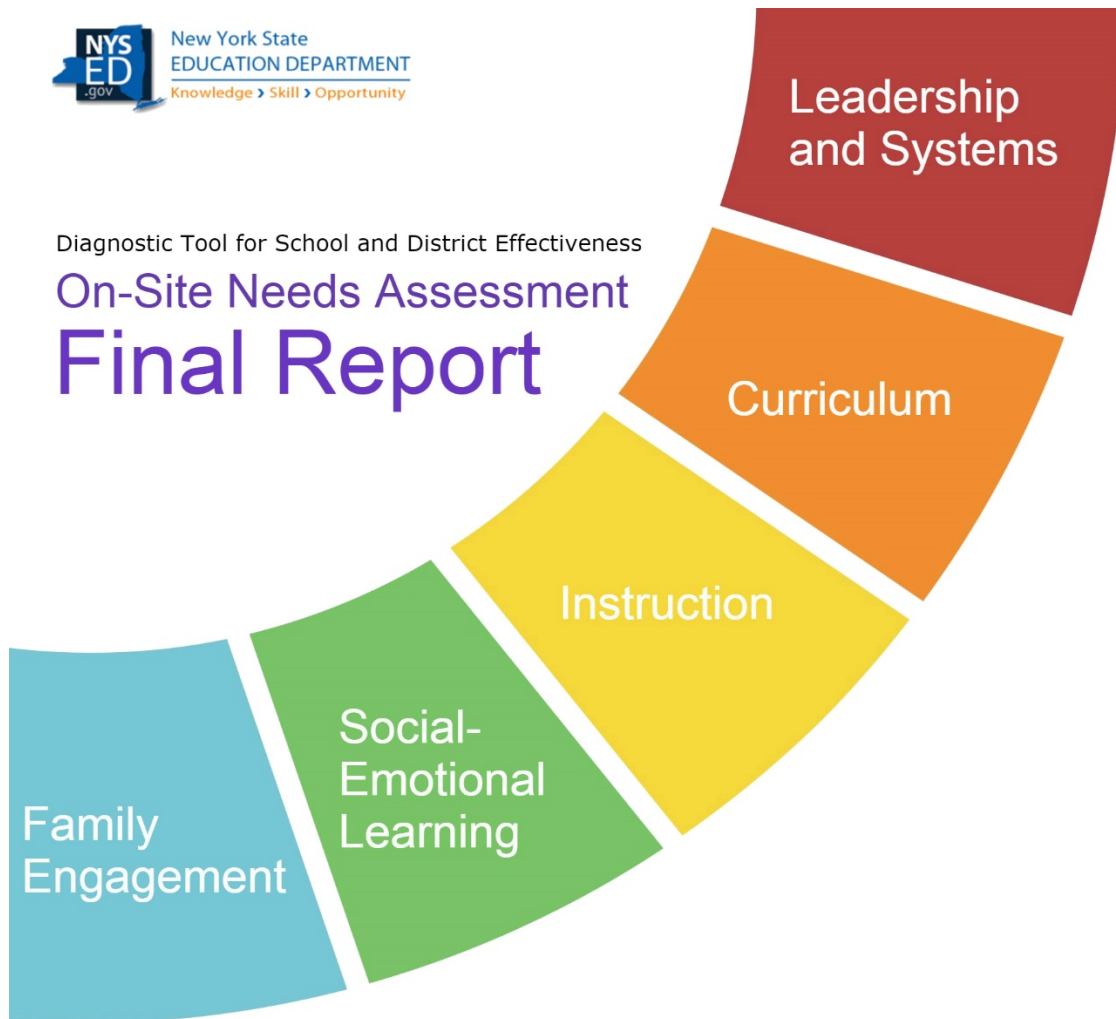


Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness

On-Site Needs Assessment

Final Report



BEDS Code	550101040003
School Name	Odessa-Montour Junior-Senior High School
School Address	300 College Avenue Odessa, New York, NY 14869
District Name	Odessa-Montour Central School District
Principal	Mr. Almon McCarty
Dates of Visit	April 9-11, 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	3	4	3	-	3	3	3

Odessa-Montour Junior-Senior High School serves 315 students in grades seven through 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.
- The team visited a total of 32 classrooms during the visit.

- The OEE visited seven 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 academic, social, emotional, and behavioral data such as referral and out of school suspension numbers.
- In advance of the visit, 21 staff members (58 percent) completed a DTSDE pre-visit survey conducted by NYSED.

Successes Within The School That The School Should Build Upon

1. The principal stated that this school year students requested to have more input in the planning of school events, such as the homecoming parade and dance. He noted that he allowed students to plan these events and that as a result of this initiative, many more students participated in these activities than in past years. The principal indicated that the school morale has increased. Students interviewed by the IIT stated that they appreciated having a greater voice in the school and that more students feel their viewpoints are valued.
2. To better address the social and emotional needs of students, the principal reported that he added a full-time social worker position to the staff for the 2018-19 school year. The social worker meets with general education and special education students. A district representative stated that the specialized skill set that this person possesses has improved access for all students to discuss personal, home, or school issues that they may have. Several students interviewed indicated that the social worker was one of the people that they would go to if they had an issue that they needed to discuss. The principal reported that the addition of this position and the social worker's impact on the school's social and emotional program has led to a decrease in the number of out of school suspensions. For the 2017-18 school year, there were 112 out of school suspensions, for the 2018-19 school year thus far, the school has 67 out of school suspensions.
3. For the 2018-19 school year, the principal reported that he has increased access for special education students to more inclusive general education settings. To address the needs of special education students, he noted that the school has implemented a consultant teacher model, where special education teachers teach alongside general education teachers in general education settings. He noted that this new approach has increased the level of engagement of special education students both in school and in extra-curricular activities. The IIT observed special education students actively participating in class, and teachers noted that students have expressed more interest in participating in extracurricular activities.

Areas Of Need To Be Addressed For Long-Term Success

Systems for Improvement

- **The principal should gather teacher practice data to help him make strategic decisions related to the development of the School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP) and professional development (PD) plan for the 2019-20 school year.** Although the principal and teachers reported that formal teacher evaluations are completed, informal class visits conducted for identification of trends in teacher practice have not yet occurred. Administrative tasks throughout the day often take precedence over visits to classrooms. Teachers and students also noted that their classrooms are infrequently visited. In the future, the principal may want to consider setting aside a minimum of 30 minutes a day to visit classrooms informally and gather data related to teacher practice. He should use these data to help develop the school's PD plan and the SCEP.

Leadership and Organization at the School

- **The principal will need to consistently provide teachers with targeted informal feedback on their instructional practice.** The team found that although teachers receive two evaluations during the school year, they do not receive regular and on-going feedback based on the instruction observed, on how to improve their practice. Duties, such as meetings with families, staff members, and students throughout the day limit the time for classroom visits.
- **The principal should clarify instructional expectations to teachers and monitor their implementation.** The principal expects teachers to engage students, know their content area, and have learning targets posted. Most teachers were able to specify elements expected in lessons such as student engagement, knowledge of the subject area, and positive relationships with students. However, they did not cite expectations that involved the posting of learning targets or specific, measurable, ambitious, results-oriented, and timely (SMART) goals in their classrooms, which have been initiatives over the past few years. The IIT found that in the majority of classes they visited, neither learning targets or goals were posted, and students were not engaged in the lesson. Additionally, teachers stated that they have not received feedback concerning learning targets or goals during the 2018-19 school year. In the future, the principal should clearly articulate his expectations for high quality instructional practice and provide regular and on-going monitoring, guidance, and support to help each teacher meet these expectations.

Learning at the School

- **Teachers will need to promote student engagement and ownership of their learning during lessons.** The IIT found during classroom visits, that teachers typically dominated discussions, asked most of the questions, and provided few opportunities for students to voice opinions or work together to problem solve. In most cases, teacher talk was predominant, approximately 80 to 90 percent of the time, with students taking notes and occasionally responding to questions. Many students the team interviewed, articulated that teachers talk most of the time and allow little time for student interaction. Some students categorized their classes as boring and did not see a connection between what they were learning and how it applied to what they noted, as the real world. In the future, the principal should provide regular feedback to teachers on how they can increase

opportunities for student voice during instruction and develop lessons that students find relevant and interesting.

- **Teachers should adapt instructional strategies to meet students' various learning styles and needs.** Students indicated that their general education teachers usually teach the same way to all students, regardless of student learning styles. During class visits, the IIT observed that teachers typically taught all students the same way, with few or no modifications for students who may learn best if taught differently. In one class, for example, the teacher lectured most of the time the IIT was in the classroom and did not provide any variation to meet student needs. Teachers indicated that this was typical teacher practice. In the future, the principal should provide feedback to teachers to apply various strategies to their instructional practice to best meet the needs of more learners.

Stakeholder Perspectives on Areas of Need and Ideas for Improvement

- **Parents said that teachers do not regularly reach out to let them know how their child is doing or what they could do to help.** Some parents reported that they rarely hear from their child's teacher if their child is struggling and are not usually provided information on what they could do at home to help their child be successful. One parent interviewed stated that she had to seek out her child's teacher to have a discussion about her child's academic progress, and if she had not done so, she would not have known that her child was doing poorly. Some parents stated that some teachers may believe that if a parent initiates a meeting, that the parent is going to be confrontational. Parents also reported that report cards do not provide enough information on what specifically their child may be struggling with because teacher comments are often general in nature.
- **Parents stated that the school's online parent portal is not regularly updated to reflect students' current grades.** Parents indicated that they are not always certain of how their child is doing in school. Some teachers noted that although grades are supposed to be updated weekly, sometimes they are not able to get to this task for two to three weeks, leading to an inaccurate gauge of how students are performing. Both parents and students stated that often when students hand in a homework assignment, it gets registered by the teacher in the portal as a 100 percent, whether it is perfect or not. According to parents, this causes confusion when a child has several 100s posted online and then may get a low grade on the corresponding assessment.