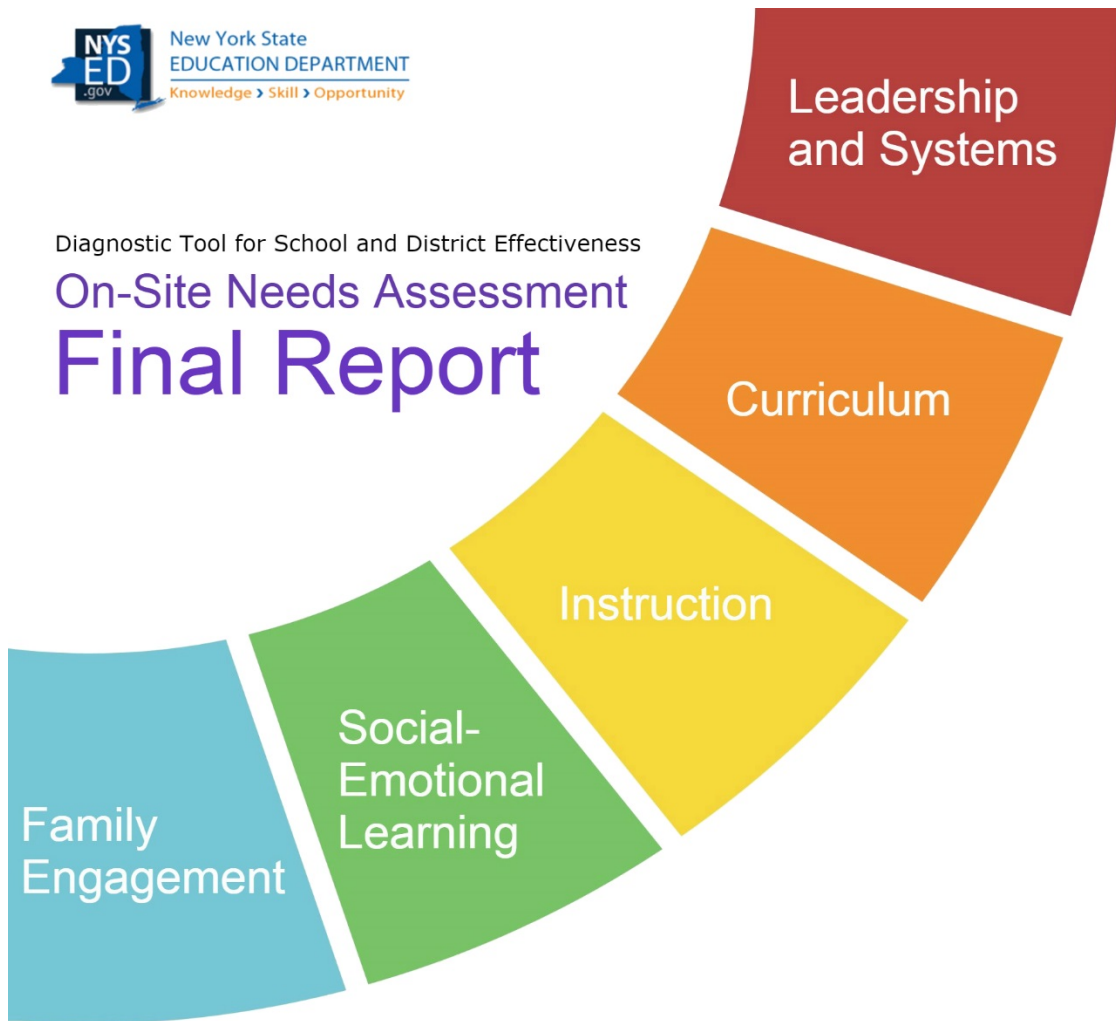


Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness

On-Site Needs Assessment

Final Report



BEDS Code	140600010082
School Name	PS 82 Early Childhood Center
School Address	230 Easton Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14215
District Name	Buffalo City School District
Principal	Tracie-Michele A. Lewis
Dates of Visit	December 11-13, 2018



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 and a Special Education School Improvement Specialist (SEIS) representative.
- The team visited a total of 31 classrooms during the visit.
- The OEE visited five 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 curriculum maps/action plans, schoolwide data, teacher feedback, and student work.
- In advance of the visit, 20 staff members (44.4 percent) completed a DTSDE pre-visit survey conducted by NYSED.
- PS 82 Early Childhood Center School serves 389 students in grades pre-kindergarten to four.

Successes Within The School That The School Should Build Upon:

1. Students shared that they are provided numerous opportunities to engage positively with their teachers and fellow students. In interviews with the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT), students stated that they feel safe at school and believe they have staff members who they can go to if they need support.
2. School leaders and the parent liaison have created a designated parent/family room that offers clothing, support services information, and other resources to support students' families. This has created opportunities for positive interaction between the school and its families, resulting in increased interest from parents who are looking to volunteer.
3. The IIT noted that special education classrooms are placed throughout the building and are included and participate in the school culture. This has created a culture of inclusivity that has positively impacted the social emotional relationships for special education students and has helped illustrate key elements of the school's Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) matrix to all students.

Areas Of Need To Be Addressed For Long-Term Success

Systems for Improvement

- **The school leaders should ensure that school goals are attainable.** For example, one of the school's goals is to increase English language arts (ELA) proficiency to 41 percent when currently only 23 percent of students are proficient. Similarly, for math, the school's goal is to increase proficiency to 43 percent when currently 21 percent of students were proficient. Although these goals are ambitious, the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) believes that these goals may be unattainable given the school's current proficiency numbers. In the

future, the school leaders should consider more attainable goals, building on past successes to foster growth and achievement in identified areas.

Leadership and Organization at the School

- **The school leaders should ensure that the master schedule is organized to support the daily needs of elementary school classrooms with regard to academics, social-emotional support, or basic logistics.** Currently, the organization of the master schedule includes 15 minutes for math academic intervention services (AIS), no time for transition, and no time for recess. Teachers stated that they cannot quickly shift from one content area to another in class, let alone from the classroom to a special and back again, without being late to start. To help manage, some teachers said that they switch content areas around on different days, with the hope that students will receive the required minutes of instruction over the course of the semester. For example, teachers were switching science in the morning with social studies at the end of the day because the time students needed to get ready to go home, especially in the winter, was cutting heavily into the scheduled content area's instructional time. Without set transition times, teachers are being left to amend the schedule to fit their immediate needs, creating imbalance and irregularity in instructional time for certain content areas. Students are not receiving as much time for physical activity or break time as they are allotted per the schedule. In the future, school leaders should design a master schedule that includes adequate time for math AIS, transition time, and recess at a time of the day when recess will be implemented.
- **School leaders need to set expectations and foster a collaborative environment.** Teachers stated that many teachers tend keep to themselves or near close colleagues and try to manage their classrooms alone and deliver instruction through strategies of their own. Teachers also stated that while they may receive a directive, it is not often disseminated in the most efficient way. For example, the principal only posts the newsletter in the office and makes it a point to monitor who is reading and discussing the newsletter's content. The principal shared that she has taken the first part of the school year to monitor how the school operates and assess the needs of staff and students because she is new to the school. The school leaders are now moving towards setting and monitoring expectations for teachers.

Learning at the School

- **Teachers need to plan lessons that address the needs of students.** The IIT found that while teachers noted the quality resources the curriculum contains and the grade level standards it addresses, they stated that they often work to follow pacing guides as they are written and do not make modifications based on data that might better serve the needs of students because they feel they need to cover the content on schedule. In the future, school leader will need to support teachers with planning lessons that address the diverse needs of students.
- **School leaders should work with coaches to support teachers by providing them with feedback and individualized support based on their needs.** School leaders have been able to get into some classrooms and understand the needs of many of their teachers. Most of the informal feedback to teachers is relayed verbally by school leaders with little, if any, follow up, making it difficult for coaches or other school leaders to use walkthrough data when addressing teacher support needs.
- **Teachers should plan and post objectives that are aligned to what is being taught in the classroom.** School leaders have set the expectation that teachers post objectives in their classroom by following a specific protocol. The IIT noted on the first day of its visit that many teachers did post learning objectives. However, on day two of the visit, the team saw that many classes that had posted objectives, had the same objectives

from the previous day, and while some lessons may have extended into the second day, teachers in few classes observed were teaching content aligned to the posted objectives.

- **Staff should regularly model the school's PBIS pledge to students.** School leaders and staff said they believe that setting behavior expectations for students is imperative in promoting a scholarly and collegial learning environment. Students stated that they are unsure of the behavior expectations, as different staff have different expectations, and that some students are not equally held accountable for following those expectations. The IIT and school leaders observed that some teachers were abrasive and curt in their interactions with students.

Stakeholder Perspectives on Areas of Need and Ideas for Improvement

- **Teachers shared that the bulletin and other pertinent information are posted in the office but not communicated by other means.** Staff stated this creates an inequity of access for teachers who may not be able to regularly take time to stop and read the entire bulletin. This also impacts school leaders' ability to set expectations and hold staff accountable for items outlined in the bulletins.
- **Parents expressed concern about staff talking about their children in front of other adults.** Parents noted that teachers or other parents not directly involved with their children could speak to incidents regarding private information to which they should not be privy. Parents stated they heard teachers or staff members discussing student issues openly with other adults in ways that seemed inappropriate and did not protect student's privacy.
- **Parents expressed that they do not feel welcome in the building.** Parents stated to the IIT that the building is not very welcoming in appearance and that there is limited information available about their children's education when they visit. They said the entrance is poorly lit, and the office is not easy to find without help. Parents also said they feel it is much harder than it used to be to interact with teachers and observe their children in the classroom.