most lessons observed focused on procedural learning and completing of tasks. Instruction predominately lacked higher-order questioning and peer discussions. Instructional practices do not encourage levels of high student engagement preventing increased student achievement.
- Generally, instructional practices do not promote intellectual discovery or rigorous thinking, nor is there an environment that promotes physical or intellectual safety. Though pockets of effective instructional practices were observed, the predominant method of instructional delivery was lecture. Behavioral management strategies witnessed relied on reactive approaches and did not address specific behavior, only removal from class. It was reported by both staff and students that removal to the SAVE (Students Against Violence in Education) room was not viewed as effective, as there are no learning expectations. The SAC (Student Assistance Center) room, however, was reported as more severe, as the behavior expectations are both clear and consistent. There was no evidence that

students have input on programmatic decisions related to the school environment. Both staff and students reported feelings of intimidation in certain classroom and common areas. Instructional practices do not meet the diverse needs of all students, preventing an environment that is physically and intellectually safe.

- Data-driven instruction is not common practice at this school. Aside from New York State assessment data and report card grades, no other forms of assessment data were reported or evidenced. Instructional strategies based on data that target specific groups of students was not evidenced, nor was data informed groupings of students for targeted instruction. As a result, obtaining high levels of student achievement is made more difficult when instructional decision-making is based on limited data points.

Recommendation:

- School leaders should immediately begin work with teachers to establish school wide expectations for engagement, specific literacy in the content area strategies and protocols for using data for effective student groupings.

Tenet 5 - Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health: The school community identifies, promotes, and supports social and emotional development by designing systems and experiences that lead to healthy relationships and a safe, respectful environment that is conducive to learning for all constituents.

Tenet Rating

STAGE 1

The school is in **Stage 1** for Tenet 5 – Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health.

- There is no formalized vision, system or program in place to identify or support students’ social/emotional development. The school leader stated that they have started to address this area. The school has received a mental health social work and a behavioral specialist who have started to look at relevant data. Until a vision and formalized system are in place, barriers to learning cannot be addressed and will continue to hinder academic success.
- There is no social-emotional curriculum currently in use. Issues concerning students’ social/emotional health needs are dealt with on a student to student basis. The building leader acknowledged that a needs assessment should be done but provided no plans for doing so. Without an understanding of current student social/emotional health needs, barriers to learning cannot be properly addressed and students will not develop social-emotional learning skills.
- There is no strategic plan in place to organize efforts to address students’ social/emotional developmental health needs. Without a strategic plan in place that coordinates the efforts of all stakeholders, students will not receive the supports they need and barriers to learning will remain.
- There are no structures currently in place to collect and analyze data related to student social/emotional developmental health needs. Without strategic and intentional use of data to address student needs, social/emotional learning skills of students will not be developed and barriers to learning will remain.

Recommendation:

- By June 2016, the school leader should work with stakeholders to adopt a school-wide social-emotional learning curriculum and schedule all professional development required in order to implement by September 2016.

<p>Tenet 6 - Family and Community Engagement: The school creates a culture of partnership where families, community members, and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being.</p>	<p>Tenet Rating</p>	<p>STAGE 1</p>
<p>The school is in Stage 1 for Tenet 6 – Family and Community Engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lack of communication between the school and students’ families. Although parents expressed positive regards for the school leader and reported positive experiences from Open House, delays in receiving responses to phone calls and email were reported. Parents present were unaware of the changes in school leadership which took place throughout the year. Without regular communication, partnerships between the school and families cannot be cultivated in order to assist children with meeting academic success. • The opportunities for reciprocal communication between staff and families is inconsistent throughout the school. While some parents reported regular communications, such as emails and phone calls, from their children’s teachers, other parents reported waiting weeks for a response. A parent interested in getting a tutor for their child reported having to wait weeks for test papers to be returned in order to inform the child’s tutor how best to provide support. Effective planning and a system for reciprocal communications is vital to ensuring students’ academic achievement and social-emotional growth. • There is a lack of partnerships between the school, the families of its students and community agencies. The school did not fully utilize the resources from the Community Schools Grant. Statements from parents indicated a desire to revive the school’s parent group. The lack of strong partnerships between the school and the community impedes improved student outcomes. • School community members are not empowered to take action to support student academic or social-emotional learning. There is an absence of data to focus dialogue and efforts regarding students’ social-emotional wellbeing. Teachers expressed both frustration with and a hesitance to intervene in matters of student behavior. There are no formalized protocols in place for the collection, analysis, planning and sharing of academic data. Without data to drive conversations and inform efforts towards improved student academic and social-emotional needs, the school community will not be empowered or knowledgeable in how best to support improved student learning. <p>Recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By June 2016, school leaders should create a parent stakeholders group that will work with the School Leadership Team to develop a parent newsletter, formal opportunities to meet with school leaders and opportunities for parent volunteers in the school for implementation in September 2016. 		

