New York State EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Knowledge > Skill > Opportunity

Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness

On-Site Needs Assessment
Final Report

Leadership and Systems

Curriculum

Instruction

Social-Emotional Learning

Family Engagement

BEDS Code	030200010012
School Name	Theodore Roosevelt School
School Address	9 Ogden Street, Binghamton, NY 13901
District Name	Binghamton City School District
Principal	David Chilson
Dates of Visit	February 20-23, 2019

Purpose Of The Visit

This school was identified as needing additional support by the New York State Education Department (NYSED). Because of this identification, NYSED arranged for an Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) to visit the school. The visit is intended to help the school identify areas of need that are making long-term success a challenge and provide several visible Quick Wins that can be accomplished and demonstrate the school's commitment to improvement.

The report provides a critical lens to help the school best focus its efforts.

School Performance

New York State uses multiple indicators to determine the identification status of schools across the state. For each of these indicators, schools receive a number of 1 (lowest), 2, 3, or 4 (highest) that corresponds with how the school performed in relation to either other schools and/or performance targets. More information about how these levels are determined can be found at: http://www.nysed.gov/accountability/essa-accountability-designation-materials

The most recent results for the "All Students" group at the school are as follows:

Elementary/Middle School Performance Indicators

Composite Performance Achievement Level	Student Growth Level	Combined Composite and Student Growth Level	English Language Proficiency Level	Average ELA and Math Academic Progress Level	Chronic Absenteeism Level
1	1	1		2	2

Theodore Roosevelt School serves 374 students in pre-kindergarten through grade five.

Information About The Visit

- The visit was led by an Outside Educational Expert (OEE) and a representative from NYSED. The team also included a district representative.
- The team visited a total of 31 classrooms during the visit.
- The OEE visited 13 classrooms with the principal during the visit.
- Team members conducted interviews with students, staff, and parents.
- Team members examined documents provided by the school, including schoolwide data, teacher feedback, and student work.
- In advance of the visit, the school provided results of a staff survey that 42 staff members (100 percent) completed.
- In advance of the visit, 42 staff members (100 percent) completed a DTSDE pre-visit survey conducted by NYSED.
- On the second day of the visit, the school had a delayed opening due to inclement weather.

Successes Within The School That The School Should Build Upon:

1. Since September 2018, grade two teachers have been collaborating with the school social worker to team teach the Connected & Respected curriculum which contains 16 lessons per grade level focused on five themes: Making Connections, Emotional Literacy, Caring and Effective Communication, Cultural Competence and Social Responsibility, and Conflict Management and Responsible Decision-Making. Using this model, students are taught a concept during the morning meeting, and teachers reinforce the concept throughout the school day. Since the implementation of this curriculum, the number of disciplinary incidents for grade two students has decreased. School leaders are planning to expand the use of this curriculum to other grades during the 2019-20 school year.

2. For 2018-19, school leaders developed an academic challenge and enrichment (ACE) program to provide challenging and enriching activities for higher achieving students in grades four and five. Students in this program participate in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) activities that extend the current curriculum and challenge the students to think more deeply about the content being studied. Interviewed students participating in this program were excited about the activities and stated that they enjoyed the opportunity to think beyond what is taught within the regular classroom lessons.

3. The school has implemented both positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) and the Student and Teacher Agreement Realignment Strategy (STARS) programs as a way to improve the school environment and foster a culture of collaboration and respect. Since implementing these two programs, there has been an increase in both staff and student attendance and a decrease in the number of disciplinary incidents. Additionally, school leaders and teachers noted improvements in morale and the overall climate of the school.

Areas Of Need To Be Addressed For Long-Term Success

Systems for Improvement

- **The School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP) actions plans need to include specific dates for implementation that allow school leaders to monitor progress at regular intervals and make adjustments as needed.** Most of the dates for implementation of activities in the 2018-19 SCEP action plans are listed as September to June, with no interim benchmarks to measure progress. School leaders acknowledged that establishing short-term goals and target dates would allow them to better monitor the impact of school improvement efforts and make adjustments when necessary to achieve the identified goals.
- **School leaders should review and modify how intervention services are provided to ensure they are effectively supporting student learning.** Through observations and interviews with teachers, the IIT found that students who need intervention services are regularly pulled from classes to receive those supports causing them to miss a significant amount of the general education content.
- **School leaders should encourage all teachers to participate in inter-visitation.** Through interviews with school leaders and teachers, the IIT learned that the existing system of teacher inter-visitation is not being used by all teachers to share best instructional practices across the school. Teachers volunteer to participate in inter-visitation, and school leaders provide a substitute each week to cover for teachers who wish to visit

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other classes. However, teacher participation in inter-visitation is limited, and it is primarily new teachers that are taking advantage of the opportunity.

Leadership and Organization at the School

- **The school should develop a formal protocol for Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) which focuses on supporting student learning and achievement.** The IIT found no evidence of a district- or building-level protocol for PLCs. Currently, a member of each grade-level team leads the PLC, and the agenda for PLC meetings is created by each individual team. The IIT did not find any specific process to record and maintain minutes of the PLCs or evidence that expected outcomes for the meetings had been established**.** When observing grade-level PLCs, the IIT found that although the meetings typically operated smoothly, at times the conversations within the meetings were not focused on improving teaching and learning. For example, in some meetings, discussions focused on student social-emotional health rather than academic performance.
- **School Leaders should develop a plan for supporting and monitoring the integration of available resources into the classrooms.** Over the past year, school leaders have provided teachers with access to a range of suitable teaching programs and learning resources and offered some training on the use of these reources. However, some teachers stated that they were confused about how and when to implement the new programs and strategies in their classrooms. School leaders acknowledged that teachers need additional clarification and training and that increased monitoring of the implementation of new programs and strategies would be beneficial. During the visit, an after-school training for staff on the implementation of new programs had been scheduled, but this was canceled due to inclement weather. A follow-up training has been scheduled.

Learning at the School

- **Teachers need to utilize wait time to allow students to fully develop their answers.** During class visits, the IIT observed multiple instances in which students were asked a question and then quickly provided with the answer. In other classes, students were not given time to reflect on all possible options and provided only a short answer before receiving the remaining information from the teacher. School leaders acknowledged that some teachers need to provide longer wait times and stated that they have been addressing this through conversations with teachers.
- **Teachers should use questioning as a strategy to deepen student understanding of the content material.** In most classes visited, students were primarily asked comprehension questions that did not require them to think deeply about the content. In addition, the IIT saw few opportunities for students to ask questions of teachers or their peers to gain a better understanding of the material and concepts being taught.   Although school leaders stated that teachers are expected to utilize student questioning in their lessons, they acknowledged that this is an area that needs improvement.

Stakeholder Perspectives on Areas of Need and Ideas for Improvement

- **Students would like more students to be recognized for positive behavior.** The school holds a monthly schoolwide recognition assembly where students from all grade levels are recognized for positive behavior.

Students stated that they enjoy the recognition, but they would like more students to be recognized. Students suggested that having two assemblies, one for kindergarten through grade two and one for grades three through five, would allow more students to be recognized each month.

- **Teachers and families stated that the school's current curriculum is not culturally relevant to the students.** While the majority of students within the school are African American and Latino, interviewed teachers and families stated that the current curriculum does not reflect that demographic. They explained that the current curriculum does not include historical events from African American and Latino culture and does not include stories that depict characters representing these demographics.

- **Many families are not comfortable coming to the school.** With the exception of student performances, family participation in school events is minimal. Interviewed families stated that many families are not comfortable coming to the school. One family member suggested that having parents volunteer to hear students read during the school day would be a good way to increase family participation.

- **Families stated that school leaders and staff do not have a thorough understanding of cultural differences and do not celebrate other cultures.** Interviewed families shared that many teachers do not demonstrate a clear understanding of student's cultural backgrounds, and the school does not offer activities that celebrate different cultures or display images of people from diverse ethnic backgrounds.