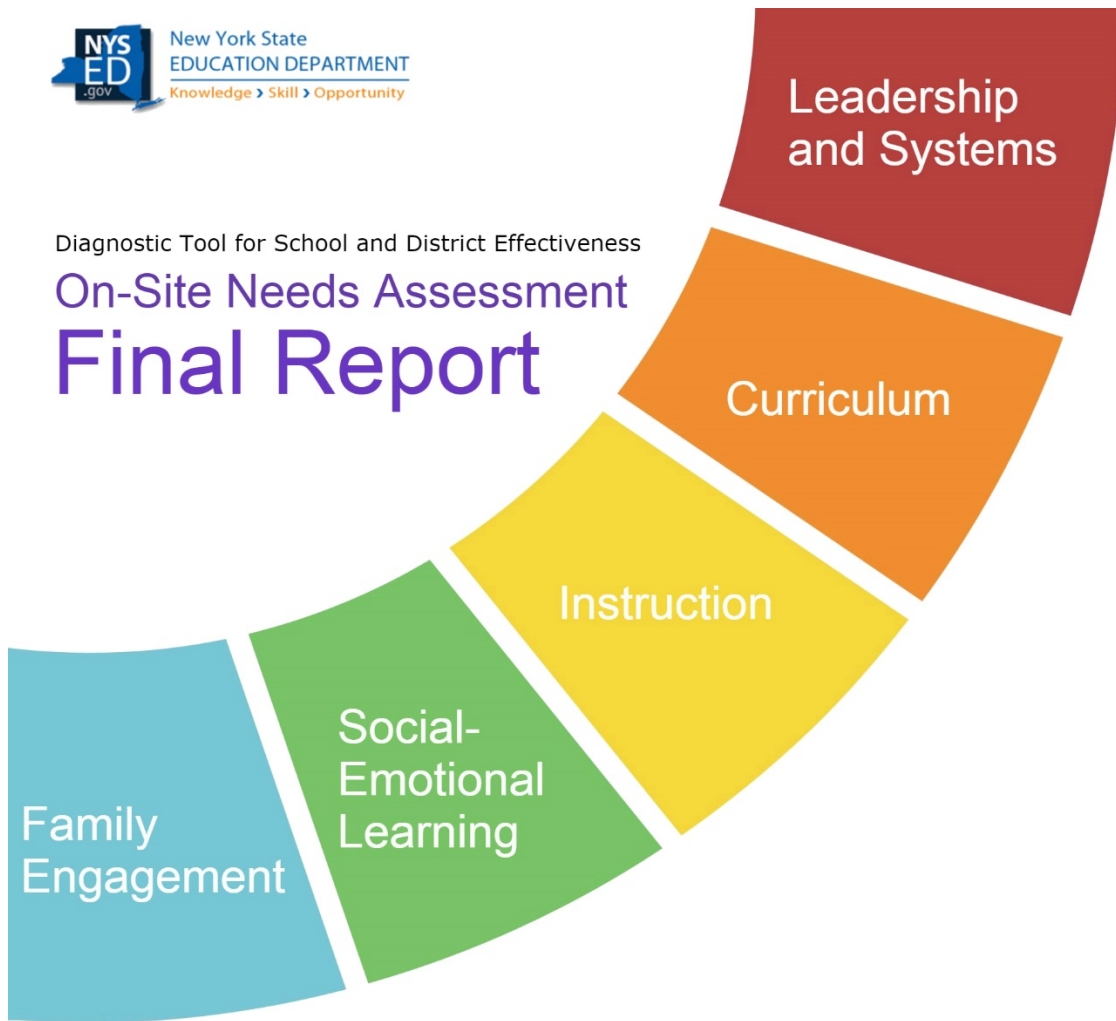


Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness

On-Site Needs Assessment

# Final Report



|                       |                                       |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>BEDS Code</b>      | 160801040002                          |
| <b>School Name</b>    | Chateaugay Middle-High School         |
| <b>School Address</b> | 42 River Street, Chateaugay, NY 12920 |
| <b>District Name</b>  | Chateaugay Central School District    |
| <b>Principal</b>      | Lori Tourville                        |
| <b>Dates of Visit</b> | March 19-21, 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 |
|---|----------------------|---|------------------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| 2                                       | 1                    | 1   | N/A                                | 1  | 4                         |

### High School Performance Indicators

| 4 Yr Grad. Rate <67% | Composite Performance Achievement Level | Average of 4-, 5-, and 6-year Graduation Rate Levels | Combined Composite Performance Achievement and Graduation Rate Level | English Language Proficiency Level | Average ELA and Math Academic Progress Level | Chronic Absenteeism Level | College, Career, Civic, Readiness (CCCR) Level |
|----------------------|---|--|--|------------------------------------|--|---------------------------|--|
| No                   | 3                                       | 4  | 3  | N/A                                | 3  | 4                         | 4  |

Chateaugay Middle-High School serves 213 students in grades seven through 12.

## 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 who was the school principal.
- The team visited a total of 24 classrooms during the visit.
- The OEE visited six 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 student work.
- In advance of the visit, 31 staff members (89 percent) completed a DTSDE pre-visit survey conducted by NYSED.

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

1. To prioritize student learning, the principal, faculty, and staff have continued to build on the development of a warm and supportive environment for students and their families. When the IIT asked students and parents what they liked most about the school, they stated that they appreciated the positive relationships they had with everyone at the school. Students also commented that they felt safe in the school and that they liked coming to school. The most recent data available for the school, which is from the 2017-18 school year, show that State assessment scores are steadily increasing in both the middle school and the high school. Scores on local assessments for the 2018-19 school year thus far, are continuing this trend. During discussions with the team, parents shared anecdotes of some at-risk students they knew from other districts, who indicated that when the students transferred to Chateaugay Middle School/High School, they attended school regularly and were more successful academically.
2. This school year, the school has contracted with a community agency for the services of a mental health coordinator to better address students' social and emotional learning. The mental health coordinator has been working closely with the health teacher to revise the curriculum to make it more relevant to student needs. She has established a cycle where she visits all grades to discuss health issues. This is especially important for certain grades, such as grade eight, which are not scheduled for a health class because of the alternating years when health class is part of that year's curriculum. During the IIT's visit, all students participated in an assembly that the coordinator had organized, which focused on the dangers of vaping. Currently, the frequency of students' vaping is of particular concern to the school leaders and staff.
3. Each year the school sponsors a senior trip to Washington, D.C. This year's trip is scheduled to take place in April 2019. The fees are covered by the district, the parents, and fund raising by the students. In this way, all students are able to take part in the trip regardless of their financial situation. Seniors are expected to research the areas the group will visit and are required to make presentations in their English 12 classes, highlighting what they have found. In this way, students practice their public speaking skills while gaining background on and a better understanding of the monuments and government agencies they will visit.

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

### Systems for Improvement

- **The principal should develop a system to enable teachers to plan together to improve instruction.** The small size of the school results, in many cases, in there being only one teacher per content area. While teachers have one or two preparation periods a day, the principal reported that the current teacher schedule does not allow teachers to have time to meet as a group. In addition, with only one teacher per content area, there is often no one else to plan lessons within the particular subject area. In the future, the principal should consider developing a system, within the school's schedule, to allow teachers to come together to discuss ways in which

they can address common skills, such as inferring or predicting, in their classes, regardless of the content area being planned for and taught.

- **School leadership needs to develop a system so that data is collected for individual students in order to track their progress.** There is a system in place for academic and behavioral referrals. The school uses a ticket system where the multi-tiered system of support team meets every five weeks to review referrals from teachers. Teachers told the IIT that they submit tickets outlining information about the student based on social, emotional, and/or academic issues. However, teachers noted, and the school leadership acknowledged, that their submissions contain information that is primarily anecdotal, and there should be a central database where this information is kept either for future analysis or reference.
- **School leaders will need to establish an effective system to proactively identify students in need of social and emotional support.** When the IIT interviewed the student support staff, they noted that their student groups should meet with them regularly to address emotional or behavioral concerns. The principal reported that the school is in the process of implementing the *Leader in Me* program, which is already in place at the elementary school. However, this program, which includes some components that support social and emotional learning, such as self-discipline, communication, and listening skills, has only 12 students on the student lead team.

## Leadership and Organization at the School

- **The principal should develop a process so that behavioral issues are handled at the classroom level as well as by the school leadership.** The IIT found that the principal has assumed responsibility for addressing most behavioral issues in the school, which results in her being confined to her office for a large part of the day. The principal explained to the IIT that she feels it is important for her to relieve teachers of as many responsibilities as possible, so they can concentrate on instruction. In the absence of definitive structures to identify those behaviors that should result in students being sent to the principal's office, many teachers immediately send misbehaving students to the office without first attempting to manage the student's behavior in class. This issue results in a larger than necessary number of students being sent to the office, and the principal spending much of her day addressing numerous, often minor, behavioral issues.
- **The principal should visit classrooms more frequently, on an informal basis, to determine the quality and impact of instruction and provide teachers with regular, targeted feedback.** The principal reported that she carries out the required formal teacher observations each year, but because of other duties, she is not able to visit classes informally as much as she would like. During interviews, teachers told the IIT that they receive positive feedback from the principal after her occasional class visits. In the future, the principal should consider setting aside time each week to visit classes and to provide targeted feedback to teachers on their professional practice.

## Learning at the School

- **Teachers will need to incorporate the learning standards they are identifying for their content areas in their lessons.** The team did not observe learning targets, objectives, or standards posted or referred to in the classes they visited. The principal told the IIT that teachers have been involved in a multi-year project to identify the

standards for their subject area and will now move to creating assessments to measure student achievement. However, this task is undertaken during teacher meetings and has not yet been implemented in classrooms or practice. The IIT did not see any indication in classrooms of these standards, or reference to them to help students understand what they should be learning and why. Students told the IIT that they are often confused by the packets of material they are required to complete and are not sure of the reasons behind the work.

- **Teachers should develop pacing guides to ensure that all required material is covered in their content area.** The principal told the IIT that she has not required teachers to develop pacing guides, which would lay out their content for the school year. Some teachers indicated that they know what they should address to prepare students for tests, so formal pacing guides, for example, are not necessary. The principal noted that the lack of a guide to the curriculum being covered sometimes puts her at a disadvantage when she visits classes, particularly because it makes it more difficult to fully judge the effectiveness of the teacher's instructional practices, as she is not familiar with content in all subject areas.
- **Teachers need to provide more lessons that are aligned to students different learning needs and include checks for student understanding of what they are learning.** The team found that most instruction is teacher led, with the same activities completed by the whole group. In most classes the IIT visited, all students were completing the same assignments. Teachers seldom checked how well their students understood the material during class by asking questions randomly or having students stop and share their thoughts with their peers or bringing closure to lessons before the bell rang. Students interviewed told the IIT that the content of the lesson is not usually summarized at the end of the session and that they are not asked to complete an exit slip or other method of sharing with the teacher whether they understood what they had learned.
- **Teachers should use data to address individual student needs.** In grades seven and eight, students are assigned iReady diagnostic assessments. The school is attempting to implement the *iReady* program with fidelity, but the data generated are not used effectively to create small groups with targeted support. Teachers assign ten *iReady* assessments per month for all students. Students told the IIT that they have difficulty completing all these assignments due to lack of class time, lack of study halls, or when assigned the assessments for homework, lack of internet connections at home. Parents reported that their children's grades may suffer because some teachers are giving students a homework grade and a test grade for their *iReady* assignments. In the future, the principal should review the use of these assessments and guide teachers in using the data to inform their instruction.

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

- **Students shared that they would like more opportunities to write about what interests them.** Students said they spend a lot of time in class completing packets of work. They explained that when their time is used completing worksheets, which they often do not understand, there is no time left for them to do their own writing about topics that interest them.
- **Parents stated that they appreciate the orientation given to grade six students as they transition to middle school; however, there is a great amount of information to absorb during that session.** Parents explained that they felt the transition to the middle school would be smoother and create less anxiety for their children if there were periodic refresher sessions for families with children moving from the elementary school to the middle school.
- **Students said that teachers have class rules they should follow; however, all teachers have different rules and expectations and that is very confusing to them.** Students noted, for example, the issue of "phone

garages.” In some classes, students are required to put their phones in a special place when they enter the classroom. In other classes, the teacher does not require students to use the “phone garage” but allows the students to keep their phones in their pockets or backpacks.