

Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness

On-Site Needs Assessment

# Final Report



<b>BEDS Code</b>	581010020000
<b>School Name</b>	Greenport High School
<b>School Address</b>	720 Front Street, Greenport, NY 11944
<b>District Name</b>	Greenport Union Free School District
<b>Principal</b>	Gary Kalish
<b>Dates of Visit</b>	March 12-14, 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:

### 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
78.2	3	3	3	2	2	4	3

Greenport High School serves 333 students in grades 7 to 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 and a representative from the Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN).
- The team visited a total of 19 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, and student work.
- In advance of the visit, 33 staff members (85 percent) completed a DTSDE pre-visit survey conducted by NYSED.

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

1. In November 2018, the school conducted its first Multicultural Night to celebrate the diversity of the school community due to the increased number of international students enrolling in the school. The event highlighted the various cultures represented within the school community through dance, music, foods, and clothing. Approximately 200 parents and students participated in the event. The principal noted that more parents and community members attended this event than all other non-sports related activities during the 2018-19 school year.
2. Recognizing the need for students to improve their writing skills, in September 2018 all teachers in the social studies department began implementing a writing program. Social studies teachers interviewed by the IIT noted that students' writing skills have improved. Students with whom the team spoke expressed their enjoyment about engaging in creative writing activities during their social studies classes. Teachers from the social studies department reported that they have students engage in a writing activity at least once per week.
3. For the 2018-19 school year, the principal began rotating the meeting schedule of the principal's roundtable to maximize the number of parents who can participate in the meetings. From the 2017-18 school year to 2018-19 school year, the principal noted that parental participation has increased by five percent. Parents stated that the new meeting schedule makes it more convenient for them to attend meetings.

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

### Systems for Improvement

- **School leaders will need to establish a process for assessing the needs of English language learners (ELLs) and students with interrupted formal education (SIFE) when they enroll at the school and for monitoring their progress.** The principal noted that due to the shortage of English as a new language (ENL) and English as a second language (ESL) teachers, ELLs and SIFEs are often assigned to general education classes. General education teachers indicated that they need training to meet the academic needs of these students. The team also learned that the school needs to establish a system to distribute language assessments to all teachers. Non-ESL teachers reported they have not received New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) or the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL) assessment data. The IIT learned that none of the students who took the 2017-18 NYSESLAT achieved at the highest level.
- **The principal should ensure that the school develops indicators to measure student academic progress over time.** The principal reported that the school has not established academic benchmarks or interim assessments for teachers to use to measure student performance on an ongoing basis. Teachers noted they are not required to assess their students' progress with unit tests. The principal stated that teachers have autonomy over the grading policy for their courses. The IIT found no evidence that any two teachers have consistent grading policies. Consequently, the school does not have a consistent means of measuring student achievement other than the annual New York State assessments. On the 2017-18 New York State English language arts (ELA) assessment, 16 percent of students in grades seven and eight earned proficient scores, and 17 percent of the students in grades seven and eight participated in the exam. For the 2018-2019 school year, the principal noted that the school does not have a process for determining students' academic achievement as it relates

to State standards. Each teacher is responsible for measuring students' academic achievement based on students' performance in each course.

## Leadership and Organization at the School

- **The principal will need to ensure that staff implement schoolwide policies and initiatives.** The team found that teachers skills, needs, and visions of the school vary, and the principal and teachers indicated that there can be disagreements between members of the faculty. The IIT learned that some teachers perceive that the principal provides higher levels of support for new teachers. The principal reported difficulty in implementing some schoolwide policies. He noted that there are some staff that are less willing to implement new instructional activities. For example, the Advanced Placement (AP) Capstone program was an initiative suggested by the principal; however, the principal indicated that interest in training was limited. In the future, the principal should conduct regular activities to promote healthier personal and professional relationships among staff.
- **The principal should develop and communicate instructional expectations for teachers.** The principal noted that he provides each teacher with autonomy over his or her instructional program. Although the principal requires unit plans to be submitted for review, the team learned that only approximately 60 percent of teachers submitted unit plans. Teachers reported that aside from the principal's observations that are required by the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) process, there is a need for school leadership to provide written instructional feedback to teachers. In 19 visited classrooms, the IIT did not observe consistent instructional practices including lesson design, learning objectives, or classroom assessments. For example, the principal identified class discussions and groupwork as schoolwide initiatives, but the team observed use of these instructional strategies in only two classes.
- **The principal will need to monitor the schoolwide implementation of the advisory program.** The team found that in accordance with the school's master schedule, advisory time is scheduled daily from 7:45-8:15 am. The principal stated that the overall goal of the advisory program is to strengthen relationships between staff and students. However, in only two of 19 observed classrooms did the IIT see teachers leading activities related to strengthening relationships. In 15 classrooms, the team observed unstructured instructional time as students typically talked with classmates, played on their cellphones, participated in card games, or relaxed. Students noted that the advisory program serves as a study hall when needed. Teachers remarked that they struggle to communicate with ELLs during advisory time because they do not speak Spanish; consequently, ELLs are not engaged in instructional activities. The principal stated that the goal for the advisory program for the 2018-19 school year is to ensure that advisory is included in the daily schedule. Teachers noted that the principal has not monitored the implementation of the advisory program and has not provided feedback regarding its implementation.
- **School leaders will need to adapt the staffing model to address the needs of the student population.** The principal noted that the number of ELL and SIFE students increased from the 2016-17 school year to the 2018-19 school year. Although general education classes have substantially more students, the principal emphasized the importance of offering additional Advanced Placement (AP) courses. The team learned that from the 2017-18 school year to the 2018-19 school year, the number of AP courses increased by five. The IIT observed AP classes with fewer than 17 students. The average size of general education classes, which includes ELLs and SIFEs, exceeds 22 students.

## Learning at the School

- **Teachers should provide students with increased opportunities for student discussion, challenge, and ownership of their learning.** In approximately 90 percent of visited classrooms, the IIT observed teachers using instructional strategies that did not require students to be actively engaged in lessons. Although the principal identified classroom presentations and group work as schoolwide initiatives, the team observed student discussion in only ten percent of general education classrooms they visited. Students were engaged in rich discussions and in challenging assignments in two AP classes; however, in two out of 19 general education classes visited by the team, teachers lectured the students, and in other classes, students sat passively and were disengaged. Students reported that class lessons are often boring and that they are not usually provided opportunities to engage in learning activities with their classmates.
- **Teachers will need to use instructional strategies that promote student understanding of what they are learning.** In approximately 94 percent of visited classrooms, the IIT did not observe a learning objective posted nor did teachers refer to a learning objective or check that students understood the purpose or content of the lesson. The team found there was a need for teachers to incorporate assessments into daily lessons to gauge students' understanding of concepts. During classroom visits, the team did not observe teachers reteaching concepts when students did not demonstrate mastery. The principal noted that teachers are not required to post learning objectives or use assessments to measure student learning. Students stated that teachers rarely refer to learning standards or provide them with daily assessments aligned to the lesson being taught.

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

- **Teachers shared that the principal has not established schoolwide systems to ensure initiatives are fully implemented.** For example, they said that the principal spearheaded an initiative for all students to complete an end-of-term project but did not provide initial training or ongoing feedback regarding its implementation.
- **Parents reported that they were not aware of any potential problems of having their child opt out of the State assessments.** Parents stated that they received a letter from the district outlining the process for opting out of the State assessments. Parents suggested that a workshop that provided them with a comprehensive overview of the State assessments, including the potential benefits and consequences of opting out, would be beneficial.
- **Teachers and students shared that students would benefit from having more schoolwide assemblies.** Students noted that only one assembly celebrating Black History Month had been held during the current school year. Teachers remarked that students would benefit from other assemblies that address issues such as bullying and harassment.
- **Parents shared that teachers in some areas, such as ELA, do not provide sufficient information about the instructional programs and their child's academic experiences.** Parents interviewed by the team noted that some teachers do not typically respond in a positive manner when parents ask them questions about their instructional programs.
- **Students reported that some Spanish-speaking students do not feel their language or culture is respected.** They shared that some teachers and other students at times are critical of Spanish-speaking students for speaking Spanish in classrooms and hallways.