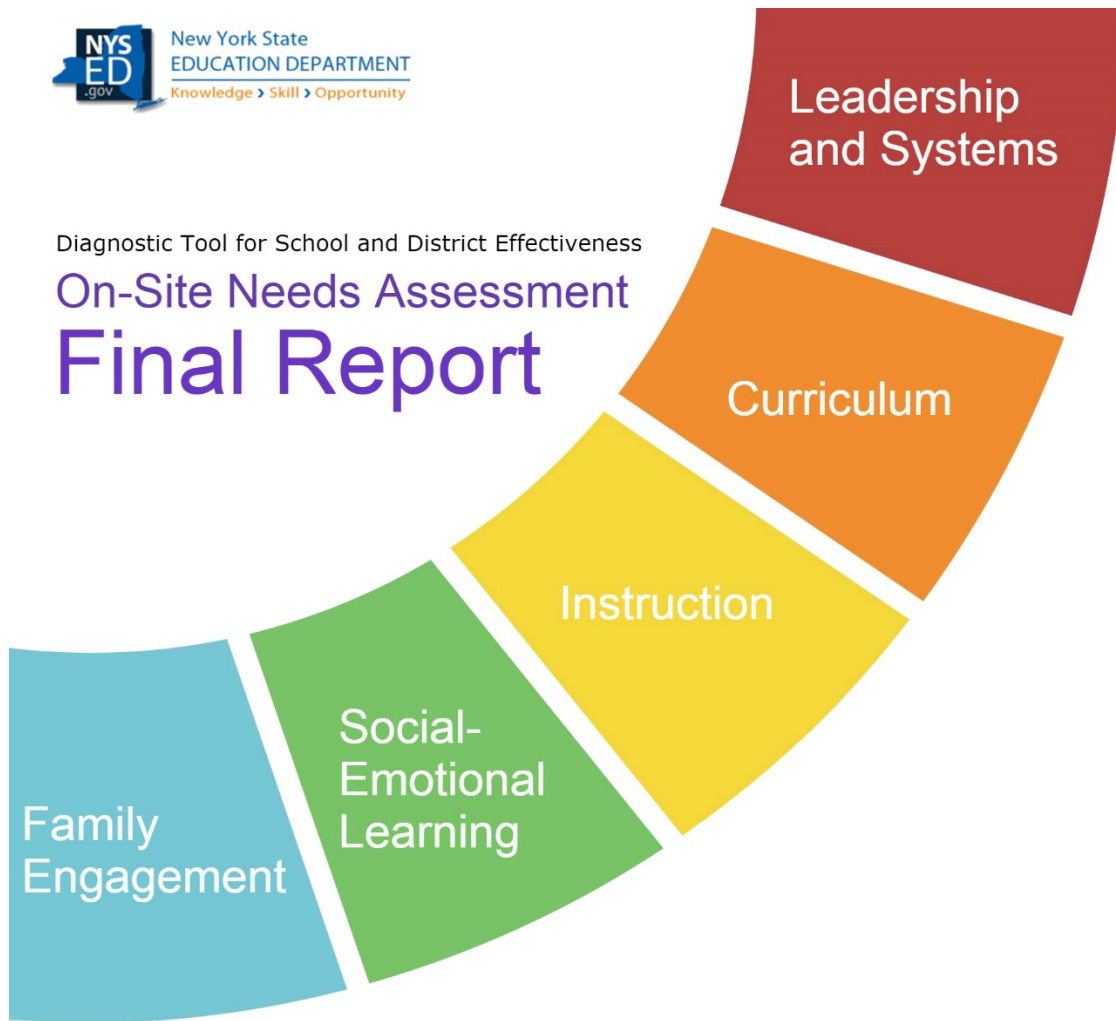


Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness

On-Site Needs Assessment

# Final Report



<b>BEDS Code</b>	<b>500201060008</b>
<b>School Name</b>	<b>James A. Farley Elementary School</b>
<b>School Address</b>	<b>140 Route 210, Stony Point, New York 10980</b>
<b>District Name</b>	<b>Haverstraw-Stony Point Central School District</b>
<b>Principal</b>	<b>Avis Collier Shelby</b>
<b>Dates of Visit</b>	<b>March 19-21, 2019</b>



## 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	1	1	4

James A. Farley Elementary School serves 584 students in grades four through six.

## 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 32 classrooms during the visit.
- The OEE visited eight 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, lesson plans, schoolwide data, teacher feedback, and student work.
- In advance of the visit, 24 staff members (43 percent) completed a DTSDE pre-visit survey conducted by NYSED.

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

1. In 2018-19, grade-level teams began inviting parents to attend their common planning meetings to participate in the development of a support plan to address their child's academic and/or behavioral needs. The principal and teachers shared that this new process has resulted in an increase in the number of positive parent interactions. They also noted that as a result of increased parent involvement, the number of classroom suspensions and disruptive student behaviors has decreased, and student academic outcomes have improved.
2. For 2018-19, the school implemented the explicit instruction model to guide teacher lesson planning and delivery. Teachers are beginning to utilize components of this model, including a gradual release of teacher instructional control and authority, more student group work and interaction, increased student talk, decreased teacher talk, explicit instruction and feedback, and high levels of student engagement. Teachers reported that they are still in the early stages of implementing these strategies, but more teachers are incorporating these practices into their daily instructional routines. School and teacher leaders reported that the increase in small group instruction has fostered more interpersonal connections between teachers and students and increased student-to-student conversations. Teachers also reported an increase in student engagement as compared to previous years.
3. In 2018-19, the school implemented a positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) system to establish and teach school expectations for behavior. School and teacher leaders developed a rubric of behavioral expectations tied to the PBIS programmatic tenets of being respectful, responsible, safe, and ready. Each month, school leaders use the rubric to generate behavior reminders based on referral data. For example, if the office receives a high number of referrals about student misbehavior in the hallways, then the behavior reminder will focus on how students should travel in the hallways. Teachers provide lessons based on the monthly behavior reminder, and school staff provide positive reinforcement when students exhibit the targeted behaviors. Since the implementation of the PBIS system, the number of behavior referrals has decreased, and the number of students receiving positive reinforcement and being recognized during school assemblies has increased.

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

### Systems for Improvement

- **School leaders should monitor the implementation and impact of the “What I Need” (WIN) period.** The principal reported that the WIN period was added to the school schedule to provide students with additional instructional support, enrichment, and intervention. However, no system has been established to monitor the use of this time and its impact on student achievement. Interviewed teachers shared that while the WIN period is used to provide student intervention or enrichment, the activities are not individualized based on student needs. Interviewed students shared that during the WIN period, they participate in enrichment activities like battleships, playing dots, or use the Lexia computer program. Some students suggested that the WIN period could be improved if they were provided with more rigorous activities during this time. Teachers suggested that school leaders and teachers should meet to discuss ways to make the WIN period more beneficial to all students.

## Leadership and Organization at the School

- **The principal should provide teachers with clear written feedback that focuses on improving their instructional practices.** The principal shared that she visits classrooms regularly and provides teachers with verbal feedback during these walkthroughs. Teachers told the IIT that they only receive written feedback during their formalized Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) mandated observations. Teachers stated that most of the verbal feedback they receive does not include suggestions to help them to improve their instructional practice.
- **The principal should clearly communicate her instructional priorities.** The principal stated that she has clearly communicated her instructional vision to the staff and described the workshops she has led related to her instructional expectations and the guidance she has provided about what she expects to see in classrooms. However, most interviewed teachers stated that they were unclear about the principal's instructional priorities. Although the principal identified instructional priorities for reading and math, the majority of teachers identified PBIS as the school's instructional focus.

## Learning at the School

- **School leaders should provide additional support to ensure that the explicit instruction model is implemented consistently across the school.** The principal reported that teachers are transitioning from a traditional teacher-led classroom to a more student-centered, explicit instruction model that includes students engaged in learning, explicit skill instruction, student reflection, student-led classrooms, and students working collaboratively. During class visits, the IIT found that teachers are at varied stages in their implementation of this model. For example, in some classes, students were asked questions that required only short, one-word student responses, and wait time was not utilized to allow students to reflect before responding to questions. In other classes, the IIT observed respectful and purposeful student-to-student, student-to-teacher, and teacher-to-student interactions. Interviewed teachers shared that although they have received training in explicit instructional practices, some teachers are not fully comfortable implementing all components of this model.
- **Teachers need to consistently implement strategies to support English language learners (ELLs).** During class visits, the IIT noted that all teachers had posted lesson objectives for their instruction, but not all classrooms had language objectives posted. The IIT saw little evidence of differentiated tasks or scaffolds to support ELLs. The English as a new language (ENL) teacher shared that not all teachers have been provided with professional development to support their teaching of ELL students. The ENL teacher stated that although she meets with classroom teachers during common planning time, this time has not been used to focus on strategies to support ELL students in the classroom. The principal stated that she has provided time in the schedule for the ENL teacher to support classroom teachers, but the impact of this collaboration has not been monitored.
- **Teachers should provide students with feedback that helps them to improve their work.** Interviewed teachers stated that they have not been provided with clear expectations regarding how they should provide students with feedback on their work. Teachers stated that they decide how to deliver feedback to students in their classes. Interviewed students shared that teachers provide them with feedback in a variety of ways, including putting a sticker on their work or telling them they had done a good job. Most interviewed students could not explain what they needed to do to improve their work. In addition, many students stated that they

receive little feedback regarding their reading performance and were unable to identify their current reading levels.

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

- **Students would like more rigorous homework assignments.** Students told the team that they wanted homework to be assigned every other day. They explained that this would allow the activities to be more rigorous, requiring additional time and thought to complete.
- **Teachers would like more follow-up on the implementation of schoolwide initiatives.** Teachers shared that the principal introduces strategies to improve instruction during faculty meetings, such as the implementation of explicit instruction. However, they explained that follow-up is not provided to ensure that staff understand how to implement these strategies, and the impact of initiatives is not monitored to determine if they are having the desired impact on student learning.
- **Families would like more information about their children’s academic progress.** Interviewed parents stated that they receive little information about what their children are learning in school. Parents also stated that they would like the school to provide more information about their children’s academic progress.
- **Families expressed concern about student homework.** Interviewed parents reported that homework assignments vary from class to class, even when students are in the same grade level. Some parents expressed concern that homework assignments were too easy and did not do enough to extend their children’s learning. Some parents suggested that the school should develop a uniform homework policy that ensures all students are provided with rigorous and challenging homework activities.