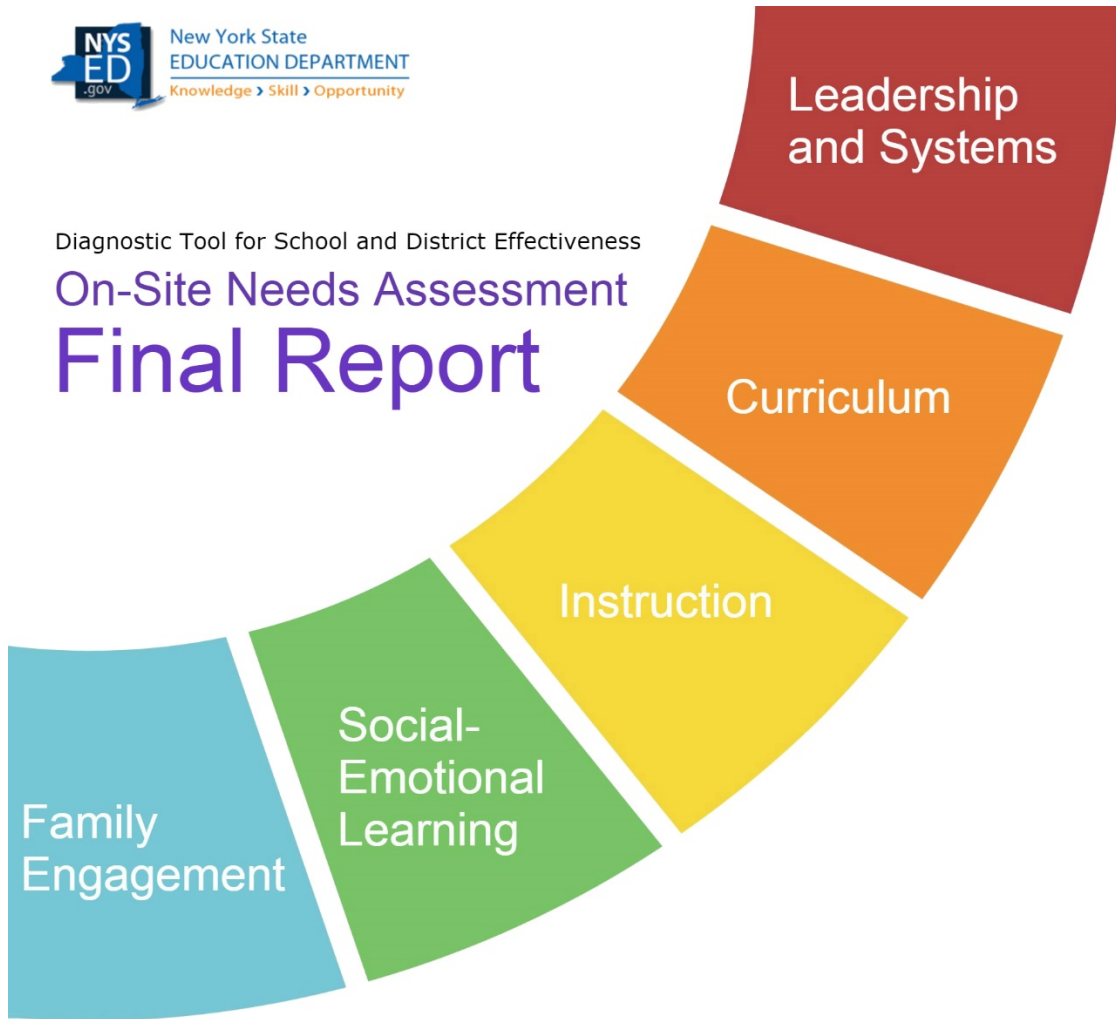


Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness

On-Site Needs Assessment

# Final Report



<b>BEDS Code</b>	<b>140600010033</b>
<b>School Name</b>	<b>Bilingual Center School #33</b>
<b>School Address</b>	<b>157 Elk Street</b>
<b>District Name</b>	<b>Buffalo City School District</b>
<b>Principal</b>	<b>Hadassa Bachellor</b>
<b>Dates of Visit</b>	<b>December 4-6, 2018</b>



## Purpose Of The Visit

A team organized by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) visited the school to help the school identify areas of need that are making long-term success a challenge and provide actionable quick wins to direct the school's work in the immediate future.

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

## 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, a Special Education School Improvement Specialist (SESIS) representative, and a representative from the Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN).
- The team visited a total of 48 classrooms during the visit.
- The OEE visited four classrooms and observed the grade four team meeting with the principal during the visit.
- Team members conducted interviews with students, staff, and parents.
- Team members examined documents provided by the school, including lesson plans, collaborative team meeting notes, school-wide data, teacher feedback, and student work.
- In advance of the visit, 31 staff members (78 percent) completed a DTSDE pre-visit survey conducted by NYSED.

## Successes Within The School That The School Should Build Upon:

1. **Parents feel the school's bilingual program provides students with a significant advantage that will increase their career opportunities.** Parents shared that the bilingual program attracted them to the school, as they valued the opportunity for their children to become bilingual and academically successful in two languages and thus have better future career opportunities.
2. **In her first three months at the school, the principal has established clear expectations and structures for school improvement and is supporting and enabling staff to improve their professional performance.** Recent strategic initiatives include increased usage of Class Dojo, which has enabled teachers to communicate regularly with family members; the allocation of time for English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teachers to provide mandated, stand-alone services; and improved monitoring of weekly lesson plans by school leaders where teachers receive constructive feedback on the quality of their planning. In interviews, most teachers indicated that they had received feedback, which was beginning to improve their lesson plans.
3. **The new principal has formalized a grade level meeting structure, committed school leaders to visiting classes every day, and has provided professional development (PD) on a variety of different instructional practices each month between September and November.** All grade level team meetings are now guided by agendas, provide teachers a facilitated environment to examine data and/or student work, and result in action plans that document the work ahead for each grade level team. Grade level meetings are facilitated by the literacy coach and guided by a year-long plan she developed in collaboration with the principal. The analysis of a wide range of different student performance data that took place in the early fall informed the development of formative assessments, the revision of writing activities in some grade levels, and the

formation of leveled groups for interventions. The principal, assistant principal (AP), and literacy coach have provided differentiated support to each grade level team as they work to implement the new initiatives and meet expectations for planning for Data-Driven Instruction (DDI).

## Areas Of Need To Be Addressed For Long-Term Success

### Systems for Improvement

- **School leaders need to develop a system to collect, analyze, and calibrate classroom observation data to determine the progress of schoolwide instructional practices.** Both the principal and the AP conduct class visits but as a next step need to develop a system to calibrate their observations or a shared data system to house both walkthrough data and the details of the follow up support provided to groups of teachers and individual teachers. This will enable school leaders to examine desegregated data about teachers and building-wide trends to effectively distribute and monitor the impact of their instructional leadership.

### Leadership and Organization at the School

- **School leaders need to develop or select a rubric to provide feedback for teachers of science, social studies, and other subject areas to improve the quality of teaching and learning at the school.** The principal conducts frequent class visits and utilizes a district-developed rubric to provide non-evaluative feedback on math and English language arts (ELA) lessons. However, there is no similar rubric for science and other subject areas. An appropriate tool to provide feedback on science lessons is important given the school's ambitious 20 percentage point growth goal in science.

### Learning at the School

- **Teachers need to plan for and deliver lessons that include a range of instructional strategies to support the diverse needs of all students.** While many teachers spoke about data-driven instruction (DDI) and discussed how they use strategies, such as sentence starters, graphic organizers, manipulatives, white boards, and videos in instruction, these tools and strategies were not evident during classroom visits. The IIT found frequent use of worksheets and whole class lecture. Further, prior knowledge was not typically activated at the onset of a lesson or assessment used to determine whether the objective had been met at the end of a lesson.
- **School leaders need to clearly define all the bilingual education program models used at the school and clarify the learning expectations for each program.** Evidence collected in meetings with stakeholders, as well as classroom visits, suggested that there are varied understandings about the method of bilingual education at the school. Some teachers have not been fully trained in the 50/50 model and others stated they are unclear about program elements and best practices.
- **School leaders need to clearly communicate the school's expectations for treating students with respect and dignity.** Most students reported that there was at least one trusted adult in the building who they could speak to about important matters or issues that concerned them. Some students reported that they sometimes felt scared to talk or embarrassed to ask questions in class. The use of a respectful tone when speaking to parents and students was cited as an area of concern.

## Stakeholder Perspectives on Areas of Need and Ideas for Improvement

- **The use of technology for home-school communication varies considerably in its frequency and quality.** The IIT found that the lower grade teachers are communicating more often with parents and those parents stated that they are in general more satisfied with the communication. Effective use of Class Dojo to share information about assignments, homework, and class activities was more often reported by parents of lower grade students than by those of upper grade students, which mirrors the fact that upper grade teachers only adopted the software this year, while many lower grade teachers have more years of experience with it.
- **Not all parents feel the school provides them with a clear understanding of student progress.** Although most parents reported receiving report cards, many raised the issue that report cards are only available in English, which prevents some non-English speaking parents from gaining a full understanding of their children's progress in school. Several parents of upper grade students stated that they would like information about their children's progress more frequently than report cards.
- **Many students, and parents were unclear about the school's behavioral expectations, positive supports, and consequences.** Efforts were made by the principal and the Student Study Team to ensure that students in all grade levels understood the behavioral norms established at the beginning of the year. However, students and parents reported different understandings about the existence or definition of school-wide norms, behavioral expectations, and consequences in interviews.