New York State
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
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Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness

On-Site Needs Assessment
Final Report

Leadership and Systems

Curriculum

Instruction

Social-Emotional Learning

Family Engagement
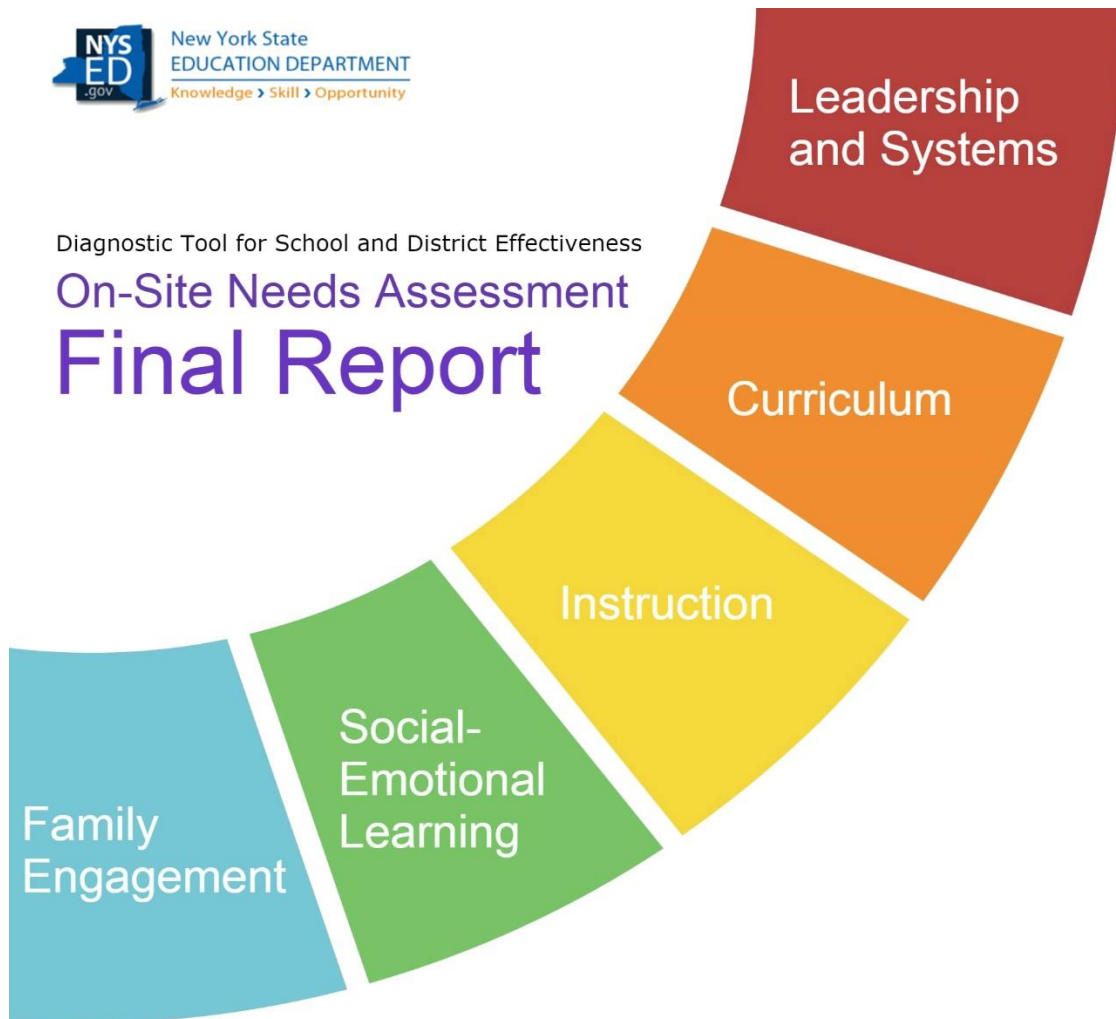
BEDS Code	321200010195
School Name	P.S. 195
School Address	1250 Ward Avenue, Bronx, NY 10472
District Name	NYCDOE CSD 12
Principal	Mr. Unal Karakas
Dates of Visit	January 15-17, 2019

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.

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 33 classrooms during the visit.
- The OEE visited four 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, the school provided results of a staff survey that 40 staff members (59 percent) completed.
- In advance of the visit, the school provided results of a parent survey that 471 parents (64 percent) completed.

Successes Within The School That The School Should Build Upon:

1. School leaders and staff have developed a culture of collaboration and collegiality whereby teachers engage in inter-visitation of classrooms, review student assessment artifacts in an inquiry cycle, and assume team member roles during grade-level team meetings. For 2018-19, school leaders delegated the responsibility of leading inquiry meetings to teacher leaders at each grade level in an effort to build leadership capacity and encourage shared leadership. The IIT observed teacher leaders managing the inquiry meetings following established time management protocols and facilitating the team discussions using the consultancy protocol for inquiry. For each inquiry cycle, grade teams target one skill and discuss student performance and instructional strategies related to that skill. The results of common pre- and post-assessments for an eight-week English language arts (ELA) inquiry cycle for grades three and four showed an average increase of 26 and 20 percentage points, respectively.

2. In the fall of 2018, grade five math teachers implemented math circles that provide students with a structured way to navigate the problem-solving process. I-Ready benchmark assessment results indicate that this practice has contributed to an improvement in math proficiency of grade five students. In December 2018, 54 percent of the students in this cohort scored at the proficient level compared to 44 percent in December 2017, a gain of 10 percentage points. In addition, teachers have initiated the process for implementing math circles in grade three.

3. In 2018-19, teachers began using data to set short- and long-term goals for students that include learning trajectories. The goals are content specific, and teachers establish new goals for students when the current goals are met. The IIT's review of student folders revealed that teachers regularly track student performance and communicate with students about their learning goals and progress toward meeting those goals. As a result of this process, students are aware of and are able to articulate their goals in ELA, math, and writing.

Areas Of Need To Be Addressed For Long-Term Success

Systems for Improvement

- **Activities within the School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP) need to include clear timelines for completion and benchmarks to monitor progress .** The principal stated that the school leaders meet regularly to discuss action items and monitor progress towards achieving the school's goals. However, the SCEP action plans do not include interim benchmarks to measure progress for each initiative. For example, the timeline for providing professional development (PD) to teachers around Tier I positive behavior interventions is September 2018 through January 2019. In addition, the timeline for the progress monitoring component of one action plan comprised of multiple action items is February 2019 with no benchmarks to monitor progress prior to that date.
- **School leaders should establish whole-class growth targets to monitor cohort growth and proficiency from year to year.** The school's overall goal for students to achieve 25 percent proficiency in ELA and math has been communicated throughout the school. In addition, students have annual reading goals and interim reading, math, and writing goals aligned to the content standards. However, classroom-level goals for annual student growth have not been established. Although the principal compares the proficiency of students in each grade level to that of the previous year's students, student performance is not analyzed by cohort to determine yearly growth and establish growth targets for whole-class performance.
- **The school needs to develop a system to identify the root cause of absence for students who are chronically absent in order to plan appropriate interventions and support.** During interviews with school leaders and staff, the IIT learned that the school has identified all chronically absent students and has formulated a plan to contact the parents of identified students. While teachers and school leaders noted that some of the students reside in temporary housing, the specific circumstances contributing to chronic absenteeism for each child had not been identified.

Leadership and Organization at the School

- **The principal should develop a system to monitor teacher use of iReady data to plan interventions.** The principal shared that teachers are expected to use iReady to provide interventions for students based on individual performance. Although the principal has established mechanisms to track and monitor teacher use of iReady, there is no system to determine if teachers are using iReady data to plan additional supports for students who need them.

Learning at the School

- **Although the school has established a PBIS system, school staff should clearly communicate expectations for student behavior, how students can earn rewards for positive behavior, and clear consequences for behavior infractions.** During classroom visits, the IIT saw limited implementation of the PBIS system. Expectations for student behavior were not referred to during class and the IIT did not observe a curriculum being used to teach positive behavior. Interviews with students, parents, staff, and school leaders revealed that the school rewards students for positive behavior, but the criteria for earning rewards was unclear. Interviews with students also revealed that the consequences for bullying and fighting at school were not clear.
- **Teachers should use instructional modeling to deepen student understanding of the content.** During class visits, instructional presentations in all classrooms included *I do*, *We do*, and *You do* components. However, some teachers modeled just one example prior to moving on to guided practice.
- **Teachers in integrated co-teaching (ICT) classes need to implement a co-teaching model that fully utilizes both teachers.** The IIT observed teachers in ICT classes collaborating to provide students with small-group activities during the student work period. However, most instruction was led by the general education teacher while the special education teacher helped students complete graphic organizers.
- **Although teachers are using data to plan instruction, some teachers need additional support to differentiate instruction based on data.** School leaders have introduced data systems throughout the school, and teachers attend data meetings where they discuss student data and student work. The IIT's review of lesson plans revealed that teachers use data to plan for reteaching and grouping students. However, many observed lessons were characterized by whole-group, teacher-led instruction with all students engaged in the same activity regardless of their proficiency levels. For example, one teacher provided all students with instruction on letter sounds even though student responses demonstrated that some students had mastered the focus skill for this lesson. Although teachers in some classes grouped students and provided them with leveled text and choice of text during reading and writing instruction, all students completed the same activity in the same way during the work period. Some teachers shared that they need additional coaching support to fully understand the purpose and function of each of the data points they are required to collect and use. The principal confirmed that school leaders have focused more on the use of data in grades three through five and that teachers in lower grades need additional support in this area.

Stakeholder Perspectives on Areas of Need and Ideas for Improvement

- **Families would like additional support from the school in various areas of adult education.** During parent interviews, the IIT learned that families would like the school to offer additional classes in areas such as English as a new language (ENL), attaining a high school equivalency diploma, and parenting. While some families were unaware that the school provided ENL classes, others knew about these classes but did not believe there was space available for them to enroll.
- **Families would like to be more engaged in the school improvement process.** The IIT learned that the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) president works closely with school leaders to make decisions for the school, and the principal regularly shares information with families during PTA meetings. However, some families suggested that the school create a forum during PTA meetings where families could share their ideas for school improvement with the principal.

- **Families would like teachers to provide regular correspondence on their child's progress, strategies to assist their children, and general classroom updates.** Families reported that ClassDojo is a positive tool that enables families to obtain classroom updates and information on the progress of their child in both English and Spanish. However, not all classroom teachers use ClassDojo to communicate with families. Although the school provides families with grade-level specific training on strategies to assist their child, some families shared that they need additional strategies from the classroom teacher to assist their child with assignments.
- **Families requested that all correspondence from the school be available in their home language.** Interviewed families shared that not all classroom-level written communications are translated.