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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	331600010681
School Name	Madiba Prep Middle School
School Address	1014 Lafayette Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11221
District Name	New York Department of Education City School District 16
Principal	Anne-Marie Malcolm
Dates of Visit	June 3, 5, 7, 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:

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
1	1	1	-	1	1

Madiba Prep Middle School serves 156 students in grades six to eight.

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.
- 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 lesson plans, schoolwide data, teacher feedback, and student work.
- In advance of the visit, 21 staff members (100 percent) completed a DTSDE pre-visit survey conducted by NYSED.

Successes Within The School That The School Should Build Upon:

1. During the 2018-19 school year, the principal arranged for all students to attend a club of their choice each Friday morning. Students are offered a wide range of activities such as tap ensemble, Tae Kwon Do, sister circle, Harry Potter club, female empowerment, mindfulness and meditation, chorus, and restorative practices. Students appreciate this time and say that it is their favorite part of the week. Other students reported that they wished the clubs lasted longer each Friday because the time goes by so quickly. Students identified that the clubs enable them to work closely with a group of students on a regular basis.

2. For the 2018-19 school year, school leaders established a morning assembly. The whole school community takes part in this assembly which promotes and celebrates good attendance, scholarship, and leadership. Adults give out student awards, such as science awards, for students in all grades. The team observed older students in grade eight celebrating their leadership role within the school by wearing white school shirts, while students in grades six and seven wear yellow school shirts. The team observed good behavior and great enthusiasm throughout the assembly. This gathering promotes school community as everyone celebrated each other's achievements.

3. School leaders have placed display boards outside classrooms where teachers display student work and give information about some of the students' activities. As a result, the hallways throughout the school are filled with interesting and well-organized examples of student work celebrating all aspects of the curriculum, including the promotion of the culturally diverse aspect of the school community. This is evidenced by the students' projection of powerful self-images of gender and culture. In addition, the displays focus on progress in improving attendance such as comparing the attendance of different classes and showing students how the attendance varies from month to month. The displays can promote college and career readiness, as students may identify post-high school aspirations.

Areas of Need to Be Addressed for Long-Term Success:

Systems for Improvement

- **The principal should analyze which data are most relevant and accurate to determine strengths and areas for improvement in whole school performance.** The IIT found that clear internal systems have not been established to check how well students are performing. For example, current data have not been analyzed to gain a comprehensive picture of behavior, attendance, and the progress of student groups. Other initiatives such as the Friday Clubs or the daily What I Need (WIN) lesson, in which students work in groups based on their reading ability, should also be monitored to see how they are impacting student performance.

- **School leaders should decide which student performance data are useful to teachers for planning instruction and then make sure that all teachers are prepared to use the data to inform their teaching.** School leaders reported that they collect a great deal of data related to student academic performance in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. A few teachers who were interviewed by the review team reported that they use data to inform their planning and delivery of instruction. Other teachers reported that they were not confident in using data to inform instruction because some data are difficult to understand. The IIT found that data was primarily used to place students into groups. In the future, school leaders should assist teachers with interpreting data and exploring additional ways to utilize data in their planning.

Leadership and Organization at the School

- **The school leaders, the Middle School Quality Instruction (MSQI) coach, and the peer collaborative teacher should complete weekly walkthroughs focused on the instructional expectations that have been identified and give teachers actionable feedback.** The IIT found that the principal has successfully focused on establishing a common lesson structure among classrooms, and all teachers now plan using a similar format. However, teachers reported that no instructional expectations had been formally shared with them and that the feedback they received about their teaching was usually very general. In reviewing sample feedback documents provided by the principal, the IIT found that comments were not specific about what needed to be done in order to improve teaching and learning. In the future, school leaders should develop a walkthrough template or other method for providing teachers with actionable feedback about their instructional practices.

- **The school leaders should establish procedures to ensure that after the initial focused walkthroughs, classes are revisited to monitor teachers' instructional improvements.** The IIT found during discussions with the principal and teachers that school leaders and consultants do visit classrooms and provide general feedback to teachers. However, the school has not yet established effective systems to monitor improvements and find out if they are sustained. In the future, school leaders should create a walkthrough schedule that includes follow-up visits.

Learning at the School

- **Teachers should differentiate class assignments in order to meet the varying needs of their students, particularly those performing below grade level.** The IIT found from discussions with teachers and students that class materials and assignments are not typically adjusted to meet student needs. During visits to classrooms, the IIT observed that teachers often give the same work to all students. Discussions with students who find learning difficult revealed that they are not always provided with the necessary learning supports to help them access their assignments. They indicated that their peers try to assist them during group work, but that helps them finish the assignment, not necessarily understand the lesson.

- **Teachers should ensure that they check for understanding throughout their lessons.** During visits to classrooms, the IIT and principal observed that assessment opportunities are not consistently embedded in lessons. This makes it difficult for teachers to ascertain how well students are understanding a given lesson. At the end of lessons, assessment information is not often gathered to help inform the next lesson. The principal and the IIT identified checking for understanding as a future instructional expectation.

- **School leaders and the English as a new language (ENL) teacher should review the way English language learners (ELLs) are supported.** The IIT observed that support of ELLs varies from teacher to teacher. When visiting classrooms, the IIT found that sometimes teachers support ELLs with appropriate activities that match their learning and language needs. At other times, ELLs are given the same activities as all other students. As a result, ELLs sometimes struggle to participate in the lessons.

Stakeholder Perspectives on Areas of Need and Ideas for Improvement

- **Students would like access to extension activities when they finish their work quickly.** When interviewed by the review team, students reported that when they find work easy and finish quickly, they often sit and wait for the other students to finish, chat quietly, or help someone else. Some students stated that they would welcome opportunities to try more challenging work.