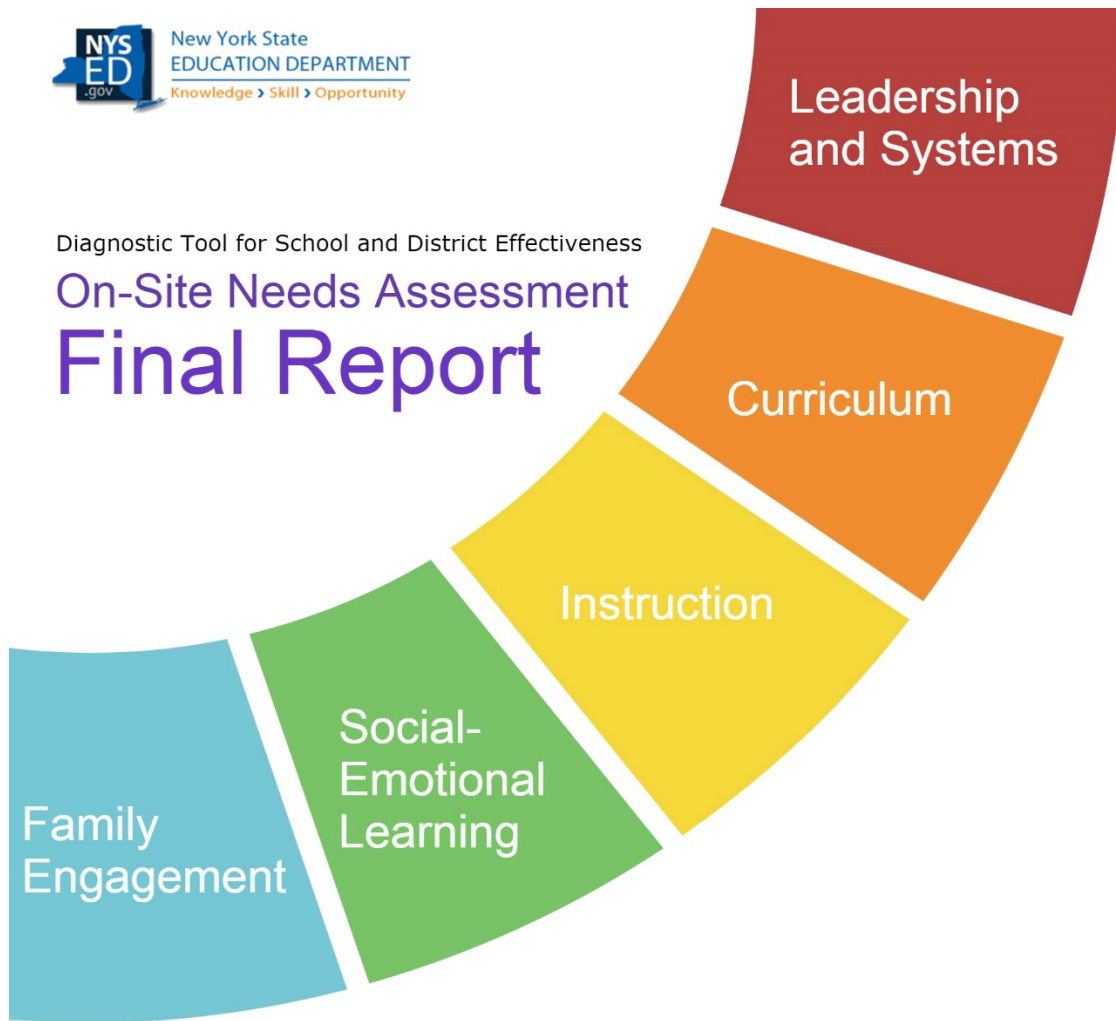


Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness

On-Site Needs Assessment

Final Report



BEDS Code	170801040002
School Name	Mayfield Junior/Senior High School
School Address	27 School Street, Mayfield, NY 12117
District Name	Mayfield Central School District
Principal	Dr. Christopher Wojeski
Dates of Visit	March 27-29, 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	-	1	3

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	4	4	4	-	3	4	4

Mayfield Junior Senior High School serves 428 students in grades seven to twelve.

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 district consultant.
- The team visited a total of 20 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 schoolwide data.
- In advance of the visit, 29 staff members (74 percent) completed a DTSDE pre-visit survey conducted by NYSED.
- The first day of the team’s visit was a “Wellness Day” during which all students could choose from a variety of workshops, such as yoga or nutrition, in the morning. Students were dismissed at 11:00 a.m., and the rest of the day was a professional development (PD) session for teachers during which they met as departments. As a result, the IIT did not observe any classes although the team was able to conduct student and teacher focus groups.

Successes Within The School That The School Should Build Upon:

1. Recognizing the need to establish priorities for the school, in the few months prior to the Integrated Intervention Team's (IIT's) visit, the principal formed several committees of teachers and staff that are currently reviewing and addressing procedures at the school. For example, in an effort to ensure consistency in discipline policies, the discipline team is reviewing the school's code of conduct. Likewise, the newly formed pupil personnel team is surveying the needs of students and teachers in order to identify and document the need for additional student support staff. Teams are reviewing data on academic and behavioral referrals, as well as attendance records, to determine root causes and create action plans to address these issues in a proactive way.
2. The school offers a large selection of college and career courses for its students. For example, the school has a dedicated distance learning classroom that is used for college classes, mostly from Fulton Montgomery Community College. Students are enrolled in college classes taught by Mayfield teachers who are accredited by the college as adjunct professors. In this way, students can begin accumulating college credit well before they graduate high school. The principal reported that currently this class is at capacity all eight periods of the day and that many students graduate with college credits. The principal shared that one student is graduating with 39 college credits. Parents also praised these college credit bearing courses as a way to help their children jump start their college careers and cut college costs in the process. For students interested in engineering, the school offers Project Lead the Way, and for those interested in the arts, the school has an arts and business/entrepreneurial pathway program.
3. The school's annual "Wellness Day" for students and teachers was held March 26, 2019, during the IIT's visit. Students explained to the team that they choose three sessions for the morning during which they can explore areas they may not otherwise be familiar with. Students shared that they were excited about this opportunity, which they helped organize, and the wide range of offerings such as yoga and nutrition. They said that being part of the long-range planning for this day gave them a chance to have their voices heard and made them feel a bigger part of the school community. Teachers reported that they often lead the sessions in areas that are of particular interest to them or areas where they have some expertise. Teachers and students agreed that being able to interact with each other in ways different from the classroom setting continues to strengthen the collaborative relationships among the members of the school community.
4. The junior/senior high school and elementary school leaders have a close working relationship that leads to articulation between the two schools. The school leaders explained to the IIT that the assistant principal (AP) divides his day between the two schools and is able to bring consistency between the processes in each school. Further, the high school principal conducts teacher observations in the elementary school as well as in the high school so that he understands the pedagogy used with students who are transitioning to the junior high school in grade seven. He said he shares these best practices with his teachers, who were predominantly trained as high school teachers, so that they may become more effective with junior high school students when they better understand the instructional practices that are more successful with younger students.

Areas Of Need To Be Addressed For Long-Term Success

Systems for Improvement

- **The school needs to establish a system to ensure that intervention supports are provided to struggling students.** The principal explained that students take benchmark assessments three times a year and are then identified for some intervention such as math lab. During class visits, the IIT found that some math lab classes were simply a continuation of a math lesson or a time to complete homework assignments without targeted support based on student-specific data. In the future, the principal should ensure that benchmark and other assessment data are used to identify students who would benefit from targeted intervention and implement an intervention plan for them.

Leadership and Organization at the School

- **The principal should prioritize informally visiting classes to provide targeted feedback to teachers on an ongoing basis.** While the school leaders are fulfilling their requirement to complete annual evaluations of teachers, the principal told the IIT that he would like to visit classes at least three times a week but competing priorities such as building projects often interrupt these visits. Teachers told the IIT that receiving feedback from the principal would help them identify and implement more successful instructional strategies.
- **The principal should communicate his expectations for what is to be accomplished at department meetings.** Staff shared that the departments have monthly meetings, but the principal told the IIT that he leaves the agenda items to the teachers and that they send him notes of what went on at the meetings. The principal explained that teachers often use these meetings to share information about students rather than use the time to focus on curriculum or share successful practices. In the future, the principal should let teachers know what areas he would like them to focus on, including the use of student data to inform their instruction, and prior to the meeting, he should review how their agendas reflect these expectations.
- **The principal should ensure that teachers are implementing activities he has assigned and sustaining efforts for agreed-upon initiatives.** During class visits, the IIT saw no evidence of higher-order questioning, even though the principal shared that this was a priority and that the teachers had received PD on this topic. Likewise, apart from some bulletin boards around the school, the team saw no evidence in classrooms that the school's character education program, SPARRK, which consists of service, perseverance, attitude, respect, responsibility, and kindness, was being implemented. Further, when asked by the IIT, students did not know what the program was or what the letters stood for.

Learning at the School

- **Teachers should focus on ask higher-order questions to students during instruction to deepen student thinking.** During classroom visits, the IIT did not see evidence of higher-order questioning. Very few questions were typically asked during lessons, and when they were, teachers either answered the questions themselves or accepted one-word answers. Students were not typically expected to answer any follow-up questions. In the future, during classroom walkthroughs, the principal should focus on giving feedback to teachers on the quality of their questioning.

- **Teachers should refer to standards during their lessons and post objectives or learning targets in their classes.** Some junior high school teachers said they have aligned their curriculum with what they think is needed for students to be successful at the high school, rather than the content and skills outlined in the New York State (NYS) Next Generation Learning Standards. The principal said he was aware of this but has not discussed his concerns with the teachers on this misalignment because they will be using a new math curriculum next year. Students told the IIT that they follow directions in class and complete their work, but they said they do not always understand how what they are learning fits into an overall program of study or why they are doing a particular assignment. Posting learning targets in classrooms and referencing these throughout instruction is a way of helping students to better understand the progression of lessons.
- **Teachers should vary instructional styles to meet the needs of all students.** During class visits, the IIT observed all students doing the same work, often worksheets or taking notes. The predominant voice in the class was that of the teacher, and there were few checks for student understanding of the material. Teachers told the IIT that they have large amounts of material they must cover so they need to move quickly. However, some interviewed students said they are sometimes lost during class but seldom ask questions to clarify their understanding, while other students said they do not feel challenged at all.

Stakeholder Perspectives on Areas of Need and Ideas for Improvement

- **Students reported that although they generally feel comfortable in class, they do feel not comfortable enough to ask questions when they do not understand the material.** Students explained to the IIT that they are worried that teachers will be annoyed with them for taking too much time away from them as they try to cover the necessary content.
- **Parents and students stated that, although there is a code of conduct that is shared with teachers and families at the beginning of the school year, discipline practices are inconsistent.** Both parents and students said that students who violate the rules, such as by wearing hoods in school or bringing food or drinks into the gymnasium, are punished differently, if at all, depending on the teacher. They said that they perceive this as teachers having favorite students, which results in hurt feelings for some students and a negative outlook about school in general for others.