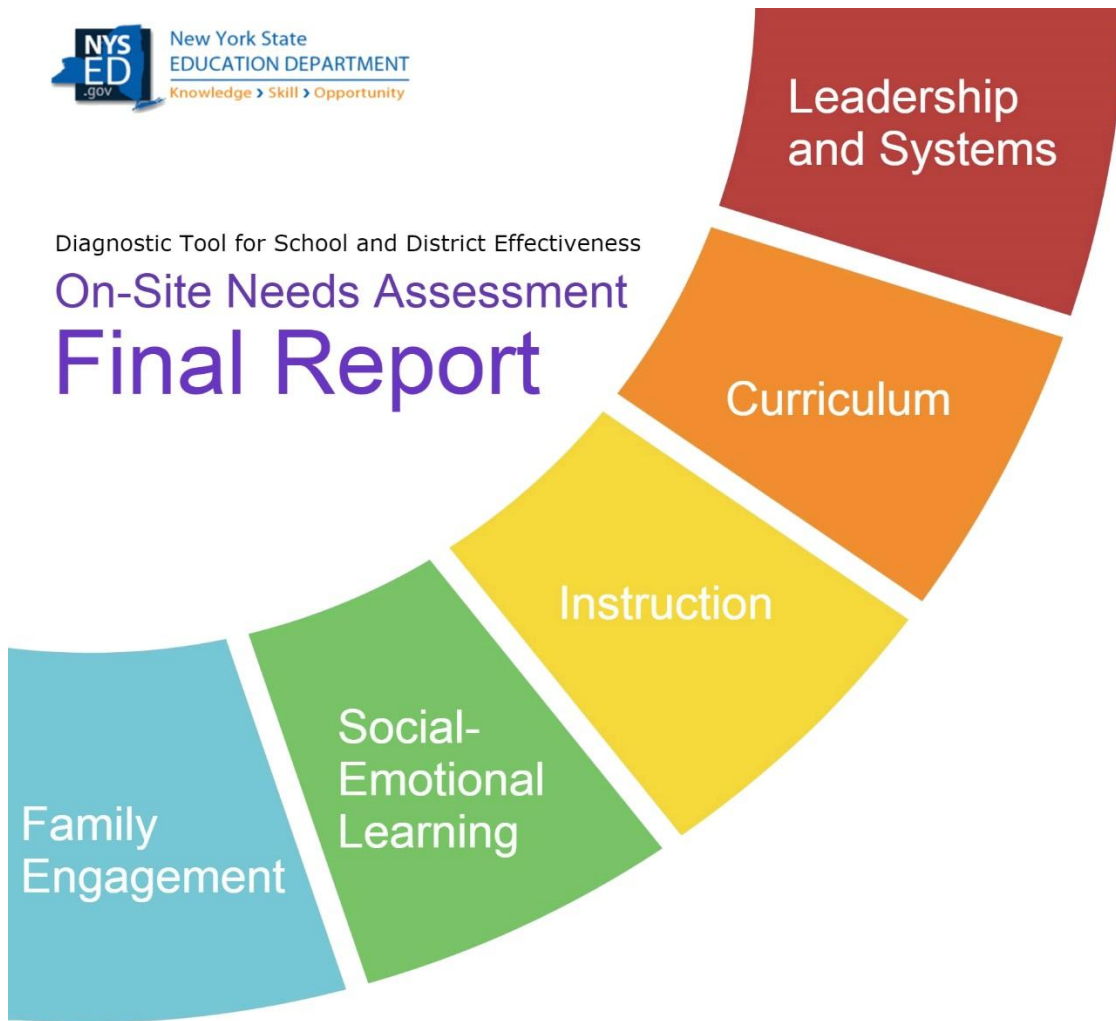


Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness

On-Site Needs Assessment

Final Report



BEDS Code	140600010043
School Name	Lovejoy Discovery School #43
School Address	161 Benzinger Street, Buffalo, NY 14206
District Name	Buffalo City School District
Principal	Orniece Hill
Dates of Visit	November 27-29, 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 visited a total of 29 classrooms during the visit.
- The OEE visited 11 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 lesson plans, schoolwide data, teacher feedback, and student work.
- In advance of the visit, the school provided results of a staff survey that 11 staff members (18 percent) completed.

Successes Within The School That The School Should Build Upon:

1. Students reported that they have a sense of belonging within the school and they attributed this to the Restorative Circles program, which the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) found is being implemented to some degree in 75% of classrooms. In addition, students stated that restorative circles help them to understand their classmates better, and that this program, when implemented, helps them appreciate attending this school more.
2. During interviews with the team, teachers consistently reported that the school's principal and school leaders have created an environment where their concerns are being heard and respected. The school has had five principals in the six years prior to the arrival of the current principal. Staff reported that there is an overall feeling of respect and willingness on the part of the current school leaders to understand the needs of the school and that this has helped ease the process of implementing phase one of the Restorative Practices.
3. The IIT observed a positive climate and culture at Lovejoy Discovery School. Class transitions, as students moved between classes, were orderly. In addition, the IIT did not observe behavior issues in classrooms.

Areas Of Need To Be Addressed For Long-Term Success

Systems for Improvement

- **Teachers should maximize instructional time by adhering to the daily schedule.** Students are admitted to school at 9:00 a.m., and restorative circles are to begin by 9:20 a.m. However, the IIT observed that restorative circles did not start until 9:30 a.m. in most classrooms. As a result, students lost ten minutes, on average, of

instructional time at the start of each day. In addition, school leaders have implemented a schoolwide Response to Intervention (RtI) program time. When the IIT asked teachers about its implementation, they stated that there is a suggested time for teachers to work with students, but the schedule is not enforced.

Leadership and Organization at the School

- **School leaders will need to monitor common planning time to ensure that it is being used by teachers to modify instruction to meet student needs.** The IIT found that some teachers are using common planning time to implement initiatives and improve their practice. However, during some grade-level common planning time meetings observed by the IIT, time was spent gathering data and organizing information, but not using data to modify instruction in order to meet student needs.

Learning at the School

- **Academic data needs to be used to drive the instructional process.** Data-informed decisions to design and deliver instruction are areas in need of growth. The IIT observed that teachers typically delivered the same instruction to the entire class of students.
- **Instruction should be student-centered.** The IIT found that prior DTSDE recommendations around instruction still need to be implemented in order to ensure that learning in classrooms is student-centered.

Stakeholder Perspectives on Areas of Need

- **Students shared they want less noise and litter in hallways.** Students reported that litter is often in the hallways after breakfast, and they stated that a few students cause minor disruptions in the hallways during instructional time on occasion.